

# ***BlogBooker***

From Blog to Book.

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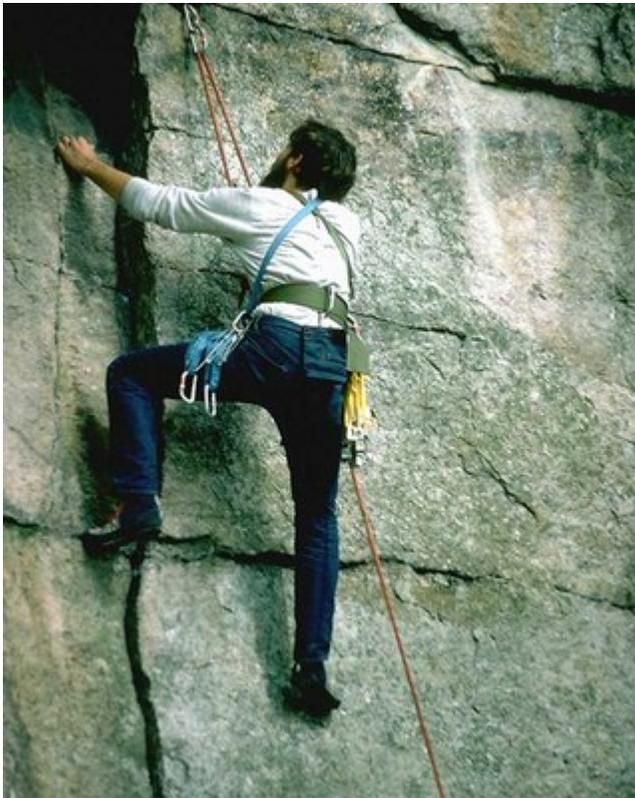


# Chapter 1

2008

## 1.1 March

### 1.1.1 Hello world! (2008-03-06 00:33)



[1]

I'm just finishing a long and grueling medical treatment.

I'm moving back out on my own.

I'll be hanging out in a groovy coffee shop with my new computer.

I'm going to start a business that offers Whole Food Supplements (I'm also going to take the supplements to get me back to prime health after this horrible Hep C treatment...

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/06/hello-world/3/>

---

Mr WordPress (2008-03-06 00:33:30)

Hi, this is a comment.

To delete a comment, just log in, and view the posts' comments, there you will have the option to edit or delete them.

PetMono (2008-03-06 21:41:12)

hello alex, new computer, coffee shop! you must be in heaven! let's hear more from you!

### 1.1.2 I'm A Wreck... (2008-03-06 02:07)



[1]

The boat of my body is wrecked on the shore of new potential.

Medical treatments can debilitate a body while they exalte a soul.

Keeping the mind focused above the emotions is critical...

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/03/boats-ships-61.jpg>

---

Brandi Magill (2008-03-06 14:25:46)

I've always said, emotions are far more crippling than any disease, disorder or handicap.

amzolt (2008-03-06 15:06:31)

And, you've always said what's literally True !!!

### 1.1.3 Just Get Back Up . . . (2008-03-06 13:30)



[1]

Whether in Sports, Medical Conditions, Relationships, Business, or Life in General, we **will** be tackled and lose the ball.

We must **always** remember:

*Just Get Back Up !*

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/03/sports-028.jpg>

---

Alexys Fairfield (2008-03-06 17:57:05)

Hey Alex, I love the feel and the spirit of your new place. It feels alive, vibrant and exciting - just like you.  
Welcome back to your life.

amzolt (2008-03-06 18:04:00)

Why, thank ya, dear Lady !!!

#### 1.1.4 Will Power (2008-03-06 21:57)



[1]

The drugs I've been taking for the last 9 months have caused many changes.

They make me sick; they knock out my energy; they play cruel games with my feelings; they even warp my thinking at times.

I just took a long nap and wanted to go right back to bed till my Will Power said, "Keep Moving!".

See me move...?

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/03/kids-stuff-49.jpg>

---

Dar (2008-03-07 02:18:12)

Ah Alex!!! Do you know how much you are admired my dear? Not only do you have the courage to go through these greuling treatments, you share your very personal experiences with us, and most beautifully, you look to see the good in all the suffering. God bless you Alex!!!!!! And Happy Spring!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

amzolt (2008-03-07 02:22:29)

Aw, shucks, Dar, you're a sweetheart... Do you remember how hard it was to pedal across a lawn?

Sophia (2008-03-09 00:12:17)

I applaud you for having the strength to rise after taking a nap and being tempted to just stay in the bed. I've been in that position many times, and many of those times I gave in to the temptation. So keep it up, Alex!

amzolt (2008-03-09 00:24:32)

Another AwShucks... I've actually got a choice: \* Give in to the drugs power... \* Use my will power... Some days, the decision itself is clouded by the drugs...

### 1.1.5 Our Bodies... (2008-03-07 04:18)



[1]

The lengthy treatment for Hepatitis C that I've been suffering through for 9 months has caused a hyper-awareness of the difference between body and soul . . .

One of the best analogies I've heard on the subject is:

Our bodies are horses. Our souls are the riders.

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/07/our-bodies/10/>

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takinoshi (2008-03-08 08:32:45)

Allow me with all the respect to show you a picture. Imagine a car, an old fashion car. The car is our body, the horses are our emotion, our feelings. The driver is our mind, the brain. The passenger is the master, he gives the orders to the driver to drive the car to the right path. Unfortunately the driver most of the times is sleeping, and the horses riding wherever they want, most of the times out of the road. Or the master gives wrong directions to the driver with the same catastrophic results. It happens to all of us more

or less. The results are the same. The horses drive the car out of the road, and the car stays with one or two wheels less, and other damages. We are lucky if another traveller finds us, gives us a hand for repairs, gives us some supplies to continue our journey. The point is that the other time the driver or the master gets sleep, we can't rely on other travelers' help because our horses may drop us in a place that nobody can find us. This is an very old picture of what we are. Thanks, you have a great blog, keep sharing :)

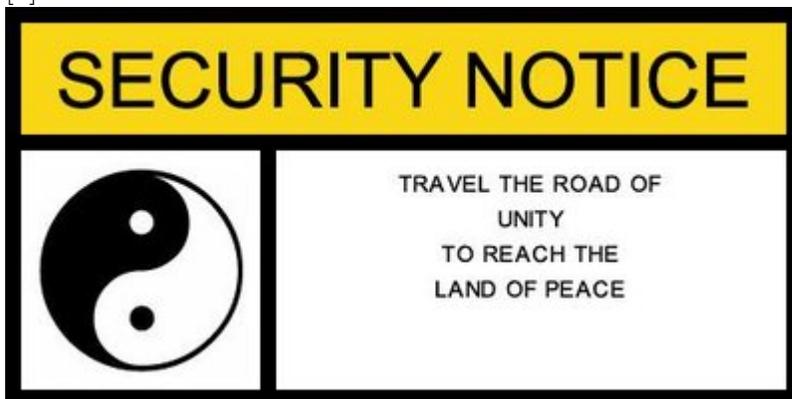
amzolt (2008-03-08 16:28:12)  
Thanks you, Takinoshi ! Alex

### 1.1.6 Unity. . . (2008-03-07 15:44)



[1]

[2]



Gearing up...

Casting off fears...

Clinging to hope...

Here come the People,

After so many months of isolation...

Here comes my opportunity to

Practice my Faith !

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/07/unity/14/>

2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/07/unity/12/>

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### 1.1.7 Taking a Few Hits . . . (2008-03-07 23:46)



[1]

Had a friend blindside me today.

It means I have to take more responsibility, sooner than I'd imagined...

Working to forgive and forget.

Working to smooth my residential transition.

Working to rise above the warping effects of all these drugs I have to take...

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/07/16/15/>

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Sophia (2008-03-09 00:06:58)

I'm sorry that you had this misunderstanding with your friend. It seems you've taken a very mature stance about it and have reacted wisely. Your move will be over before you know it and then you can go hang out at the coffee shop with your dear mistress the laptop! That'll be a nice way to relax, and you definitely deserve it!

### 1.1.8 Forgive and Forget . . . (2008-03-08 18:10)



[1]

Oh!

To have my sensitivities *not* cause insensitivity toward others...

Oh!

To have others' insensitivities *not* cause oversensitivity in me...

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/08/forgive-and-forget/18/>

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Sophia (2008-03-09 00:04:16)

Hi Alex, I'm so glad to see you've started a personal blog, where your readers can come to learn more about —>YOU<—. I look forward to reading more. I just looked again at your family pics and this time around I saw a small but lovely photograph of you smiling. I think you should smile and take some more photographs of yourself doing such and post them to this blog. I loved to see your smile! I wish the photograph was bigger.

amzolt (2008-03-09 00:27:50)

Aw Shucks. Aw Shucks.. Aw Shucks...

Alexys Fairfield (2008-03-09 04:48:32)

Alex, Love your new home and new expressions. Love it! Keep it up.

Liara Covert (2008-03-09 09:45:37)

That photo is touching and so is your endearing story. To bring yourself up out of a challenging health situation is a way to inspire and encourage others as you also do the same for yourself. You may be interested in these blogs: <http://secondchancetolive.wordpress.com/> <http://healpain.blogspot.com/>

amzolt (2008-03-09 13:07:06)

Aw Shucks again, Alexys...

QuoteGuy (2008-03-15 23:58:40)

My girlfriend is going to melt when she sees this picture. Many blessings!

### 1.1.9 Edification . . . (2008-03-09 15:02)



[1]

Oh, *SO* grateful for the Uplifting Enlightenment of my E-Friends.

Massive proof to me that Soul Rules—never met them in person yet with them in Spirit . . .

With my body so wracked by the treatment to fight Hep C, I *work* to induge my soul in Seasons of Prayer.

I sent a prayer to Alexys Fairfield from a WebSite I'd discovered.

Not only was she grateful, she posted this:

”Sometimes we need to hear them. We need to see them. We need to read them. We need to feel them. We need to be them.

”They are prayers. Words written to heal our Souls. Words written with a golden pen to infuse a little light into our life.”

[2]Check out the Whole Post !

[3]

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/09/edification/attachment/20/>
2. <http://soulmeetsworld.com/2008/03/spinning-prayers.html>
3. <http://soulmeetsworld.com/2008/03/spinning-prayers.html>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-03-09 19:20:44)

Oh Alex, You are a prayer! Full of hope, faith and goodwill. Thanks.

### 1.1.10 Lemme Out ! (2008-03-09 20:08)



[1]

*Many aspects of Hep C treatment are positively insane !*

Took my Sunday shot to boost my bone marrow's production of red cells.

(Wednesday is another blood-boost shot plus the Interferon [ *Hey, Ma! Look at me shoot up !!* ])

See, the Ribavirin I take every day causes anemia.

Muscles always ache; bones do after a shot; crap is what I take; doc claims it's working. . .

Since the exit's behind me, I'm just gonna back my way outta this noisome necessity !

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/09/lemme-out/22/>

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Liara Covert (2008-03-10 01:35:24)

Any substance you ingest to supposedly bring balance to one part of your body will naturally bring disequilibrium to some other area. Trying to control leads to ruin. Its a difficult lesson for human beings to learn. You can allow your life to unfold differently. I recommend you read or listen to "Change Your Thoughts, Change Your life—Living the Wisdom of the Tao" by Wayne Dyer.

Liara Covert (2008-03-10 04:04:51)

To clarify, I didn't mean to imply that prayer alone would be everyone's choice. Stories exist of people who have been diagnosed with cancer and who have survived without traditional medical treatment. Combinations of approaches can be desirable too. The important thing is to recognize what works best for you in your heart and mind. Being aware of options is itself a blessing. Opening yourself to choose is how you nurture yourself and deliberately decide to notice things about yourself you had missed before.

Suzie (2008-03-10 12:29:00)

Hi Alex. (I hope it's OK for me to call you Alex, I have read many of your comments on Sophia's blog.) I am sorry to hear about your physical challenges. I take the health of my body for granted at this point. I am just beginning, I believe, to bring some awareness to that part of my being, (it really does feel separate to me). Thank you for sharing your thoughts and feelings.

amzolt (2008-03-10 12:56:03)

Dear Suzie, Yes, body and soul can feel quite separate—especially when one or both are under stress. Still the Soul-as-Rider needs the Body-as-Horse to traverse the Field of Life... Plus, calling me "Alex" is cool !

### 1.1.11 Emergencies . . . (2008-03-10 01:52)



[1]

Some loving folks have tried to help me by recommending various spiritual or psychological "cures".

If the barn's already on fire, try to save the horses first, then the barn.

If you can plan ahead and install a fire supression system, more power to ya !

I had a deadly virus infect my liver. By the time I found out it was there, the horses were dead.

The treatment may be unbalancing me and causing massive suffering but the fire will not spread to the main house...

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/10/emergencies/24/>

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Liara Covert (2008-03-10 03:13:26)

No matter what happens, you can always assume everything happens for reasons from which we're meant to learn. Deciding conditions draw your attention to the way you think and lead your life, can be cathartic and meaningful.

1.1.12 In spite of all the drugs . . . (2008-03-10 11:43)



[1]

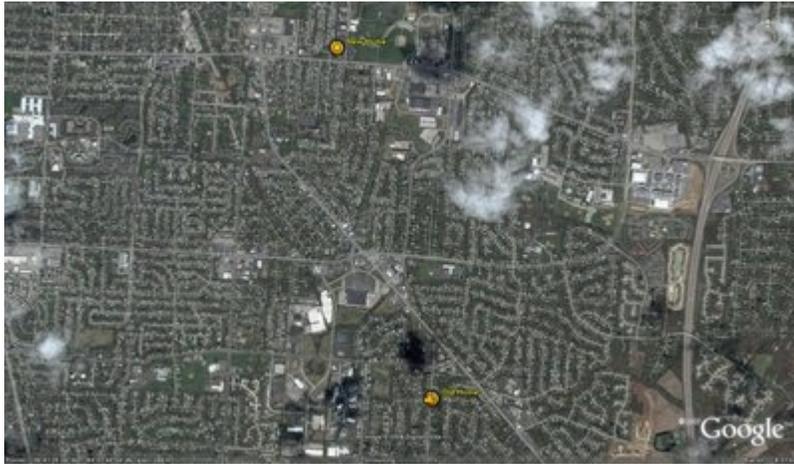
O God, my God! I beg of Thee by the ocean of Thy healing, and by the splendors of the Daystar of Thy grace, and by Thy Name through which Thou didst subdue Thy servants, and by the pervasive power of Thy most exalted Word and the potency of Thy most august Pen, and by Thy mercy that hath preceded the creation of all who are in heaven and on earth, to purge me with the waters of Thy bounty from every affliction and disorder, and from all weakness and feebleness. Thou seest, O my Lord, Thy suppliant waiting at the door of Thy bounty, and him who hath set his hopes on Thee clinging to the cord of Thy generosity. Deny him not, I beseech Thee, the things he seeketh from the ocean of Thy grace and the Daystar of Thy loving-kindness. Powerful art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. There is none other God save Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.

- Bahá'u'lláh

(Compilations, *Bahá'i Prayers*, p. 84)

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/10/in-spite-of-all-the-drugs/26/>

### 1.1.13 Moving . . . (2008-03-10 22:26)



[1]

Tomorrow is my day to pack (not too many possessions).

Wednesday, I pay up the first month's rent.

Thursday, I move from the yellow marker at the bottom of the map to the yellow marker at the top of the map.

A short, easy move for space and time.

Exciting since I've been so isolated for nine months and I'll be hanging out in my new coffee house working on my laptop.

Anxiety-inducing because I'll be on the Hep C drugs till the end of April and they help make exciting things anxiety-inducing.

Fact is, it could take from two to six months for my body to rid itself of the drugs.

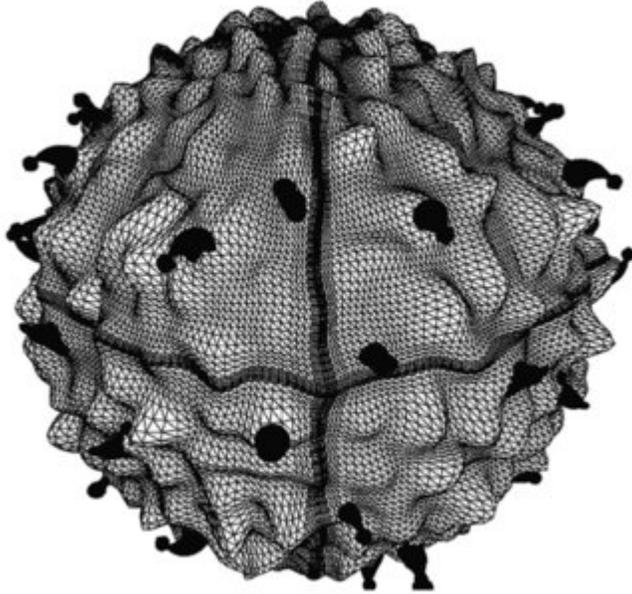
I'll be taking Whole Food Supplements as my first step toward better health...

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/10/moving/attachment/31/>

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### 1.1.14 Slow Growth Seen in Hepatitis C Market (2008-03-11 16:01)

[1]



[2]

[3]"Jefferies Sees Slower Than Expected Growth in the Hepatitis C Drug Market"

That image is a model of one of the little buggers that infected my liver.

The link below the image is to an article that, basically, looks ahead to new drug mechanisms for treating Hep C.

As too many people used to say way too often: "It's all good".

However, being what we, the sufferers, call a "Dragon Killer", I'm aware of the \$100,000 cost for current treatment [ I'm a Vet and "lucky" the government is paying that...].

The company that makes one of the main drugs makes a large enough profit to maintain a 24/7 hot line staffed with nurses.

I don't wish the treatment I'm going through on future Dragon Killers and truly hope better regimens are found.

But...

With the Weird State of Mind induced by the drugs I take, a "Slow Growth Seen in Hepatitis C Market" could be remedied by "[4]CDC: Hepatitis C in Nev. could be 'tip of iceberg'":

"The city of Las Vegas shut down the Endoscopy Center of Southern Nevada last Friday after state health officials determined that six patients had contracted hepatitis C because of unsafe practices,

including clinic staff reusing syringes and vials. Nevada health officials are trying to contact about 40,000 patients who received anesthesia by injection at the clinic between March 2004 and Jan. 11 of this year to urge them to get tested for hepatitis C, hepatitis B and HIV.”

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/11/slow-growth-seen-in-hepatitis-c-market/attachment/33/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/11/slow-growth-seen-in-hepatitis-c-market/attachment/33/>
3. [http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/080228/sector\\_snap\\_hepatitis\\_c.html?.v=1](http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/080228/sector_snap_hepatitis_c.html?.v=1)
4. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-03-03-hepatitis-nevada\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-03-03-hepatitis-nevada_N.htm)

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Liara Covert (2008-03-13 05:58:24)

Its useful to realize you experience what you think about. To focus on disease invites it to stay. As an alternative, its meaningful to feel grateful for your healing. Train your mind to visualize what it feels like to be fully healed. Concentrate on meditation exercises. You will be amazed by the positive effects of this approach.

Enoch Strollo (2008-05-23 19:34:59)

I stumbled across your blog and was glad I did. I am sure you are currently tracking the NOW increase in products pending release for treatment of HCV, These protease inhibitors are showing promise in late stage trials and could be added to current therapies to help patients achieve a sustained virological response faster, and in greater numbers.

### **1.1.15 What’s the point? (2008-03-13 22:26)**

[1]



Someone recently asked me what I thought the point of my writing is.

Here was my response to them:

Suffice it to say that I believe in Spirit over Matter and in One God Who gives us all we have.

I try to reflect those beliefs in my three blogs and in my books.

The fact remains that my liver was infected with a deadly virus and I'm doing the treatment for that. I'm also trying to portray what it's like to suffer through the Hep C treatment and look ahead to better days...

Some of my humor is "dark" and I'm aware the drugs do warp things a bit.

I "caught" the virus because, for far too many years, I was not close to God... But, now that I have it, I can't just think or pray it away. God is Merciful but is also Ultimate Justice.

I'm "paying" for a loose lifestyle. Some would call it burning off Karma...

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/13/whats-the-point/35/>

Brandi Magill (2008-03-21 20:52:10)

”The only opinion about your dreams that really counts is yours. The negative comments of others merely reflect their limitations, not yours” Cynthia Kersey

isabella mori (2008-04-22 21:06:06)

alexander, i love how you use your images.

### 1.1.16 Primitive Urges . . . (2008-03-14 18:27)

[1]



[2]

All moved in and stalking my new neighborhood . . .

Really beat up physically—four block walks are a real chore—but I’m starting to imagine how it’ll feel when the drugs are all purged . . .

I may be old and battered but that just proves I can survive !

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/14/38/attachment/37/>

2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/14/38/attachment/37/>

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Liara Covert (2008-03-15 06:54:03)

Attitude is the key to evolving into who you really are.

### 1.1.17 4th Down and Goal . . . (2008-03-15 18:25)

[1]



So close to the end of this hellacious drug treatment. Third day of carrying my computer to the coffee house—4/10s of a mile, one way—and I ache in places I never even *had* before... Can't stop pushing this old body. Got to surge through the pain... Gotta score this one !

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/15/4th-down-and-goal/39/>

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1.1.18 Being a Man . . . (2008-03-16 15:42)

[1]



[2]

My good friend, [3]Brandi Magill, inspired me greatly with her blog post—such inspiration that I must post this poem !

[4]

[5]If

If you can keep your head when all about you

Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;

If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,

But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,

Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,

Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,

And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;  
If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with triumph and disaster  
And treat those two imposters just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;  
If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breath a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";  
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;

If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute

With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -

- Rudyard Kipling

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/16/being-a-man/42/>

2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/16/being-a-man/42/>

3. <http://trueoptimalhealth.blogspot.com/2008/03/do-as-i-do.html>

4. <http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/2008/03/15/if-rudyard-kipling/>

5. <http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/2008/03/15/if-rudyard-kipling/>

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omnizient (2008-03-18 09:10:43)

One of the classics! Great to read it here! Thanks! As is famously said: Let GO! and let GOD be! Happy Accelerated Healing!

Brandi Magill (2008-03-21 20:47:45)

You are a sweet heart Alex, you too inspire me as I have often told you! You are a great man, full of wisdom, full of life...I can't wait for your body to be healed the way your heart has been! I am pleased to have the chance to witness your recovery and to see you move on to great things, I know you will!!!

Alexander M Zoltai (2008-03-22 00:15:09)

Oh, Brandi... Aw, Shucks...

### 1.1.19 Postus Interruptus (2008-03-19 15:42)

[1]



*My reason for not posting as much lately:* **Scope out the environment of that image up there. You'll have some idea of how I've been feeling. Now, just add Pain.**

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/19/postus-interruptus/44/>

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Brandi Magill (2008-03-21 21:06:31)

You CAN DO IT! Wish you could hear my accent, but you get the point!

Brandi Magill (2008-03-21 21:07:59)

Hope this weekend brings you relief, I'm here if you need a shoulder: )

### 1.1.20 How Ya Feelin' ? (2008-03-21 23:57)

[1]



Now, don't take this post as a resumption of daily blogging. . . Gonna take a bit of healing to get back to that. I may be just a month and nine days from stopping the ingestion and injection of what I call *abusive* drugs, but, like I told my psychiatrist at the VA today: Imagine someone ripping out your fingernails; one... two... three... four . . . They notice you're not feeling well, *at all*, and say, "Hey, we're only doing one hand and there's only one finger to go." Yeah, *right*. Stop cheering me up, o.k.?

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/21/47/attachment/46/>

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**1.1.21** "...not among men." (2008-03-22 13:17)

[1]



[2]

Just *had* to post this:

[3]Green Mountain

[4]You ask me why I dwell in the green mountain;

I smile and make no reply for my heart is free of care.

As the peach-blossom flows down stream and is gone into the unknown,

I have a world apart that is not among men.

Li Po

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/22/50/attachment/49/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/22/50/attachment/49/>
3. <http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/2008/03/20/green-mountain-li-po/>
4. <http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/2008/03/20/green-mountain-li-po/>

QuoteGuy (2008-03-24 01:52:36)

Hi Alexander, Great post. It reminds me to "go with the flow." I will have want for nothing if I am totally non-resistant to what the Universe has for me...just "as the peach-blossom flows down stream..." Thanks again for the reminder. Blessings! Quoteguy(Dexter)

rainforestrobin (2008-04-05 19:06:08)

This post made me tear up. Bless you for bringing it into my life like a living reminder, a reflection of all things dear to me. It spoke as an old friend. I lived several years of my life in the wild, away from the world of man. The photo...the simple profound poem by Li Po...and my heart said, "Yes, I know this place, like old friend, my peace, my soul, my reason for living." You touched my life today. Thank you.

amzolt (2008-04-05 19:21:08)

Dear rainforestrobin, I'm very pleased my effort gave you soul-peace ! Alex

### 1.1.22 Reality . . . (2008-03-24 17:13)

[1]



[2]

I've mentioned my various pains here and I'll be **so** happy when I can trade them for different pains. Hepatitis C treatment is *No Fun* but the induction of submission and resignation can be profound .

. . .

Spiritual Quote of the Day:

The Sun of Reality is one Sun but it has different dawning-places, just as the phenomenal sun is one although it appears at various points of the horizon. During the time of spring the luminary of the physical world rises far to the north of the equinoctial; in summer it dawns midway and in winter it appears in the most southerly point of its zodiacal journey. These day springs or dawning-points

differ widely but the sun is ever the same sun whether it be the phenomenal or spiritual luminary.

Souls who focus their vision upon the Sun of Reality will be the recipients of light no matter from what point it rises, but those who are fettered by adoration of the dawning-point are deprived when it appears in a different station upon the spiritual horizon.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith*, p. 255)

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/24/reality/52/>

2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/24/reality/52/>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-03-27 22:08:10)

Alex, You have so much light. Brighter than the sun. :D

Elizabeth (2008-03-28 02:57:29)

Alex you are a wonderfull man so full of life and light when I feel down and my pain gets to be too much I read your blogs and it helps and I hope in turn this message helps you.

### 1.1.23 Who Am I ? (2008-03-28 15:46)

[1]



[2]

This blog is a response to some 'Net-wisdom and the request of a bloggin' buddy —> reveal more of my personal life.

For ten months, my personal life has been an unmitigated struggle with flu-like symptoms, nausea, muscle ache, bone ache, ultra dry skin, hair loss, exaggerated depressive tendencies, the potential to

rage at irritants, and anemia with its consequent fatigue—just a typical response to the drugs that treat Hepatitis C.

What helps me fly above this unequivocal crappiness is, first, my sense of spirituality and my willingness to use the pain and suffering to learn submission to the invincible Power of God.

Second are the Ginseng and vitamins I've been taking for ten months and the recent addition of the best whole-food nutritional supplement I can get . . .

You should be resolving at least a fuzzy image of what I'm like by now.

However, as my Supreme Spiritual Guide says, "...music [is] a ladder for your souls..."

Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 38

So, having my iTunes jacked into my ears is an important part of my spiritual therapeutics.

And, to reveal even more intimate knowledge about me:

[3]My all-time favorite song.

[4]My all-time favorite singer.

[5]My all-time favorite musical group !

Now, I do hope some of you will leave your comments about what all this says about me...

[6]

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/28/who-am-i/attachment/55/>

2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/28/who-am-i/attachment/55/>

3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1r2D4Pwn58>

4. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0K2Q59eT2Us>

5. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZY0xk0VeDs>

6. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/03/28/who-am-i/attachment/55/>

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Elizabeth (2008-03-29 22:45:17)

Wow I'm honored to be comment of the week. I feel your pain as I suffer from RA, fibromylgia, and lessening bone mass in my spine I know the pain and the fog of medications, and the soothing calm of my IPOD .

amzolt (2008-03-31 14:21:38)

Elizabeth, A poem for you from me...

Fellow Suffer, We sail on wings; Wings of loving submission to God's Will. We soar above; Above mere physical challenges. We float toward Higher Goals.

Brandi Magill (2008-03-31 17:22:37)

Thank you for sharing your soul with us Alex, you are truly an inspiration to many

Eddie (2008-04-03 04:28:32)

Hello, A while back I started a blog that you were one of very few to respond to. Not only did you respond within a few of the first days of my opening the blog, but you continued to check back consistently. Despite the distance and virtual nature of our relationship, I kind of feel like you were there to encourage me in shaping my new online identity. Therefore, I thought I should tell you. My efforts have evolved into 2inspire.us. I hope you enjoy. Let me know what you think. Thanks again for your encouragement of my work and your service to mankind.

## 1.2 April

### 1.2.1 Chiaroscuro . . . (2008-04-03 21:32)

[1]



[2]

[3]

[4]”Chiaroscuro (Italian for clear-dark) is a term in art for a contrast between light and dark.”

Yesterday, I received the last month’s supply of the ”abusive” drugs I’ve been taking to eliminate the Hep C virus from my liver.

Today, I officially began a new business [ see the nutrition banner and the links below it ].

The Dark is diminishing, the Light is rising . . .

However, it's like I told a business associate today: It had to be God that got me through the last ten months. I know it because I know my own strength—mental, emotional, and physical—and it had to be God's strength . . .

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/04/03/chiaroscuro/attachment/58/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/04/03/chiaroscuro/attachment/58/>
3. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiaroscuro>
4. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiaroscuro>

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Susan (2008-04-05 18:39:12)

Light emerges from the shadows, creating transformation, movement, expansion, growth.. that may not have been possible without the presence of that darkness.

anzolt (2008-04-05 18:42:25)

"Light emerges....that may not have been possible without the presence of that darkness." Oh, so True !!!  
Alex

Judi Moran (2008-12-10 21:08:32)

Alex, The photo was so beautiful...one of yours?! And I'm so glad that you are returning to health, according to this post. Yes, God's strength and light are what get us through the dark times. Care, Jlo

anzolt (2008-12-10 21:12:12)

Judi, Not my picture but it sure spoke my heart... I wrote that post eight months ago and the virus is still not detectable—another test in 5 months... Slowly gaining my physical strength back—rapidly soaring to new spiritual heights...

Liara Covert (2009-04-18 16:59:58)

To know that you are loved, regardless of your perceived circumstances, this reality reframes everything in a positive light.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-18 17:12:04)

Yes, Liara, and God's love is the Most Positive Light there is...

## 1.2.2 "Good" and "Bad" (2008-04-05 18:12)



[1]  
Gotta dance 'cause I sure don't wanna cry...

I'm so happy I began my new business; I'm happy the medical treatments are almost finished; hell, I'm happy I was able to walk here to the coffee shop.

'Course, that happiness doesn't stop the suffering from the treatments.

If you've read a number of posts in this blog, you may be tempted to say: "Why so much negative stuff?"

Well...

It's "bad" that I got Hep C and the side effects from the drugs are "bad" BUT the submission to God's Will and the resignation to His Power I've been learning are "good". Sometimes, it takes quite a crisis to teach me a lesson.

"Know ye that the embodiment of liberty and its symbol is the animal. That which beseemeth man is submission unto such restraints as will protect him from his own ignorance, and guard him against the harm of the mischief-maker. Liberty causeth man to overstep the bounds of propriety, and to infringe on the dignity of his station."

[ Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 335 ]

Also, I feel, since I'm going through the treatment and understand the threat of the virus, that not sharing information would be criminal:

[2]"It is suspected that there are, at present, more than 5 million people in the United States that are infected with Hepatitis C, and perhaps as many as 200 million around the world. This makes it one of the greatest public health threats faced in this century, and perhaps one of the greatest threats to be faced in the next century. Without rapid intervention to contain the spread of the disease, the death rate from hepatitis C will surpass that from AIDS by the turn of the century and will only get worse." [3]

If you're concerned about Hep C (for yourself or others) a wonderful and supportive space is the [4]alt.support.hepatitis-c group !

I'm gonna dance on outta here...

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/music16.gif>
2. <http://www.epidemic.org/theFacts/theEpidemic/>
3. <https://amzuri.wordpress.com/wp-admin/post-new.php>
4. <http://groups.google.com/group/alt.support.hepatitis-c>

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Robin Easton (2008-04-07 01:40:52)

You are a brave and amazing soul. You are not only courageous in your healing, but courageous in your honesty. I applaud you from my heart. You are in my prayers.

Brandi Magill (2008-04-09 03:20:12)

Isn't it funny how long we try and hide our past and then one day we wake up and ask why. These days people want to know that they are not alone and not too many people are willing to forgo their ego for the fear that someone will find out that they truly are human. Your honesty means so much to so many people Alex. I applaud you as well keep touching peoples lives and you will be rewarded greatly!

Sophia (2008-04-11 04:11:03)

Hi Alex, I'm sorry I haven't stopped by for a while. I don't want to give any excuses because I might sound pathetic. :) I'm happy to hear your treatments are almost complete. It's good of you to care about others as you have shown by warning others of the dangers of Hep-C. But then I'm not surprised that you care about others, either. :)

The Battle's Over ! &laquo; My Evolution (2008-04-30 13:32:45)

[...] In a previous post, I pointed to the growing epidemic nature of Hepatitis C. [...]

### 1.2.3 Beaten Paths (2008-04-07 19:29)



[1]

I've tried many beaten paths and could recommend one or two. Still, the real adventure and growth come from walking off the path.

Flowers don't grow well on beaten paths; neither do mysteries and heart-felt dreams.

The real secret for deep growth is to walk off the path into the night . . .

Then, there is The Path.

”Verily, the wayfarer who journeyeth unto God, unto the Crimson Pillar in the snow-white path, will never reach unto his heavenly goal unless he abandoneth all that men possess: ’And if he feareth not God, God will make him to fear all things; whereas all things fear him who feareth God.”

Bahá’u’lláh, The Four Valleys, p. 58

Seems we’re given great Gifts when we submit to God . . .

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/trees-421.jpg>

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Susan (2008-04-10 02:46:07)

Beautiful photo,reminds me of the park I walk in. Tonight I was teaching a class at a location I was not familiar with, I took the GPS, rather than mapquesting it, and left an hour ahead of the scheduled time, giving me an extra 35 minutes, should I still manage to get lost or get delayed in traffic.. This was a perfect example of staying on the beaten path way to long when I should have followed my intuition. After taking me on a route that was unnecessary, then taking me to an exit that didn’t exist any more, then putting me on a toll road that took me way out of the way, then having the GPS fall and go mute, then as I am fumbling while driving I accidently hit the language button and it turned to French, and now I am due to be teaching and 20 minutes away from my destination according to the toll taker... so I took a deep breath, yelled out a few choice words, then dialed the phone.. I managed to finally get someone at the location where I was going, and they directed me in by phone. Whew! I hit my hand against my head and thought, how many more experiences will I need to have this week before I truly get it? Each error tonight was a result of resisting the little voice in the backroom that knew, while putting more faith in something outside of myself (GPS)...this has been happening non stop this past week...thank you for the reminder...”just step off the path into the night”... Actually now that I think about it a bit more, even the GPS was giving me the answer by the way it was reacting. No coincidences.

amzolt (2008-04-10 21:50:49)

Wonderfully apt comment ! So many poor folk are in spaces like you relate and never even imagine there’s another way... Alex

#### 1.2.4 Naked in Eden (2008-04-09 18:33)

[1]



Robin Easton: Author . Speaker . Environmentalist . Musician . Adventurer

I've done, as a man, many things "only" women do: cry, have deep concerns, love flowers, hug trees, and leave my ego behind to relate to children...

Robin Easton, as a woman, does many things "only" men do...

"Ere long the days shall come when the men addressing the women, shall say: 'Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye! Verily ye are worthy of every gift. Verily ye deserve to adorn your heads with the crown of everlasting glory, because in sciences and arts, in virtues and perfections ye shall become equal to man, and as regards tenderness of heart and the abundance of mercy and sympathy ye are superior'."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 182

[2]Here's the link to her blog.

Check out her Immense Spirit !!!

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/maroon-top-7-headshot-2-re.jpg>

2. <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/>

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Susan (2008-04-10 02:24:05)

Love both of your sites, so glad I have found you both...

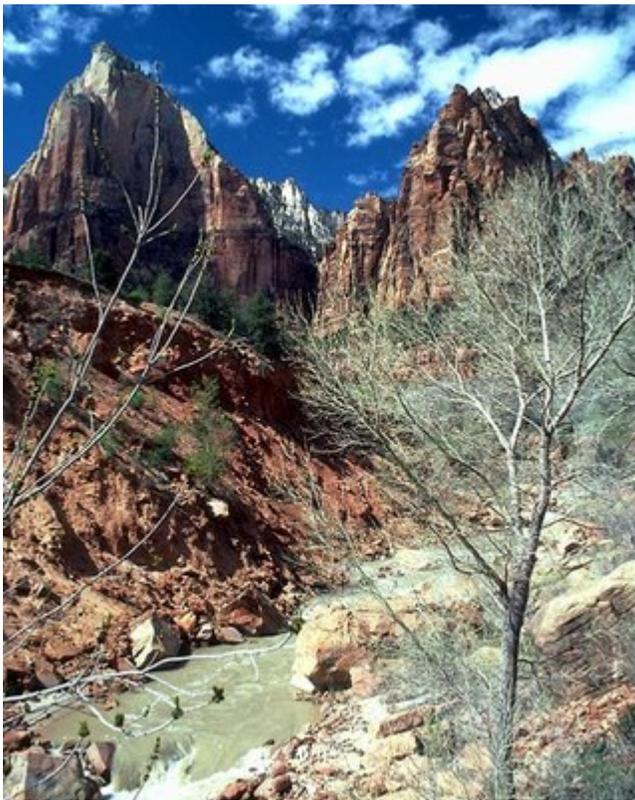
rainforestrobin (2008-04-18 20:25:42)

I am moved way beyond words. I AM tears. What a kind kind soul you are. I am honored to be touched by such a generous thought-filled heart.

THE FEARLESS BLOG (2008-04-22 16:54:21)

In the short time I have interacted with Robin, I have grown quite fond of her and her blog. I feel blessed that God has brought such a special person into my life, even if it is only "virtual." ;)

### 1.2.5 Gem-Like Poem (2008-04-10 22:18)



[1]

Had a really nice trip over this poem from [2]alt . support . hepatitis-c:

"Life is mostly froth and bubble,  
Two things stand like stone,  
KINDNESS in another's trouble,  
COURAGE in your own."  
—Adam Lindsay Gordon—

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/landscape-037.jpg>
2. <http://groups.google.com/group/alt.support.hepatitis-c/topics?hl=en>

Sophia (2008-04-11 04:17:46)

Life is sometimes like bubbles! It seems all the problems bubble up to the surface. Well, the good news is, bubbles pop. Hi Alex. Hope you've been doing well. I wanted to get caught-up with you as I haven't been making my rounds in the blog world. I've been neglectful but I've been keeping you in my thoughts. I'm happy to hear that the end of your treatments is near. Maybe this will open up some new opportunities for you.

RainforestRobin (2008-04-11 14:25:27)

Simple and true. Right to the heart of it. Has so many meanings on as many levels. I like this. Thank you. Really enjoy your photos as well.

Alexys Fairchild (2008-04-11 18:24:51)

Lovely quote. Also want to wish you a HAPPY BIRTHDAY! :D Many HAPPY RETURNS.

amzolt (2008-04-11 18:52:56)

Sophia, dear ! Next time someone asks me the meaning of life, I'll say Bubbles & Froth... ;-) As far as Opportunities, I'm really having to push myself HARD but I've just begun a new business (see the nutrition banner in the upper right corner.....

amzolt (2008-04-11 18:53:56)

Robin, I spent almost as much time selecting photos as writing the blog. Alex

amzolt (2008-04-11 18:54:47)

Alexys, B-Day ! Hmmm... Gonna start subtracting years.

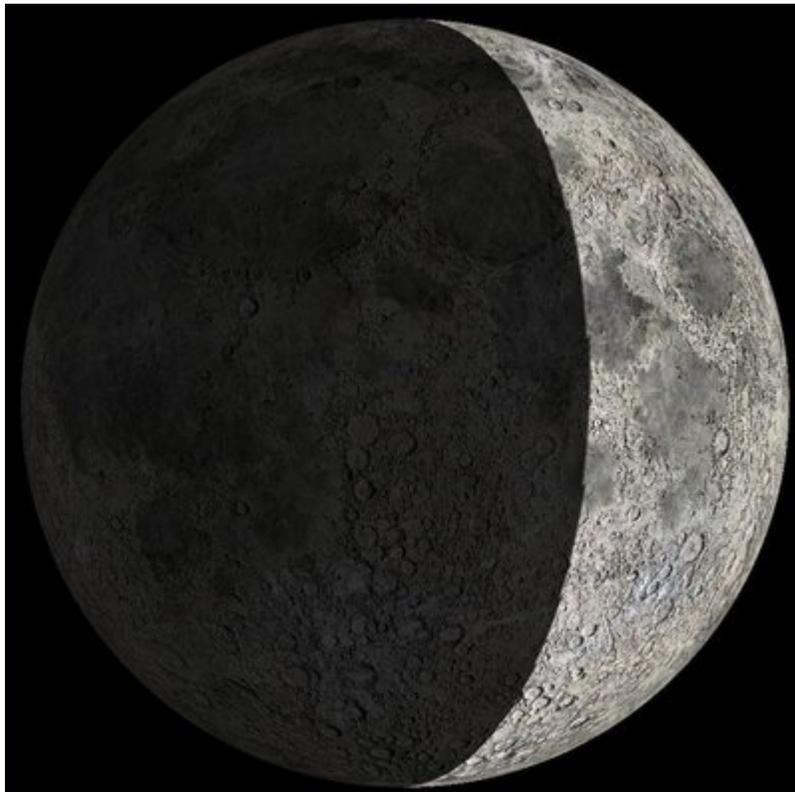
Robert (2008-04-13 12:19:37)

Thanks for this poem. So simple, so beautiful, so true. Brought tears into my eyes in a second. I have no idea why, I guess I just immediately felt connected to all the people out there. To all of YOU out there.

Brandi Magill (2008-04-13 15:12:39)

Happy Belated Alex: ) I love this poem, it is so true and has so many different meanings depending on the person reading it. Thank you for sharing

## 1.2.6 Feeling A Bit Spacey (2008-04-11 20:41)



[1]

Along with being a poet, I've been a Space Cadet—all things outer and inner Space have held me enthralled for time past remembering . . .

During my medical treatment and due to a small military pension, I bought this computer I'm using, a whole bunch of iTunes, and some very large binoculars with a tripod.

Currently, my view of the moon looks quite a bit like that image up there. However, the enchantment of the light directly entering the eye is flatly missing!

If the sky weren't so amazingly and lusciously gorgeous, I doubt anyone would have spent the time and invested the patience it takes to pry into the Dark Mother's secrets . . .

Here are a few links to some great ( and Free ) astronomical software:

[2]Celestia

[3]Sky Charts

[4]World Wind

1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/capture\\_11042008\\_1609091.jpg](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/capture_11042008_1609091.jpg)
2. <http://www.shatters.net/celestia/>
3. <http://www.stargazing.net/astropc/>
4. <http://worldwind.arc.nasa.gov/>

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Robin Easton (2008-04-16 03:19:47)

I love the things you post. Yes, the moon and stars are amazing just through good binoculars. In far northern Maine, on a clear winter night, I used to rug all up and then lay in the snow, flat on my back, and I could see millions and millions of stars. I loved it because it was so rural there were no lights. Such infinite possibilities. I always went away changed and feeling like I had touched the Divine. I did. Thank you.

### 1.2.7 Regularizing... (2008-04-16 01:52)



[1]

Woo-Hoo !

Two more weeks of taking drugs, then a month or so to flush them out of my system, then I wait for 6 months to see if the virus actually went away—BUT—in two weeks, I stop taking these abusive drugs !!!

Today was my birthday and I unexpectedly gave myself a present I didn't think I'd have for two more weeks—Internet in my apartment. It was really good to see how hard two men worked today to assure I had the Internet Today ! Not many cool service people left out there . . .

So, with the promise of more regular posting, I'll leave you with the words that go with that image up there:

Rejuvenation

Restoration

Renewal

Re-Creation

Refreshment

Mending

And, this prayer:

O God! Refresh and gladden my spirit. Purify my heart. Illumine my powers. I lay all my affairs in Thy hand. Thou art my Guide and my Refuge. I will no longer be sorrowful and grieved; I will be a happy and joyful being. O God! I will no longer be full of anxiety, nor will I let trouble harass me. I will not dwell on the unpleasant things of life.

O God! Thou art more friend to me than I am to myself. I dedicate myself to Thee, O Lord.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

(Compilations, Bahá'í Prayers, p. 150)

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/waterscape-022.jpg>

## 1.2.8 "The spiritually learned...." (2008-04-17 18:16)



[1]

"Reach high, for stars lie hidden in your soul.

Dream deep, for every dream precedes the goal."

[2]Pamela Vaull Starr

I mentioned in a previous post that I'm a confirmed Space Cadet. The Dark Mother of the sky is rich in mystery, wonder, and (importantly) inspiration !

I've written a book ([3]free download here) that sets out my opinions on the sky as life-inspiration . . .

Primitive peoples placed (or, discovered ?) their gods in the sky.

Modern people speculate about life on other worlds.

That title up there, "The spiritually learned....", means, to me, the folks who practice compassion.

Here's the full quote:

The spiritually learned are lamps of guidance among the nations, and stars of good fortune shining from the horizons of humankind. They are fountains of life for such as lie in the death of ignorance and unawareness, and clear springs of perfections for those who thirst and wander in the wasteland of their defects and errors....They are skilled physicians for the ailing body of the world, they are the sure antidote to the poison that has corrupted human society. It is they who are the strong

citadel guarding humanity, and the impregnable sanctuary for the sorely distressed, the anxious and tormented, victims of ignorance.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 33

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/hubble-m45.jpg>
2. <http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=280905>
3. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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Robin Easton (2008-04-18 15:42:37)

Wow, what post. Love the mention of compassion. The older I get the more important it becomes in my life. Will have to check out your ebooks. Loved the quote especially these lines: "...It is they who are the strong citadel guarding humanity, and the impregnable sanctuary for the sorely distressed,..." Thank heaven for that.

### 1.2.9 Ouch... Aha ! (2008-04-19 01:51)



[1]

As I approach the end of the drug treatment for Hepatitis C, I feel pretty much like that image—fact is, I think it's perfect.

The main parts of my body, mind, and feelings are sharp and prickly like that desert plant.

My soul and spiritual capacity are, naturally, the lovely flowers—growing right up out of the pain producers.

The following quote is by a magnificent man who passed away in 1921. He spent 40 years in prison

for his spiritual beliefs...

"Freedom is not a matter of place. It is a condition. I was thankful for the prison, and the lack of liberty was very pleasing to me, for those days were passed in the path of service, under the utmost difficulties and trials, bearing fruits and results.

"Unless one accepts dire vicissitudes, he will not attain. To me prison is freedom, troubles rest me, death is life, and to be despised is honour. Therefore, I was happy all that time in prison. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed release, for that is the greater prison. When this release takes place, then one cannot be outwardly imprisoned. When they put my feet in stocks, I would say to the guard, 'You cannot imprison me, for here I have light and air and bread and water. There will come a time when my body will be in the ground, and I shall have neither light nor air nor food nor water, but even then I shall not be imprisoned.' The afflictions which come to humanity sometimes tend to centre the consciousness upon the limitations, and this is a veritable prison. Release comes by making of the will a Door through which the confirmations of the Spirit come....

"The confirmations of the Spirit are all those powers and gifts which some are born with (and which men sometimes call genius), but for which others have to strive with infinite pains. They come to that man or woman who accepts his life with radiant acquiescence."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 120

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/plants-45.jpg>

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Amarendra (2008-04-19 11:28:43)

From "acceptance" to discovering "powers and gifts". Fantastic path! Thanks for sharing.

Tomas (2008-04-19 16:08:33)

Thanks for sharing. Can I address you as my best friend?

amzolt (2008-04-19 16:27:42)

Tomas, I'd be honored to be your best friend ! I added your lovely art blog to my RSS Reader so I can be inspired, often !! Alex

RainforestRobin (2008-04-21 03:56:03)

This moved me to tears. I also am moved by Tomas' question re: being your best friend and your open and loving reply. God, sometimes human beings touch me so profoundly.

amzolt (2008-04-21 04:24:27)

Robin, Tomas' art work is totally unique !!! <http://candleday.wordpress.com/> [1] Alex

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>

## 1.2.10 Food . . . (2008-04-19 23:14)

If you like this short post, you might also appreciate the more recent one:

[1]Food, Crisis, and the Human Spirit.



[2]

Just barely getting back my appetite for Real Food (the Hep C drugs really mess with stomachs and feelings for "comfort" foods).

Learning a lot about Whole and Raw Foods.

Some days I'm completely surprised I still have a living body considering the decades of self-imposed abuse.

I must have a soul holding me up . . .

'Course, there's food and there's Food:

"O God! ....Prepare for us the Food of Love! Give to us the Food of Knowledge! Bestow upon us the Food of Heavenly Illumination!"

The Compilation of Compilations vol. I, p. 429

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/03/12/food-crisis-and-the-human-spirit/>

2. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/food-083.jpg>

anzolt (2008-04-20 15:32:10)

Just checkin' out my new blog comment signature..... [1]Alexander M Zoltai

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>

Brandi Magill (2008-04-20 16:59:53)

Gotta love Real Food. You have my saliva glands going now, I need to run to the store and pick up some more fruits and veggies for the week! It's amazing what adding some Real Food to your diet can do to both your mind and body...Talk to you soon Alex

RainforestRobin (2008-04-21 03:23:19)

Oh wow! Yes, real LIVE food is SO wonderful. I eat a lot of raw food. Lot of greens. Grow a tiny garden here in the desert in summer just so I can have tons of fresh food. Most people would think me crazy when I wake in the AM and push huge handfuls of mixed greens into my blender, add water and drink it down, but then I LOVE greens and all kinds of raw and whole foods. Good for you. I proud of you. Especially after what you've been through with Hep-C medications.

Anna (2008-04-25 09:48:30)

I would much rather eat veggies and fruit. Also; I am interested in organic and raw foods. It's just finding something that is appealing to the palate. And since I struggle with the eating somewhat. Though yes good whole foods. I know it's been rough on those Hep-C meds.

### 1.2.11 Navigating Life . . . (2008-04-20 23:55)



[1]

Having been born on the southern shore of a Great Lake (Erie) and aboard ships in the Navy, I'm clearly aware of the supreme challenge of steering when the ship is dead in the water.

Some sail must be hoisted (spiritual acceptance) or the engine must turn (will power) to go this way or that.

Maps are good for life-navigation, too ( I like the spiritual ones, myself ).

So, your sails are hoisted and ya gotta map...

So...?

Where ya goin' ?

Hmmm...

It's been said, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there..."

Gotta make those choices and take responsibility for wherever you end up on life's ocean.

Today's Quote:

"Therefore, mere knowledge is not sufficient for complete human attainment. The teachings of the Holy Books need a heavenly power and divine potency to carry them out....volition is necessary..."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 249

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/boats-ships-58.jpg>

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RainforestRobin (2008-04-21 03:00:37)

I cannot get over how you convey such powerful thoughts in so few words. It is a real talent you have. As you know it takes me pages and then I whittle down and whittle down, and down and down.... :) I love this whole post and particularly like your line: "Gotta make those choices and take responsibility for wherever you end up on life's ocean." Thank you! I absolutely agree. I thought about that and how when I was younger it was sometimes hard to take responsibility for my choices (or lack of choices – which is still a choice), I wanted to blame the world, especially when I ended up somewhere that was painful or not quite right, etc. But for a variety of reasons I did learn quite young to take full responsibility for my life. I learned that every time I blamed Life, the world, someone else...I lost myself. I gave away my power or inner strength...or soul. What I grew to like about taking responsibility was the sense of complete freedom it gave me. I was at peace. Learning to love myself no matter what I did or didn't do helped me to embrace ALL of me (my humanity), even my mistakes (if there is such thing). Thank you so much my friend. Good post.

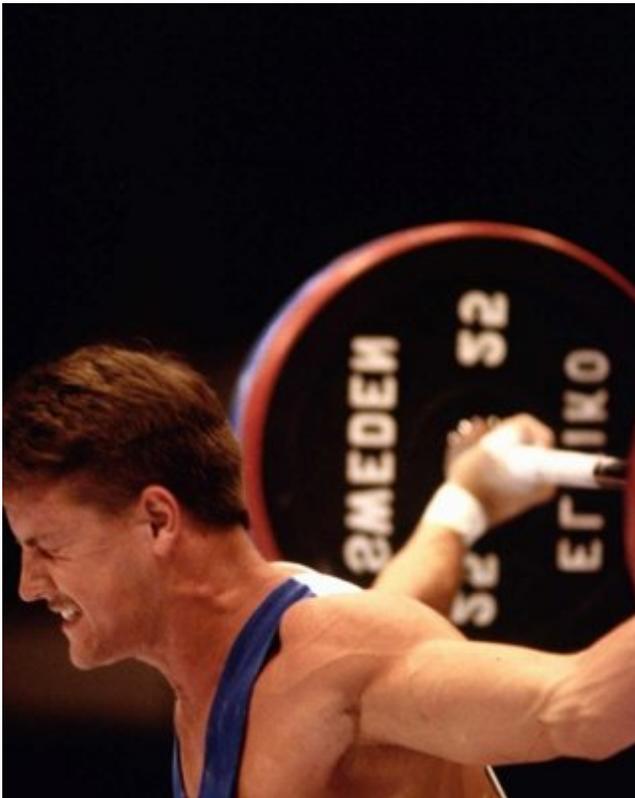
anzolt (2008-04-21 03:11:12)

My, my Robin... Thank you for gracing this blog with such a perceptive and understanding comment !

[1] Alex

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>

### 1.2.12 Strength . . . (2008-04-21 06:51)



[1]

Just got an e-mail from my very good friend, Catherine, out in California.

She had this to say:

"Physical strength is measured by what we can carry;  
Spiritual by what we can bear."

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/sports-0331.jpg>

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### 1.2.13 How "Smart" Is Your Blog? (2008-04-22 04:50)

Click this banner to go to the site...

[1] ❌

The Blog Readability Test – What level of education is required to understand your blog?

❌

<http://amzuri.wordpress.com> CHECK READABILITY NOW ❌

Note: This tool also works on myspace profiles, livejournals, facebook, and most websites

❌

Copy and Paste the HTML code below to display the above badge on your site

```
<a href="http://www.criticsrant.com/bb/reading_level.aspx"></a><p><small><a href="http://www.criticsrant.com">TV Reviews</a></small></p>
```

1. [http://www.criticsrant.com/bb/reading\\_level.aspx](http://www.criticsrant.com/bb/reading_level.aspx)

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THE FEARLESS BLOG (2008-04-22 13:41:21)

Interesting....my readability level..."genius?" I don't know about that.

kelly (2009-03-16 10:39:08)

Say...is there anyway I can write to you in private? I need to tell you something important! Thanks my friend!

## 1.2.14 Write Me A Story ! (2008-04-23 04:19)



[1]  
Humans are story-telling creatures.

Answering, "What did you do at work today?", is story-telling just as much as a thousand-page novel is.

I spent quite a bit of time in my picture files to find the image up there.

It "spoke" to me...

What does it say to you?

Write me a story in the comments, o.k.?

Anything from an entertaining caption to a full-blown work of literature !

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/kids-stuff-562.jpg>

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Brandi Magill (2008-04-23 12:36:47)

It reminds me of my kids. To me it says, "We didn't do it!"

amzolt (2008-04-23 14:09:02)

Ah ! To hope we never dampen their enthusiasm as we attempt to teach them survival skills... Alex

Stacey Huston (2008-04-24 00:02:38)

A look of guilt quietly takes form in the deep brown eyes, as I snap this photograph, the little girl bursts into tears at the loss of her hard won icecream cone. Great site, thought I would chime in here lol.. Fantastic photograph. Can't wait to hear the true story..

amzolt (2008-04-24 00:17:12)

Cool, Stacey ! I can't wait to hear the true story, too. It would be way weird if the photographer saw this blog and actually did reveal the circumstances, eh? Alex

### 1.2.15 Business . . . (as usual?) (2008-04-24 05:07)



[1]

I've recently begun a business that makes me an [2]entrepreneur. The linked article from Wikipedia says, "Entrepreneurs often have strong beliefs about a market opportunity and organize their resources effectively to accomplish an outcome that changes existing interactions."

"Marketing? And, you call yourself a spiritual person, Mr. Zoltai?"

Well...

[3]Howard Rheingold said, "Markets are as old as the crossroads."

And, tonight, in a business training seminar, [4]Brett Rademacher said, "Life is a moving market."

Nothing happens without someone selling something.

”What?”

Consider this:

Did you ever pursue someone for a date?

Did you have the date?

You must have sold them on the idea . . .

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/around-the-world-161.jpg>
  2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entrepreneur>
  3. <http://www.rheingold.com/>
  4. <http://www.iflashomatic.com/about.html>
- 

### 1.2.16 **Aaarrrrrgh !!!** (2008-04-25 15:53)



[1]

image from: [2]The Fun Times Guide to Dogs

Customer Service Hell is engulfing my drive and motivation !

I'm ultimately hopeful about the whole situation but, for my mental health, I'm gonna do a little rant.

A company has overdrafted my bank account for \$100.

This happened after 4 hours on the phone with three of their reps and the assurance I could delete my bank from their sources of money and let them hit my credit card.

Nope. It appears they'd rather not get their money but make me lose mine !!!

I've told some folks that this bitter tail end of the drug treatments for Hep C is like football's 4th down and inches.

Just yesterday, I told someone that I was the running back, up in the air, and falling for the TD.

Today, I'm deflated because the play was called back and the other team has the ball...

I've gotten up, bloodied and bemired, so many times in my life that folks think I'm impervious to the setbacks and pain.

Ha !

At least the pills for my chronic depression help a little...

Tired.

Beat Up.

Pissed.

Prayin' my ass off !

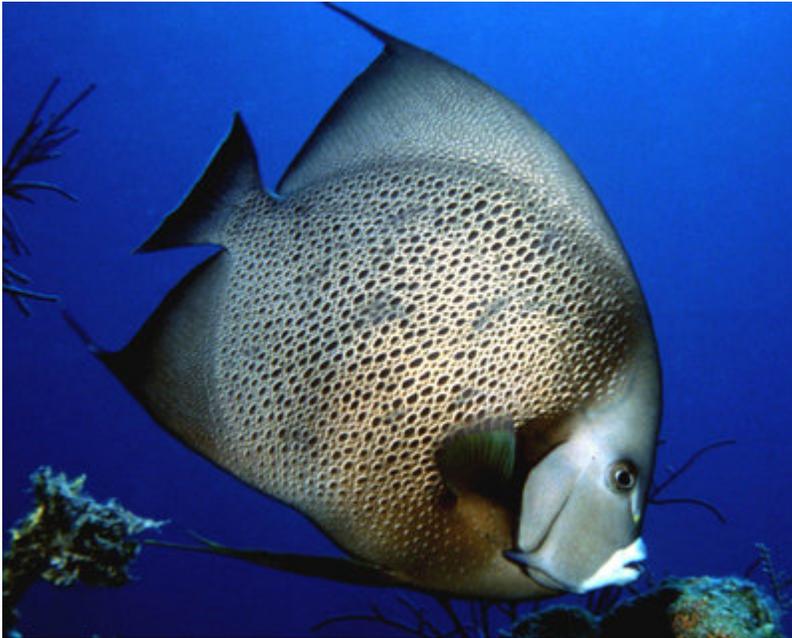
1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/mouthful-of-football.jpg>
2. [http://dogs.thefuntimesguide.com/2007/01/dog\\_football\\_toys\\_jerseys.php](http://dogs.thefuntimesguide.com/2007/01/dog_football_toys_jerseys.php)

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Aaron Wakling (2008-04-25 16:00:11)

Good Blog. I will continue reading it in the future. Nice layout too. Aaron Wakling

### 1.2.17 Materialism (2008-04-26 03:47)



[1]

Are the fish aware of the ocean?

Are we aware of the all-surrounding spiritual realm?

”The sea of materialism is at flood tide and all the nations of the world are immersed in it. It is my hope that the fish will rise to the surface, so that they may behold other wondrous aspects of creation; for the people are like unto the fish swimming in the deep—ignorant of the rest of the universe. May they be transformed into birds of the air and soar in the nether atmosphere! May they break all bonds of limitation, so that they can observe from the height the lordly processions of infinite creatures; they will see the blue heavens studded with luminous stars, rivers flowing with salubrious water, gardens bedecked with fragrant flowers, trees adorned with blossoms and fruits, birds singing songs of light, humanity ever striving forward, every atom of existence breathing life and force—the universe of God a wonderful theatre upon the stage of which every created thing plays its part.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 138

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/aquatic-33.jpg>

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Tomas (2008-04-27 06:52:40)

Thank you. Your peaceful post was like a sip of fresh air. The current way of human thought threatens indeed. The joy for being and the gratitude is replaced with grief over having less than the neighbor and thus the spiritual values appeared underfoot - made the world the blind and deaf for God’s love and His ask to share the sunbeam with all on the road.

## 1.2.18 Peopleizing (2008-04-26 04:03)

SuperSweetLifeWisdom

Peopleized by: [1]amzolt - Saturday, 26 April 2008

[2]SuperSweetLife

I've found a delightful social networking site where people interview other people about their blogs and/or their lives! Here's my first interview, with the owner of SuperSweetLife.

[3]amzolt: What makes you get up in the morning?

[4]SuperSweetLife: My alarm clock. And knowing that the daily responsibilities that I dread will soon be no more!

[5]amzolt: What makes you blog?

[6]SuperSweetLife: Being able to express myself when words don't always come so easy. Getting my thoughts and feelings on 'paper' and out into the world is liberating!

[7]amzolt: What will your degree be and why?

[8]SuperSweetLife: My degree will be in Counseling, with a credential to work in a school setting. I have always had a passion for working in a helping profession, but unfortunately I have recently learned that school settings are not the place for me. I will, however, continue to pursue human services work in the future.

[9]amzolt: Who designed you blog's graphics?

[10]SuperSweetLife: David Zemens, of [11]www.1955design.com

[12]amzolt: What will bring about global unity?

[13]SuperSweetLife: When people stop competing for power and money and realize that those things don't matter at all in the end.

[14]amzolt: What's your favorite ice cream flavor?

[15]SuperSweetLife: Vanilla fudge ripple AND mint chocolate chip

[16]amzolt: What inspires you the most?

[17]SuperSweetLife: Nature.

SuperSweetLife's Page: [18]www.supersweetlife.com Authors Page:  
[19]amzolt

powered by [20]Peopleized!

Visible links

1. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/)
2. [http://www.peopleized.com/index.php?option=com\\_comprofiler&task=userProfile&user=977&Itemid=186](http://www.peopleized.com/index.php?option=com_comprofiler&task=userProfile&user=977&Itemid=186)
3. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
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11. <http://www.1955design.com/>
12. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
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18. <http://www.supersweetlife.com/>
19. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
20. <http://www.peopleized.com/>

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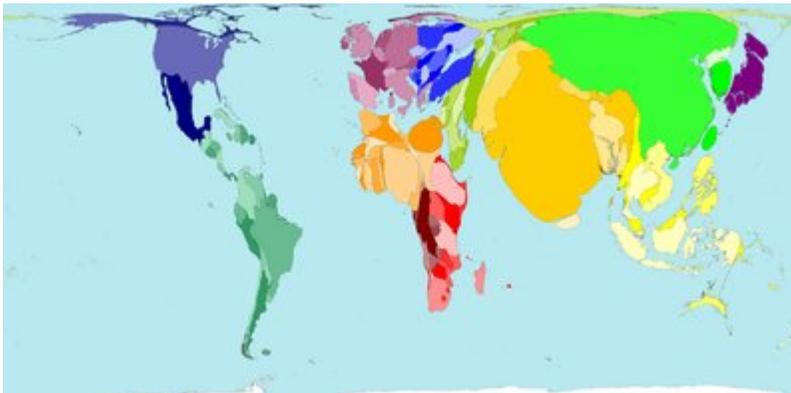
Niña (2008-04-26 12:05:06)  
Hmmm...interesting.:) Have a great day!

loveofhis (2008-04-26 16:27:16)  
That is awesome !

amzolt (2008-04-26 17:23:02)  
loveofthis, The site is awesome. It's the most human social networking site I've ever seen ! Alex

Brandi Magill (2008-04-27 13:06:24)  
That is really cool Alex. I will take a looksy tonight! Thanks for sharing.

### 1.2.19 Our Amazing World (2008-04-26 18:50)



[1]

[2]image credit

Yes, that's a map of the world but the shapes have been altered to show each country's relative population.

I found the [3]WorldMapper site by watching a video on one of my all-time favorite web sites: [4]TED Talks.

Here's a list of map categories you can explore (with nearly 600 maps):

\* Basic \* Movement \* Transport \* Food \* Goods\* Manufacturers\* Services\* Resource  
Fuel\* Production\* Work\* Income\* Wealth \* Poverty \* Housing\* Education\* Health  
Disease\* Disaster\* Death\* Destruction\* Violence\* Pollution\* Depletion\* Communication  
Exploitation\* Action\* Cause of Death\* Age of Death\* Religion

”Let not a man glory in that he loves his country, but that he loves his kind.’ All are of one family, one race; all are human beings. Differences as to the partition of lands should not be the cause of separation among the people.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, ’Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p. 55

”...all the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent. For none is self-sufficiency any longer possible, inasmuch as political ties unite all peoples and nations, and the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day. Hence the unity of all mankind can in this day be achieved. Verily this is none other but one of the wonders of this wondrous age, this glorious century. Of this past ages have been deprived, for this century —the century of light—hath been endowed with unique and unprecedented glory, power and illumination. Hence the miraculous unfolding of a fresh marvel every day. Eventually it will be seen how bright its candles will burn in the assemblage of man.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ’Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 31

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/2.png>
2. <http://www.worldmapper.org/>
3. <http://www.worldmapper.org/>
4. <http://www.ted.com/>

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## 1.2.20 New Interview (2008-04-27 14:07)

Anna’s Wisdom

Peopled by: [1]amzolt - Sunday, 27 April 2008

[2]flameoflife

Anna is a very special person. A poet who can break every rule while she’s creating new "rules". A soul-glowing friend who has the voice of an angel !

[3]amzolt: How long have you been writing?

[4]flameoflife: I have been writing since I was thirteen years old. At least that is when I began writing non-stop. I would say about eleven years total.

[5]amzolt: Is it mostly poetry?

[6]flameofflife: I am more comfortable with poetry. Though...I am working on a novel.

[7]amzolt: When were you first published and in what form?

[8]flameofflife: I was first published at the age of fourteen via a self publishing company. I would call it a vanity press which fortunately though at the time was offering a free publication for the duration of one month. The book was entitled Embraced and it was a paperback of poetry.

[9]amzolt: What makes you write?

[10]flameofflife: The flame that sparks the pen.

flameoflife's Page: [11]Anna's Site    Authors Page: [12]amzolt

powered by [13]Peopleized!

1. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/)
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11. <http://loveofhis.wordpress.com/>
12. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
13. <http://www.peopleized.com/>

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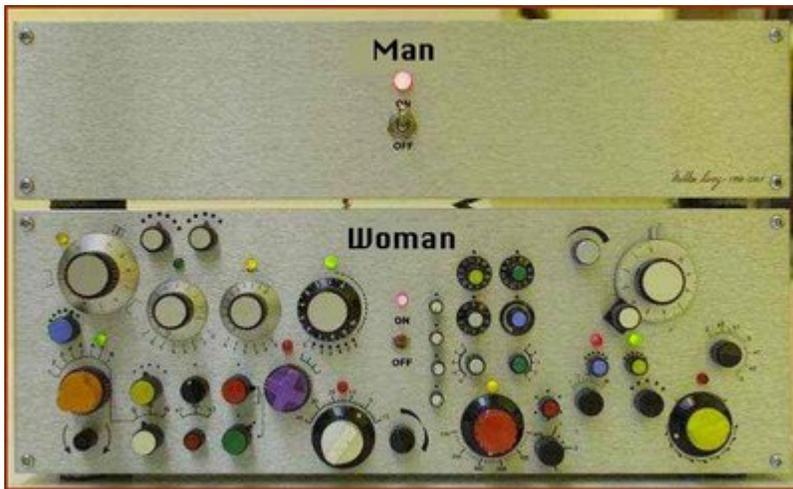
flameofflife (2008-04-28 19:30:11)  
Awwe ... thank you very much.

flameofflifebookhouse.org &raquo; Blog Archive &raquo; Interview With Alex &#8230; (2008-05-27 05:50:12)  
[...] Alex Interviews Yours Truly [...]

Flame of Life (2009-01-28 22:33:22)

[...] Page: flameofflife interviewed powered by Peopleized! Next Post [...]

### 1.2.21 One of the Basics of Life on Earth. . . (2008-04-28 15:13)



[1]

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/unknown3.jpg>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-04-28 23:06:35)

Alex, That is quite possibly the coolest photo I have even seen. And it speaks volumes. ;D

### 1.2.22 Just A Quote... (2008-04-29 03:48)



[1]

"O ye dear friends! The world is at war and the human race is in travail and mortal combat. The dark night of hate hath taken over, and the light of good faith is blotted out. The peoples and kindreds of the earth have sharpened their claws, and are hurling themselves one against the other. It is the very foundation of the human race that is being destroyed. It is thousands of households that are vagrant and dispossessed, and every year seeth thousands upon thousands of human beings weltering in their life-blood on dusty battlefields. The tents of life and joy are down. The generals practise their generalship, boasting of the blood they shed, competing one with the next in inciting to violence. 'With this sword,' saith one of them, 'I beheaded a people!' And another: 'I toppled a nation to the ground!' And yet another: 'I brought a government down!' On such things do men pride themselves, in such do they glory! Love—righteousness—these are everywhere censured, while despised are harmony, and devotion to the truth."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 1

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/sunset-sky-029.jpg>

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### 1.2.23 World Food Crisis (2008-04-29 14:35)

Google search:

[1]Enews 2.0

[2]Food prices are global challenge, says UN RTE.ie, Ireland - 3 hours ago ... hit by the crisis, and will double lending for agriculture in Africa over the next year to €515m. Rising food prices have hurt the growing mass of urban ... [3]UN and World Bank say to tackle food crisis Reuters [4]UN, World Bank to Coordinate Task Force Efforts in Food Crisis Deutsche Welle [5]UN chief orders task force to tackle food crisis AFP [6]Bloomberg - [7]Xinhua [8]all 487 news articles »

[9]Turkish Press

[10]IMF concerned about food crisis in Africa AFP - 1 hour ago "We are concerned about it because higher food prices (and) higher oil prices mean higher import bills, and it can slow down economic growth," the head of ... [11]IMF bid to help Africans on inflation Daily Times [12]all 35 news articles »

[13]Region's aid groups grappling with global food crisis Seattle Times, United States - 7 hours ago But only in the last few weeks have staffers, and much of the world, realized all the incidents were responses to a worldwide leap in food prices — and part ... [14]As Food Prices Soar, Mercy Corps Establishes Global Food Crisis Fund Reuters AlertNet [15]Mercy Corps creates fund to ease food crisis The Oregonian - OregonLive.com [16]Global Food Crisis Spurs Mercy Corps Action KOIN.com [17]PR Newswire (press release) [18]all 26 news articles »

[19]Washington Post

[20]Global Food Prices and Africa's Economic Famine Washington Post, United States - Apr 28, 2008 We're talking about the Post's Global Food Crisis series this morning. This is an important subject. I'll answer your questions as best I can. So fire away. ... [21]Food crisis translates to economic crisis United Press International [22]Where Every Meal Is a Sacrifice Washington Post [23]all 6 news articles »

[24]DigitalJournal.com

[25]"US, EU responsible for explosive food prices" Hindu, India - 9

hours ago Jean Ziegler held fuel policies pursued by the US and the EU to be main causes for the current worldwide food crisis. Last year the US 'Video: UN rapporteur talks about the global food crisis - 28 Apr 08'); [26]Video: UN rapporteur talks about the global food crisis - 28 Apr 08[27]UN Special Rapporteur Says Biofuel Production Criminal DigitalJournal.com [28]all 18 news articles »

[29]Javno.hr

[30]WTO deal seen having little impact on food prices Daily Times, Pakistan - 15 hours ago Some may conclude the message of the current crisis is they can no longer depend on imports and must improve food security by raising barriers to protect ... [31]Food crisis sparks role reversal in WTO AFP [32](UPDATE) UN meets on food crisis Inquirer.net [33]all 22 news articles »

[34]AFP

[35]UN meets on food crisis AFP - 20 hours ago - [36]Filter "Responding effectively to the impact of higher food prices must be a top priority for the global community," he said. But he criticised protectionist ...

[37]Boston Globe

[38]Economic Stresses, Biofuel Production Add to Food Crisis Pressures Voice of America - 23 hours ago By Mil Arcega The World Food Program warns that rising food prices could turn into a global crisis unless the world acts quickly. The UN food agency has ... [39]No Free Lunch Food, fuel and finance Inquirer.net [40]all 4 news articles »

[41]Cabinet to face looming crisis in food prices The Herald Eastern Cape, South Africa - 7 hours ago As far back as February, the NAMC warned that rising food prices were a threat to the country's household food security, and food inflation was a major ... [42]SA warned over food security Citizen [43]all 2 news articles »

[44]Voice of America

[45]UN Announces Food Crisis Task Force Voice of America - 28 minutes ago - [46]Filter By VOA News United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says he will head a task force to deal with the unprecedented rise in global food prices. ...

[47]Daily Star - Lebanon

[48]No simple cause - or easy cure - for rising food prices Daily Star - Lebanon, Lebanon - 18 hours ago - [49]Filter This example contradicts the wave of accusations that biofuel production is to blame for sparking the food price crisis.

[50]Vancouver Sun

[51]Fidel Castro warned of food crisis a year ago Reuters South Africa, South Africa - 20 hours ago Violent protests ignited by rising food prices toppled Haiti's government earlier this month. Increased demand from rapidly developing nations led by China, ... [52]Finding the right shade of green Ottawa Citizen [53]all 19 news articles »

- Visible links
1. [http://www.eneews20.com/news\\_UN\\_and\\_World\\_Bank\\_to\\_Set\\_up\\_a\\_Task\\_Force\\_to\\_Tackle\\_Food\\_Crisis\\_07566.html](http://www.eneews20.com/news_UN_and_World_Bank_to_Set_up_a_Task_Force_to_Tackle_Food_Crisis_07566.html)
  2. <http://www.rte.ie/news/2008/0429/food.html>
  3. [http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSSP192236.\\_CH\\_.2400](http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSSP192236._CH_.2400)
  4. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,3300141,00.html>
  5. <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hoi2sZ15pKwscBX9It0lqm51vH3A>
  6. <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=a93psqCxUq64&refer=home>
  7. [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-04/29/content\\_8075646.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-04/29/content_8075646.htm)
  8. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1153777554>
  9. <http://www.turkishpress.com/news.asp?id=228511>
  10. <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5gDYpqVRzpCwBlgasSPVoetUwVfuQ>
  11. [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C04%5C27%5Cstory\\_27-4-2008\\_pg5\\_40](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C04%5C27%5Cstory_27-4-2008_pg5_40)
  12. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1152809600>
  13. [http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2004379920\\_foodaid29m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2004379920_foodaid29m.html)
  14. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/289513/120940281398.htm>
  15. <http://www.oregonlive.com/news/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/news/1209432327239000.xml&coll=7>
  16. [http://www.koin.com/news/local/story.aspx?content\\_id=0b573720-f721-4fb4-b4c1-df757bcfa137](http://www.koin.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=0b573720-f721-4fb4-b4c1-df757bcfa137)
  17. <http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/04-28-2008/0004800989&EDATE=>
  18. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154605751>

19. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/04/26/ST2008042602333.html?hpid=artslot>
20. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2008/04/25/DI2008042502546.html>
21. [http://www.upi.com/NewsTrack/Top\\_News/2008/04/28/food\\_crisis\\_translates\\_to\\_economic\\_crisis/3128/](http://www.upi.com/NewsTrack/Top_News/2008/04/28/food_crisis_translates_to_economic_crisis/3128/)
22. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/04/27/ST2008042702198.html?hpid=topnews>
23. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154472070>
24. <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/253953>
25. <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/000200804291001.htm>
26. [file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/v-4-1\\_1154768303', 'n'\)](file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/v-4-1_1154768303', 'n'));
27. <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/253953>
28. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154768303>
29. <http://www.javno.com/en/world/clanak.php?id=144217>
30. [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C04%5C29%5Cstory\\_29-4-2008\\_pg5\\_45](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C04%5C29%5Cstory_29-4-2008_pg5_45)
31. <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5iLz7S7KXp1-XH2FRnDGsVnm1JoaQ>
32. <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/world/view/20080428-133247/UPDATE-UN-meets-on-food-crisis>
33. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154564717>
34. [http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5h2nbXGz6xz6yinhWtEB1c-0\\_b3-FA](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5h2nbXGz6xz6yinhWtEB1c-0_b3-FA)
35. [http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5h2nbXGz6xz6yinhWtEB1c-0\\_b3-FA](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5h2nbXGz6xz6yinhWtEB1c-0_b3-FA)
36. [file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/void\(0\);](file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/void(0);)
37. [http://www.boston.com/news/world/asia/articles/2008/04/27/price\\_of\\_rice\\_takes\\_toll\\_in\\_asian\\_slums](http://www.boston.com/news/world/asia/articles/2008/04/27/price_of_rice_takes_toll_in_asian_slums)
38. <http://www.voanews.com/english/2008-04-28-voa26.cfm>
39. <http://business.inquirer.net/money/columns/view/20080427-133052/Food-fuel-and-finance>
40. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154702899>
41. [http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/biz/01\\_29042008.htm](http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/biz/01_29042008.htm)
42. <http://www.citizen.co.za/index/News/671981.page>
43. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154799439>
44. <http://voanews.com/english/2008-04-29-voa23.cfm>
45. <http://voanews.com/english/2008-04-29-voa23.cfm>
46. [file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/void\(0\);](file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/void(0);)
47. [http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition\\_id=10&categ\\_id=3&article\\_id=91513](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=10&categ_id=3&article_id=91513)
48. [http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition\\_id=10&categ\\_id=3&article\\_id=91513](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=10&categ_id=3&article_id=91513)
49. [file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/void\(0\);](file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/void(0);)
50. [http://www.canada.com/vancouver\\_sun/news/story.html?id=9376ea7a-ab20-41d5-9b14-bb204e0b7122](http://www.canada.com/vancouver_sun/news/story.html?id=9376ea7a-ab20-41d5-9b14-bb204e0b7122)
51. <http://africa.reuters.com/world/news/usnN28483283.html>
52. <http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/letters/story.html?id=8f0ef3b1-da04-4287-9127-a816bdf4f5d5>
53. <http://news.google.com/news?sourceid=gmail&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&resnum=1&ct=title&ncl=1154800563>

## 1.2.24 The Battle's Over ! (2008-04-30 13:32)



[1]

[2]In a previous post, I pointed to the growing epidemic nature of Hepatitis C.

I've posted here many times concerning my responses to the side effects of what I've called the "abusive" drugs I took for the treatment... Yes, "took".

Today is the first day, after eleven months, that I will not take them! I must have tests at six months and a year to see if the virus is really gone but my immediate battle is over !!

Now, to lick my wounds by working to rid my body of the traces of the drugs (2 - 6 months)...

I want to add a remark I left on the Group, [3][alt.support.hepatitis.c](http://alt.support.hepatitis.c), and the response from one of the most compassionate and knowledgeable members of that Group:

Hey, Fellow Dragon-Slayers, On Wednesday the 30th of April I cease the intake (48 weeks–type 1a) of the "abusive" drugs. I'm well aware I have three most important dates after that—results of the blood draw on that day and the 6 month and one year checks. Still, I've been doing some blogging about my experience (including the growing epidemic nature of Hep C) and I want to celebrate the 30th in the blog. You can definitely help. Tell the world how you felt when you stopped taking the drugs. God knows what my percentage is for complete SVR or a "cure"; still, I'm overjoyed about cessation of the drugs!!! Will you help me make my blog shimmer and glow that day?!? Alex

Well, I dunno about "shimmer and glow", but here's what I remember...The last shot of Peg, and a week later, the last handful of Ribavirin, left me feeling elated, relieved - and anxious as heck. I had even mentioned here that - after the full 48 weeks and total compliance to the regimen - I was leery of stopping the meds. I had been clear from the first VL test (at 12 weeks) through to the end, but being a glb with a lot of strikes against success, even though I was still anemic as hell throughout therapy, it felt "safer" to just keep taking the drugs, to keep on keeping the virus at bay. Of course, I stopped on schedule. It would have been crazy to keep going ;- ) And I was very lucky in the SVR Sweepstakes...and still am.

Cheers

/greyhackles

[4]



1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/wild-0021.jpg>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/04/05/good-and-bad/>
3. <http://groups.google.com/group/alt.support.hepatitis-c/topics>
4. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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Brandi Magill (2008-05-01 12:12:32)

I am so happy for you Alex. I am sure you will make a speedy recovery and be on that basketball court in no time! Talk to you soon Brandi

Anna (2008-05-03 07:05:09)

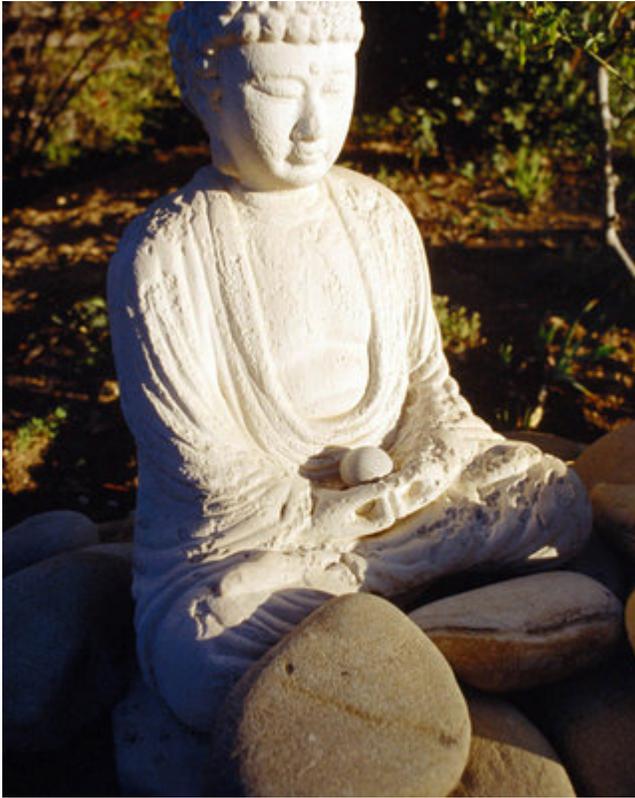
You have come a long ways. I hear it has been a long journey. You have the marks to prove it. It has been quite a stint. Yet; there is a healing release. Flowing over as a balm into your body. The battle is over. Yes; the battle has been won dear Alex !

Noon (2008-08-11 12:44:32)

Thanks! Really funny. Big ups!

## 1.3 May

### 1.3.1 Spirituality vs? Religion (2008-05-01 18:22)



[1]

I was raised by two ministers—mom and dad—and my two sisters became ministers.

It was painfully confusing as I grew up separating the authority of family from the Authority of God.

During the 60s and 70s, new brands of "spirituality" were sprouting like weeds. I tried a couple but didn't find my Faith 'till my 42nd year of life.

Wikipedia has an intelligent discussion of [2]Religion/Spirituality, in which it's said: "An important distinction exists between spirituality in religion and spirituality as opposed to religion."

I truly wish more people could make this distinction . . .

In the document [3]One Common Faith, this sentiment is found: "...the time has come when religious leadership must face honestly and without further evasion the implications of the truth that God is one and that, beyond all diversity of cultural expression and human interpretation, religion is likewise one. It was intimations of this truth that originally inspired the interfaith movement and that have sustained it through the vicissitudes of the past one hundred years. Far from challenging the validity of any of the great revealed faiths, the principle has the capacity to ensure their continuing relevance.

In order to exert its influence, however, recognition of this reality must operate at the heart of religious discourse...”

And, to round out the post with some supremely spiritual thoughts:

”Know, O thou possessors of insight, that true spirituality is like unto a lake of clear water which reflects the divine. Of such was the spirituality of Jesus Christ. There is another kind which is like a mirage, seeming to be spiritual when it is not. That which is truly spiritual must light the path to God, and must result in deeds. We cannot believe the call to be spiritual when there is no result. Spirit is reality, and when the spirit in each of us seeks to join itself with the Great Reality, it must in turn give life.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, ’Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p. 107

[4] 

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/religion-130.jpg>
2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirituality>
3. <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/bic/OCF/>
4. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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Lira Covert (2008-10-07 03:01:44)

As human beings evolve to enjoy every interaction, they can learn to patiently explore ideas without judgment. Your own vibration is your life. Nothing other than that is ever true or enduring. To know what you do not desire and to distinguish that from what you do desire teaches you how to sort through feelings about anything. To sense any feeling other than love about a person, concept or thing is a sign for you to learn to understand why you are untrue to yourself. To be true is to love and appreciate all as is. You need not adopt what you do not believe, and yet, you need not criticize or generate negative emotion either.

amzolt (2008-10-07 03:26:17)

Lira, Can you go a little deeper into your response to this post?

Lira Covert (2008-10-07 06:38:59)

Some people judge ’spirituality’ and ’religion’ with intent to criticize or compare. If you believe you exist to serve others and to learn perpetually, then you may also believe certain questions raised about the two are purposely left unanswered so you are free to come to your own conclusions. Silver Birch offers this ’food’ for thought: ”Theologians have made out of religion a great mystery, a superstructure of words and doctrines that bring doubt and perplexity and confusion, and yet, the essence of all religion and the desire of all life is expressed in one word: Service. He who strives to forget self and to serve is expressing the Great Spirit.”

amzolt (2008-10-07 13:56:28)

Lira, Oh, my! Oh, yes!! So True!!! Service, Service, Service...

### 1.3.2 Innovation (2008-05-02 14:32)



[1]

There's an old psychological technique to help a person free-up their thinking. It's simple and seems, at first blush, totally silly and useless.

First: Look around you.

Second: Name, out loud, what you see.

Third: Make sure each name is Not what the object is usually called. (ex., looking at a hat, you say elephant.)

The effort to misname things loosens your creativity and promotes innovation.

[2]Here's a site that has many tools to aid innovation.

[3]In a recent Fortune interview, Larry Page (co-founder of Google), commenting on innovation, said, "My argument is that people aren't thinking that way.

"Instead, it's sort of like 'We are captives of the world, and whatever happens, happens.' That's not the case at all. It really matters whether people are working on generating clean energy or improving transportation or making the Internet work better and all those things. And small groups of people can have a really huge impact."

And, from an article entitled, Relationship Between Disarmament and Development, the critical importance of innovative thinking and action are stressed:

"We witness around us an accelerating two-fold process of disintegration and integration. There is a breakdown of exhausted and inappropriate ideals, of archaic institutions and ideas, of empty customs

and beliefs, while at the same time there is a burgeoning of new ideas, fresh discoveries in science, insights into human behavior, innovations in the management of human affairs. These perturbations and crises could give birth to new hope and promise and must be seen as opportunities for greater measures of creative human effort. The real enemies are not other nation-states, but ignorance, prejudice, greed, poverty, and disease. Such adversaries are far more worthy of our human and natural resources.”

Baha’i International Community, 1987 Aug 24, Relationship Between Disarmament and Development

[4]



1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/kids-stuff-28.jpg>
2. <http://www.innovationtools.com/>
3. [http://money.cnn.com/2008/04/29/magazines/fortune/larry\\_page\\_change\\_the\\_world.fortune/](http://money.cnn.com/2008/04/29/magazines/fortune/larry_page_change_the_world.fortune/)
4. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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### 1.3.3 What Makes You Feel Like This ? (2008-05-03 14:02)



[1]

What makes me feel like this ?

Thinking about my daughter and grandson and certain prayers.

So...

What makes you feel like this ?

[2]



1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/recreation-08.jpg>
2. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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Jayleigh (2008-05-03 16:26:31)

Conquering my fears. Knowing that it all came out OK when I was afraid it wouldn't.

the fearless blog (2008-05-04 03:59:54)

Being up in the mountains of NC! Watching my sons, my husband and my students succeed! Seeing my mother happy! When I succeed! A beautiful red glowing sunset!

rainforestrobin (2008-05-04 04:17:12)

Being alive. REALLY ALIVE. FULLY PRESENT ALIVE. Waking up each day and, no matter how I feel, realizing that this is another day that I am alive on planet Earth. It is a "gift", not a "granted". I might not be here tomorrow....hopefully I will be, but if I treat each day as an utter miracle, like something I've never experienced before....a bit like being given vision for the first time in my life, seeing colors and shapes would seem an incomprehensible miracle. So treating as many days as I possibly can like a gift makes me feel like this picture. As long as I can remember why I am here and what is important then I feel like this picture. Thank you for reminding me of this Alex.

### 1.3.4 A Journalist from Darfur... {reprint} (2008-05-03 14:30)



[1]

This is Awatif Ahmed Isshag.

She's been a journalist for the last ten years.

She lives in Darfur.

When events like the ongoing crisis in Darfur come to the attention of relatively secure people like me (resident of the USA, not starving, and not seeing death and destruction every day), we feel particularly helpless.

It's going to take more than the combined efforts of all the aid organizations there are to help people in that country [not to mention the horrible happenings in other countries].

It's going to take a massive change of heart—massive change for each individual who could help in any way and massive change for every government and political person who has any influence on secular happenings—a thorough spiritual transformation.

Can you hear it?

The world is crying, screaming for change...

[2]The Dynamist Blog carried a short article about Awatif Ahmed Isshag. Here's just a taste:

“Nearly a decade ago, at 14, Isshag started publishing a handwritten community newsletter about local events, arts and religion. Once a month she'd paste decorated pages to a large piece of wood and hang it from a tree outside her family's home for passersby to read.

“Her grass-roots periodical has become the closest thing that El Fasher, capital of North Darfur state, has to a hometown newspaper. More than 100 people a day stop to check out her latest installments, some walking several miles from nearby displacement camps....

“Isshag complained that despite international attention, the suffering of Darfur remained vastly underreported inside Sudan. There are no television stations in the area, and most newspapers operate under government control or are based hundreds of miles away in Khartoum.

“‘The local media don't cover the issue of Darfur,’ she said. ‘We hear about it when one child dies in Iraq, but we hear nothing when 50 children die’ in Darfur.”

She is, in a way, blogging without a computer.

If you need some background on the bigger picture, the BBC News has [3]Darfur: Little hope five years on and Wikipedia has [4]Darfur Conflict.

A more complete story on Awatif Ahmed Isshag is archived at [5]the Los Angeles Times. Here's a telling detail from that article:

“An advocate for women's education, Isshag credits her parents for allowing her to avoid being tied down by housework and pursue her interest in writing.

“But she occasionally uses her columns to lecture other women on pet peeves. A recent ‘For Women Only’ article lambasted those who took off their shoes on the bus. ‘It’s wrong,’ she said with a laugh.”

[6]



1. [http://bp3.blogger.com/\\_d0xDpj3wQFc/Resrt\\_NHQqI/AAAAAAAAAZI/OCBwAYqecDU/s1600-h/Awatif+Ahmed+Issshag.jpg](http://bp3.blogger.com/_d0xDpj3wQFc/Resrt_NHQqI/AAAAAAAAAZI/OCBwAYqecDU/s1600-h/Awatif+Ahmed+Issshag.jpg)
2. <http://www.dynamist.com/weblog/archives/002480.html>
3. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7263663.stm>
4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darfur\\_conflict](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darfur_conflict)
5. <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/latimes/access/1226654731.html?dids=1226654731:1226654731&FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:FT&type=current&date=Mar+4%2C+2007&author=Edmund+Sanders&pub=Los+Angeles+Times&edition=&startpage=A.6&desc=THE+WORLD%3B+A+Darfur+tree+is+her+newsstand%3B+People+walk+miles+to+read+the+articles+posted+by+24-year-old+reporter+Awatif+Ahmed+Issshag>
6. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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RainforestRobin (2008-05-03 22:58:45)

It was SO heartening to see you at my site this afternoon after my long absence. Your words touched me. I must read this book you speak so often and fondly of. The quote you left reminded me much of Father Thomas Berry...now in his ninties. He too believes Earth is the soul of us. Thank you for knowing this. Also, this post I just read about Awatif Ahmed Isshag brought tears to my eyes, as it should. I applaud you for your words: "Can you hear it? The world is crying, screaming for change..." It reminded me of a line I wrote in my book: "The world cries out like a frightened child in the dark of night." Yes, I will take time to check more thoroughly the links in this post. I can't tell you how proud I am of you for sharing this vitally important message. Thank you Alex. Thank you.

amzolt (2008-05-04 00:44:23)

Ah, Robin ! You're so heavenly !! Especially for a nature lover... ;-)

### 1.3.5 We're Killing Our Future . . . (2008-05-04 16:48)



[1]image credit

Just a few quotes gleaned from a web search (all linked to their source sites):

[2]"Nayef Abu Snaima says his 14-year-old cousin Jihad had been sitting on the edge of an olive grove talking animatedly to him about what he would do when he grew up when he was killed instantly by an Israeli shell."

[3]"After all, who among us is not moved by endless images of dead babies sheathed in blood, body parts hanging by a shred of gristle, with the blank stare of eternity glazing their eyes? What 'civilized'" person secure in their happy world of languid summer days, mall festivals brimming with second-rate food and third rate crafts, concerts on the lawn with wine and traveling minstrels, could not want this distant tribal slaughter to stop, stop, stop this very instant?"

[4]"...the critical element remains the very low value put upon Afghan civilian lives by U.S. military planners and the political elite, as clearly revealed by U.S. willingness to bomb heavily populated regions."

[5]"...the number of dead ... caused by the U.N sanctions that started with Bush I, and continued under President Bill Clinton, whose Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, once described the effects of the sanctions on Iraq's children as 'worth it.'"

And, from a site that helps doctors make better decisions:

[6]"All societies attach a different range of meanings to war than to natural disasters, and questions of societal recognition, reparation, and justice are generally central. Most modern conflict has been grounded in the use of terror to control and silence whole populations. Those abusing power typically refuse to acknowledge their dead victims, as if they had never existed and were mere wraiths in the memories of those left behind. This denial, and the impunity of those who maintain it, must be challenged if survivors are to make sense of their losses and the social fabric is to mend. For the names and fate of the dead to be properly lodged in the public record of their

times also illuminate the costs that may flow from the philosophies and practices of the Western led world order, ones which health workers should be in a position to influence.”

[7]



1. <http://www.rampurple.com/blog/2007/09/15/never-again/>
2. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/gaza-the-children-killed-in-a-war-the-world-doesnt-want-to-know-about-416597.html>
3. <http://americandigest.org/mt-archives/006433.php>
4. [http://www.cursor.org/stories/civilian\\_deaths.htm](http://www.cursor.org/stories/civilian_deaths.htm)
5. <http://www.alternet.org/waroniraq/27353/>
6. <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/311/7003/495?ijkey=1LWv2rm0eoHVE>
7. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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Prof. Quincy Adams Wagstaff (2008-05-04 17:17:56)

Congratulations. That's about as far out of context that I have ever been quoted. Carry on!

RainforestRobin (2008-05-06 19:09:34)

My God, I am weeping over this. The contrast between blown apart little bodies and festivals at the mall shamed me in a good and right way. Not that I frequent malls but nonetheless living in America many of us are sheltered from the world's dark horrors of war. I am speechless and again feel the importance of helping in any way we can. Even if it's just helping someone we know who is suffering. Or the millions of children in this country who are starving. In some way we each must get involved. We must give. We must help. Many Americans tend to think the next wide screen TV, the latest model SUV, the largest multi million dollar home, etc. is their whole world. It's not. Others starve, freeze, suffer unimaginably and die. Thank you for this very "real" post.

amzolt (2008-05-06 21:00:15)

Yes, Robin, more compassion backed up by action...

### 1.3.6 What's The Meaning of Life ? (2008-05-05 15:47)



[1]

Here are quotes from some of the major Faith traditions concerning our purpose and the meaning of our lives.

DISCLAIMER:

"The truth is that all mankind are the creatures and servants of one God, and in His estimate all are human. Man is a generic term applying to all humanity. The biblical statement "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" does not mean that woman was not created. The image and likeness of God apply to her as well. In Persian and Arabic there are two distinct words translated into English as man: one meaning man and woman collectively, the other distinguishing man as male from woman the female. The first word and its pronoun are generic, collective; the other is restricted to the male. This is the same in Hebrew."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 76

"Having created the world and all that liveth and moveth therein, He, through the direct operation of His unconstrained and sovereign Will, chose to confer upon man the unique distinction and capacity to know Him and to love Him—a capacity that must needs be regarded as the generating impulse and the primary purpose underlying the whole of creation.... Upon the inmost reality of each and every created thing He hath shed the light of one of His names, and made it a recipient of the glory

of one of His attributes. Upon the reality of man, however, He hath focused the radiance of all of His names and attributes, and made it a mirror of His own Self. Alone of all created things man hath been singled out for so great a favor, so enduring a bounty.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 65

"There is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed. If there were not this Unborn, this Unoriginated, this Uncreated, this Unformed, escape from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed, would not be possible."

"But since there is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed, therefore is escape possible from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed."

The Eightfold Path, Buddha, the Word

"...lo! my infancy died long since, and I live. But Thou, Lord, who for ever livest, and in whom nothing dies: for before the foundation of the worlds, and before all that can be called 'before', Thou art, and art God and Lord of all which Thou hast created: in Thee abide, fixed for ever, the first causes of all things unabiding; and of all things changeable, the springs abide in Thee unchangeable: and in Thee live the eternal reasons of all things unreasoning and temporal."

Confessions of St Augustine, Book 1

"The Lord of creatures (Pragapati) created this whole (world to be) the sustenance of the vital spirit; both the immovable and the movable (creation is) the food of the vital spirit."

Hindu, Laws of Manu

"I heard that an oppressor ruined the habitations of the subjects to fill the treasury of the sultan, unmindful of the maxim of philosophers, who have said: 'Who offends God the most high to gain the heart of a created being, God will use that very being to bring on his destruction in the world.'"

"Fire burning with wild rue will not  
Cause a smoke like that of afflicted hearts."

Islamic Miscellaneous, Gulistan of Sa'di (Edwin Arnold tr)

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/garden-021.jpg>

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Amarendra (2008-05-05 18:06:49)

Thanks, Alex, I love your work! With your permission, let me "stir" a few thoughts: ON the statement-

“But since there is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed, therefore is escape possible from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed”, my experience is that such ESCAPE- FROM-THE-WORLD invitations lead people on a “wild-goose chase” :-)) THE Unmanifest (Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed) and the Manifest (the born, the originated, the created, the formed.) are PRESENT simultaneously. Time is “relative” - Past/Future is illusion. The SOLUTION provided by the Eightfold Path to “ESCAPE” VERY OFTEN deludes people:-))The Problem is TRYING TO ESCAPE to Past/Future. ACCEPT THE PRESENT TOTALLY. As gurus say, BE HERE NOW COMPLETELY. Whatever one are trying to escape from is a temporary mental abstraction! Victor Frankl’s (1946 book Man’s Search for Meaning) life, as a Holocaust survivor, was what most would like to escape from. He discovered: “Ultimately, man should not ask what the meaning of his life is, but rather must recognize that it is HE WHO IS ASKED. In a word, each man is questioned by life; and he can only answer to life by answering for his own life; to life he can only respond by being responsible.” Thanks again, Alex, for posting on this topic!

amzolt (2008-05-05 18:50:33)

Dear Amarendra, You are good at “stirring” ! Thank you for such an intelligent response !

John Bryden (2008-05-05 20:37:51)

Alex, this is a wonderful collection of quotations!

skylar (2008-05-06 16:39:53)

Namaste’ Alex; I am familiar with all these quotes, my pennys worth for the meaning of life? is simply ... To BE At One At Peace How does this occur? Acceptance of the gifts of being awake, alive, presented now if we choose such awareness, and not taking it for granted, as there may not be a next now. metta sky

### 1.3.7 when the gods descend ... (2008-05-05 19:01)

By [1]Grass Routes | Location: [2]India | 05/05/08

Once a year in the holy town of Puri on the east coast of India, the Gods enter the fray of the common man to mingle with the mob. Attracting thousands of pilgrims, the annual Festival of Faith is an orchestrated riot of colour, spectacle and sweat. Steeped in folklore and mythology the origins date back centuries, but its significance as a festival ‘of the people’ reigns. Massive crowds gather on the streets all vying for a chance to set eyes on their Gods. A motley crew linked by faith, devotion in their hearts and sweat on their brow, their anticipation and excitement is palpable. The grand scale of the festival requires scrupulous coordination from the entire community, all prescribed to pitch in for the BIG event. Immense chariots are erected in the town square meticulously crafted and decorated by master carpenters and artisans. Children writhe in the hands of make-up artists, while dancers and performers drape themselves in rich costumes and musicians polish their instruments. Leaving the lofty confines of the temple, the sacred deities are carried into the town square in a theatrical display of elaborate

ritual. To the tune of percussion, chants and fervent devotion the Gods are seated in their respective chariots and physically hauled through the teeming streets. The euphoric atmosphere verges on chaos at times, but the cacophony of colour and crowds is as overwhelming as it is enthralling. An assault to the senses, all in good Faith! Bigger than Pushkar Fair and second only to the Kumbh Mela, nothing exemplifies the spirit of India more. Join Grass Routes celebrate the magic and mayhem of India's most electrifying festival. For more information: [http://grassroutesjourneys.com/html/tour\\_festival\\_of\\_faith.htm](http://grassroutesjourneys.com/html/tour_festival_of_faith.htm) Or Call +91 9437029698

[3]View[4] All

[5]+ Enlarge

[6] + Enlarge [7] + Enlarge [8] + Enlarge [9] + Enlarge [10] + Enlarge

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Visible links 1. <http://matadortravel.com/organizations/grass-routes>

2. <http://matadortravel.com/destinations/india>

3. <http://matadortravel.com/travel-community/india/grass+routes/travel-blog>

4. <http://matadortravel.com/travel-community/india/grass+routes/travel-blog>

5. <http://matadortravel.com/files/imagecache/preview/files/images/pranam.jpg>

6. <http://matadortravel.com/files/imagecache/preview/files/images/grass.jpg>

7. <http://matadortravel.com/files/imagecache/preview/files/images/plucking-paddy.jpg>

8. <http://matadortravel.com/files/imagecache/preview/files/images/welcome.jpg>

9. <http://matadortravel.com/files/imagecache/preview/files/images/deocrated-door.jpg>

10. <http://matadortravel.com/files/imagecache/preview/files/images/Crowd.jpg>

11. <http://matadortravel.com/feeds?feed=blog/6377/feed>

12. <http://matadortravel.com/feeds?feed=blog/6377/feed>

13. <http://matadortravel.com/send/send/73696>

14. <http://www.addthis.com/bookmark.php?v=12&winname=addthis&pub=Matador1&s=&url=http%3A%2F%2Fmatadortravel.com%2Ftravel-blog%2Findia%2Fgrass-routes%2Fwhen-the-gods-descend&title=when%20the%20gods%20descend%20...%20%7C%20Matador>

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### 1.3.8 The Value of Pain (2008-05-06 14:20)

✖

[1]image credit

I've spent about as much time as most folks dealing with pain; recently, eleven months of debilitating drugs to clear a virus from my liver.

I've had my bumps and bruises from engaging with life on earth.

Now, at 62, my best advice is to strive to see pain as the mother of joy.

Like most philosophical or spiritual sayings, there's a built-in, seeming-contradiction . . .

From William Shakespeare:

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,

To the last syllable of recorded time;

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,

And then is heard no more. It is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

Signifying nothing.

[2]Macbeth Act 5, scene 5, 19–28

From my [3]free-to-download poetry book:

Forebear

The chains of hollow

Imitation clasp their sterile links on

Minds so lost in routinized

Intentions even

Love can spawn but

Crimes; and,

Faithless certainties, like

Clockwork, build their

Superstitious blinds so even

Faith becomes the Devil trading

Hope for fruitless

Rinds.

From the [4]Nobel Prize Speech of the writer William Faulkner.

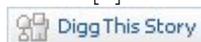
"...the young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat. He must learn them again. He must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid: and, teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart, the universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed—love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. Until he does so, he labors under a curse. He writes not of love but of lust, of defeats in which nobody loses anything of value, and victories without hope and worst of all, without pity or compassion. His griefs grieve on no universal bones, leaving no scars. He writes not of the heart but of the glands."

From a prayer by the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith:

"Thou art He Who, through a word of Thy mouth, hath so enravished the hearts of Thy chosen ones that they have, in their love for Thee, detached themselves from all except Thyself, and laid down their lives and sacrificed their souls in Thy path, and borne, for Thy sake, what none of Thy creatures hath borne."

Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, p. 163

[5]



1. [http://www.library.ucla.edu/biomed/his/painexhibit/gaze\\_o'pain.htm](http://www.library.ucla.edu/biomed/his/painexhibit/gaze_o'pain.htm)
2. <http://www.enotes.com/jax/index.php/works/download/type=gutenberg/notes=macbeth-text/>
3. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>
4. <http://www.rjgeib.com/thoughts/faulkner/faulkner.html>
5. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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skylar (2008-05-06 16:32:23)

Namaste'! this was a touching post; funny thing you remind me of someone who could have lived back in shakespearean times. Pain can be a journey of embracing our selves, instead of fighting too hard. I meet my own with respect and humbleness. Metta. sky

RainforestRobin (2008-05-06 17:40:56)

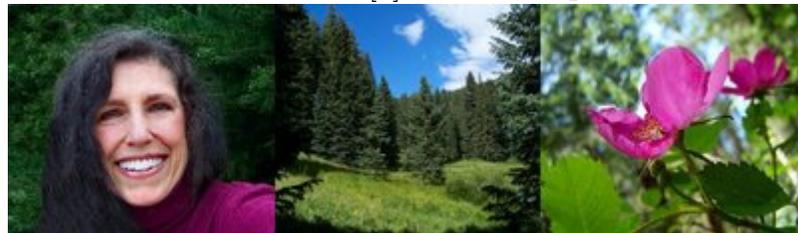
It is so good to see this piece on pain. I applaud you. I too have known intense and long term pain at times in my life. I completely know pain as a guide, healer and teacher. Of all my teachers Pain taught me the most. Then Nature. I find it disheartening at least in Santa Fe where I live that people often don't want to see pain as a healer, a teacher and stern guide that will try over and over to push us beyond our self-imposed and limited thinking and spirituality, try to push into more profound and wise depths. I understand that pain is...PAINFUL, but we often slide it over into negative context as being unworthy fodder for growth....and it is very useful fodder for growth. Thank you very much Alex. These are such wise insights and thoughts.

amzolt (2008-05-06 18:49:03)

Thank you, skylar & RainforestRobin (my two favorite natural people) ! Alex

### 1.3.9 WOMAN SNAKE DEATH = LIFE by Robin Easton (2008-05-06 18:16)

Check out our [\[1\]](#)most recent posts!



[\[2\]](#)Naked In Eden Blog  
6 May 2008



WOMAN SNAKE DEATH = LIFE

Posted by Robin Easton under: Hobnobbin' with Robin .

Once a six foot Red Belly Black snake (on the Australian Dangerous-to-humans list) came

right at me while I squatted to pee. He was fleeing from something else and ran smack into me. Already frightened and worked up, he reared up and lashed out three times in a false strike inches from my face.

It was my first encounter with a deadly snake and if I hadn't just peed I would have. Amazingly I shocked myself by staying outwardly calm. If I panicked and jumped back he'd surely strike. I was already in a squatting position and couldn't even tuck and roll fast enough to get away. Even if I could have moved snakes can strike faster than the human eye can follow, and at six feet long they have a lot length to whip out. But I knew that frenetic movement from me would be the worst thing to do, any movement would spell disaster. It would startle and rile the snake even more. If I remained still he might not strike. He might calm down. He had to know that I was no threat to him, that I was no more than a log. When I didn't move, didn't even breathe, instinct made him freeze immobile in hopes that I would no longer see him. Camouflage was his best defense against such a huge opponent. We were face to face, inches apart. Time stopped and down in the dark pit of my gut primal knowledge uncoiled from eons of dormancy and rose to consciousness. Like my ancient hunter gatherer ancestors I wanted to test myself. I thought, "Here it is, the single event you've feared might happen. He's so close now, what do you have to lose but your life? And death is already here. So why not try and relax. See if you can communicate with him."

Everything in me slowed way down and in that space I heard for the first time another specie's thoughts. I understood that he would not slither away until I looked away. He feared I would follow him or strike out and crush him; he couldn't afford to take his eyes off me. I had to trust him with my life. Slowly I rolled my eyes away from his space, sloooooowly I turned my head inch by inch. In less than two seconds he whipped his body around faster than my eyes could follow and vanished into the bush.

That day many years ago I learned with my entire body that we ARE connected to all life. If we slow down and listen we can hear the thoughts of other species. I learned that every visitation meant something, told me something. Each being was a teacher. And if I listened to my teachers I would be blessed to experience the extreme intelligence of wildlife. To be in that heightened state where we hear another animal's thoughts is one of my most treasured gifts from the wild. I am changed forever.

Although it can sometimes be hard to hear another's thoughts. To hear the thoughts of the bush lark while the python swallows her alive, to hear the thoughts of the Ulysses butterfly when he is snapped up in the flycatcher's beak, to hear the thoughts of the honey bee while the praying mantis eats him alive, to hear their desperate pleas, to hear them cling to sweet Life, to hear them beg me, life, anyone for help...to save them...and then for me to NOT intervene was sometimes hard. But I did not intervene because the honey bee is the life force of the praying mantis. The lark is the life force of the python. The ulysses butterfly is the life force of the fly catcher. Life flows into Life. Imagine a force so in love with itself that it continually devours itself to create more Life.

I would always fight fiercely to stay alive, as do most wild creatures. But with time in the forest I learned that death was not what I once thought. Close to the land, foot and hand dug into dirt, soul sunk into Mother Earth I am embraced by the thing I love most. Although always careful and aware, if I died on the land I would be with that which is most familiar to me. That which IS me. I am part of a massive self-sustaining organism eating itself alive out of sheer lust to create more

Life.

From my heart,  
Robin

PS: I've decided that instead of a blog roll or even a links page, that each week I will try to honor a link or a few links. They will not be done in order of any importance. They are all simply done as blogs/people who I respect. I chose these five this week as I felt they related to this post. There are other nature blogs that relate and are equally as good. I will cover them next time, and then more after that. I am blessed to have many wonderful friends and hope to get to each one over the weeks and months. Please bear with me. You have all touched my life.

#### DEDICATED TO THESE NATURE BLOGS:

[3]A FOCUS ON THE WILD Stacey Huston's wildlife photos are remarkable and at times almost ethereal. They reflect her inseparable connection to Mother Earth's vulnerable wild creatures. Stacey also works with falcon rehabilitation. She is a very sensitive and aware human being, just like her wild friends.

[4]EARTH & ECONOMY I respect them for their work in creating environmental awareness. If you are wanting to help protect our planet this site has hundreds of resources for positive change. Earth & Economy is a tireless and astounding effort to protect the planet. You will be amazed at the information available. Please go to this site and make use of the invaluable information they have given us.

[5]HIGH COUNTRY ARCHER This is some of the most beautiful nature writing I've read. High Country Archer has a voice that is raw and wild like the land. He is knowledgeable in survival and the ways of our wild brethren. His writing is so fresh that it still smells of the outdoors, of autumn rain, muddy tracks and the scent of passing elk.

[6]ONE MAN'S TRAVEL LOG Graham's blog is fascinating as it combines a deep and intense love of nature with travel. He is an excellent writer and the site is just bursting with vitality and warmth. It's also honestly thought provoking in a very human and every day kind of way that I really like and relate to.

[7]SANDPIPER'S PLACE Sandpiper's photos are simply crystal clear and make me feel like I am standing in the woods right next to the wren, the woodchuck and the flowers. Every time I open this blog I catch my breath at the beauty. It is truly stunning. If you love nature you will oooh and aaaah over this site.

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
2. <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/>
3. <http://afocusinthewild.blogspot.com/>

4. <http://earthandeconomy.com/>
5. <http://highcountryarcher.blogspot.com/>
6. <http://grahametttridge.blogspot.com/>
7. <http://sandpiper727.blogspot.com/>

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Liara Covert (2008-08-19 22:20:35)

I recall a story from a friend whose husband was in the US Air Force. During her husband's service, they travelled a lot. In one case, when they were based near Panama, my friend went to use the toilet in a local home only to find a huge snake wrapped around the bottom of the bowl. She literally jumped out a window into a garden and ran away. Curiously, a good friend of mine in Australia discovered a large poisonous snake around the toilet bowl of his former home. Perhaps snakes fall in love with the energy and texture of human toilet bowls?

amzolt (2008-08-19 22:23:31)

Liara, "Perhaps snakes fall in love with the energy and texture of human toilet bowls?" Hmm... Metaphysical conundrum...

Liara Covert (2008-08-20 02:03:56)

Everything makes sense on some level. Each being is attracted to the energy of things and other beings. You cannot always explain your own reasons for feeling attracted to whatever pulls you toward it. Who is to say that toilet bowls are not lovable and attractive for some creature somewhere? Metaphysics may be exactly what explains the energy level connections.

amzolt (2008-08-19 16:02:19)

Liara, I remember, as a boy, bringing a small snake into the house and scaring the wits out of my mother, God love her...

Liara Covert (2008-08-19 11:48:46)

One of the memorable images of a poisonous snake experience I recall from the movie and book versions of Australian author Bryce Courtney's bestseller entitled, *Jessica*. I recall images in films like *Indiana Jones* series, but those seemed more surreal. When I visited Indonesia, I saw a young boy who acted as a unique busker. People paid him and he entertained audiences as a snake charmer, singing and hypnotizing the snakes before wrapping two around him. To each his or her own idea of adventure. Rest assured, options are infinite. You can even feel connected to reptiles without wrapping them around your neck and limbs.

### 1.3.10 Angels of Snow and Fire (2008-05-07 07:43)



[1]image credit

Having been a spiritual seeker for most of my life, I've found the words and signs that seem to be contradictory to be the most meaningful.

That's not to say I can necessarily give a rational explanation of the intense feelings such concepts stir up...

One of my favorites

and one I'd appreciate your comments on is:

"But for the burning of their souls and the sighing of their hearts, they would be drowned in the midst of their tears, and but for the flood of their tears they would be burnt up by the fire of their hearts and the heat of their souls. Methinks, they are like the angels which Thou hast created of snow and of fire."

Bahá'u'lláh, Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, p. 157

[2]Here's the full prayer . . .

1. <http://ryancordell.com/labels/Photo%20Friday.html>

2. <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/b/PM/pm-94.html>

### 1.3.11 "...strive to see pain as the mother of joy." (2008-05-07 18:29)

Check out our [1]most recent posts!



[2]image credit

Why so much suffering?

[3]From Wikipedia:

"All sentient beings suffer during their lives, in diverse manners, and often dramatically. No field of human activity deals with the whole subject of suffering, but many are concerned with its nature and processes, its origin and causes, its meaning and significance, its related personal, social, and cultural behaviors, its remedies, management, and uses."

[4]Aldous Huxley: "At least two thirds of our miseries spring from human stupidity, human malice and those great motivators and justifiers of malice and stupidity, idealism, dogmatism and proselytizing zeal on behalf of religious or political idols." [5]Emily Dickinson: "Parting is all we know of heaven and all we need of hell." [6]Fritz Williams: "Suffering and joy teach us, if we allow them, how to make the leap of empathy, which transports us into the soul and heart of another person. In those transparent moments we know other people's joys and sorrows, and we care about their concerns as if they were our own." [7]Helen Keller: "The world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it."

"Men who suffer not, attain no perfection. The plant most pruned by the gardeners is that one which, when the summer comes, will have the most beautiful blossoms and the most abundant fruit.

"The labourer cuts up the earth with his plough, and from that earth comes the rich and plentiful harvest. The more a man is chastened, the greater is the harvest of spiritual virtues shown forth by him. A soldier is no good General until he has been in the front of the fiercest battle and has received the deepest wounds."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 50 [8]



1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
2. <http://www.morethancake.org/2007/12/suffering-and-meaning-of-christmas.html>
3. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suffering>
4. <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/001885.html>
5. <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/001097.html>
6. <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/001212.html>
7. <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/002496.html>
8. <http://digg.com/submit//>

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Stacey Huston (2008-05-10 03:55:39)

This is probably one of the most moving posts I have ever seen. Thank you so much for posting the raw, and real pain that these poor people suffer each and every day.. sometimes the reality is to easy to ignore unless it is put in your face..

Patrick Cartwright (2008-11-02 01:16:46)

Hello, Am "PC" an upcoming recording artist am doing a song entitled "Be the Light". The song is about the human suffering around the world and good leadership. I would like to use the photo above on the front of this CD Cover to better illustrate the message in the song. May I have your written consent to do so? Thank you in advanced!

amzolt (2008-11-02 01:21:50)

Patrick, I can't give permission... The link under the picture goes to <http://www.morethancake.org/2007/12/suffering-and-meaning-of-christmas.html> where I found it. The link on the picture on that page goes to <http://www.mcgillcharities.com/> Maybe they have the rights...

### 1.3.12 Look Closely . . . (2008-05-08 16:26)



[1]



[2]

1. <http://www.octavioocampo.com.mx/xgaleria1.htm>
2. <http://www.octavioocampo.com.mx/xgaleria1.htm>

Catherine Roberts. (2008-05-09 05:03:28)  
Simply out of this World!!!!

### 1.3.13 Strong In The Broken Places (2008-05-09 04:44)



[1][image credit](#)

Passion's Yield

The tears will keep the  
Flame in check,  
The flame that's killing-  
Sweet.  
My heart throbs white-  
Hot, molten  
Streams of  
Pain from  
Love beat down.

The tears will keep the  
Flame in check,

The flame that's killing  
Me. But,  
Dying is the only  
Way to keep my  
Heart unbound.

The tears will keep the  
Flame in check,  
Till death from  
Love  
Reveals that  
Love is  
Truth and only  
Pain from  
Love can set me  
Free.

The tears will keep the  
Flame in check,  
Will feed its lonely  
Heat till  
Love can do its  
Mystic work and make a  
Blind man  
See.

"The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong in the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry."

Ernest Hemingway

"Not only a crusader for the addicted and the homeless, but also an alcoholic who presided over the church where Alcoholics Anonymous was founded, George Everett Ross was both revered for his good works and reviled for his personal failings."

from the book, [2]Strong in the Broken Places

"If others hurl their darts against you, offer them milk and honey in return; if they poison your lives, sweeten their souls; if they injure you, teach them how to be comforted; if they inflict a wound upon you, be a balm to their sores; if they sting you, hold to their lips a refreshing cup."

If you like this post, you may also appreciate [3][these related posts...](#)

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments !

Like this Blog?

[4][Get a Free Subscription !](#)

1. [http://current.com/items/88493881\\_death\\_by\\_a\\_broken\\_heart](http://current.com/items/88493881_death_by_a_broken_heart)

2. <http://www3.uakron.edu/uapress/sweet.html>

3. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/tag/broken-heart/>

4. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Imelda / Greenishlady (2008-05-09 12:19:14)

Alexander: That is a very moving piece. The pain is palpable there, and the hope that the strength will hold. You ask am I a writer... Yes, I write. I've had a collection of poems published, and a few in some Irish journals. I write "bits and pieces", journaling, starts to stories, ideas. I've found that some things that started for my blog have taken on a life of their own in my writing. Blessings to you

### 1.3.14 Happy Pangea Day !!! (2008-05-09 16:22)



[1]

[2] ✖

## Media Guide

### Pangea Day's History

In 2006, filmmaker Jehane Noujaim won the TED Prize, an annual award granted at the TED Conference, which honors three individuals with the potential to change the world. She was granted \$100,000 and – more important – a wish to change the world. She wished to create a day in which the world came together through film. Pangea Day grew out of that wish. The event has been taken forward by Noujaim, in conjunction with TED and the Pangea Day staff, led by Executive Director Delia Cohen.

[3]Watch Jehane Noujaim's 2006 acceptance speech for the TED Prize

### Frequently Asked Questions

- What's on the program for Pangea Day?

Pangea Day is a 4-hour program of short film, live music and talks. You can find the lineup of films, musicians, and speakers at [4]www.pangeaday.org.

- What time is Pangea Day?

The 4-hour program will be broadcast live to the world on May 10, 2008, [5]18:00 - 22:00 GMT on TV, the Web, and mobile phones and in select digital cinemas. [6]Find your local time here ■

- How can people watch Pangea Day?

There are 7 ways to watch the Pangea Day program on May 10, 2008:

1. At a Friends of Pangea Day event: Watch the program at locally organized Friends of Pangea Day events around the world, from a large Berlin theater to a bedouin camp in the Sahara. [7]Find the full listing of events here ■
2. On television (local terrestrial or cable network): Broadcasters around the world will carry the live program on May 10, 2008. [8]Find the list of broadcasters here ■
3. Online: We will be streaming our broadcast online at [9]www.pangeaday.org.
4. At one of six live broadcast locations: Pangea Day will be broadcast live from Cairo, Kigali, London, Los Angeles, Mumbai, and Rio de Janeiro. Tickets are available to some of these broadcast locations. [10]Find more here ■
5. Via commercial satellite: We will be beaming our broadcast via broadcast satellite around the world. Some approved venues with commercial downlink capabilities will be able to receive the broadcast this way. (Note: This broadcast cannot be received on home satellite dishes.) Contact [11]info@pangeaday.org for more information.
6. By mobile phone: Watch selected content from Pangea Day on your phone via Nokia's new video-sharing site, [12]OVI.com/pangeaday.

7. In a movie theater: Cinemas around the world will carry the Pangea Day program live in digital projection. A few theaters taking part: Bryn Mawr Film Institute near Philadelphia; Cinema Paradiso in Fort Lauderdale, FL; Cinema Nova in Melbourne, Australia ... [13]learn more ■

- Who's involved?

Pangea Day's advisory board includes film-world luminaries such as producer JJ Abrams (Lost), actor Forest Whitaker, and musician/activist Bob Geldof. [14]See the full list here. Pangea Day's key global partner is Nokia. [15]Find more about this partnership here ■

- How can I contact a local Friends of Pangea Day event in my town?

Use the [16]global event map to find a public Friends of Pangea Day party in your area. Hosts are encouraged to invite and include local press. You can also contact Pangea Day for official comment by emailing [17]info@pangeaday.org.

- Where can I download photos and briefing documents?

You can find film stills, photos of speakers, hosts and musicians, regional briefing documents, and much more information on [18]our media resources site. Write to [19]info@pangeaday.org for password access, subject line "Media Request"

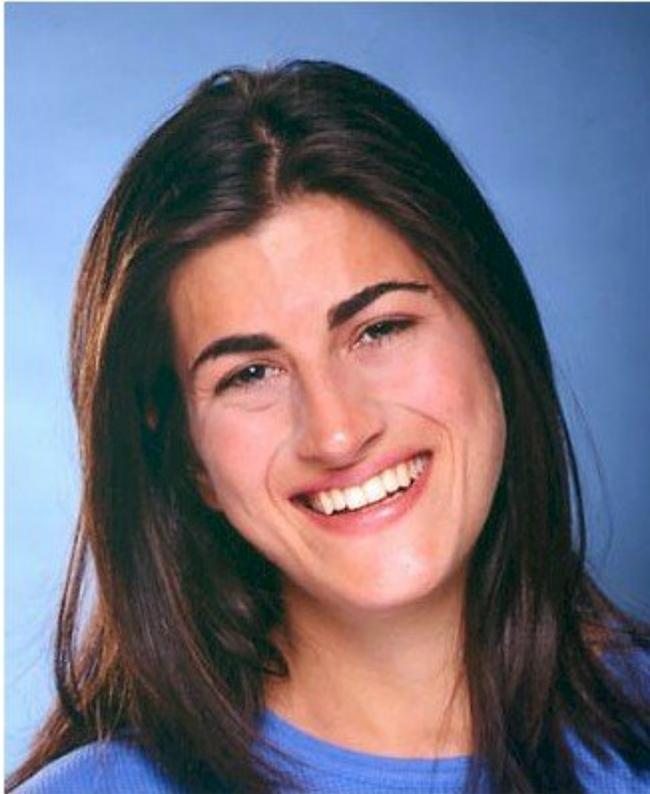
1. <http://share.ovi.com/media/pangeaday.world/PangeaDay.12639>
2. <http://www.pangeaday.org/>
3. <http://www.pangeaday.org/?vid=2>
4. <http://www.pangeaday.org/winningFilms.php>
5. [http://www.pangeaday.org/local\\_time.php](http://www.pangeaday.org/local_time.php)
6. [http://www.pangeaday.org/local\\_time.php](http://www.pangeaday.org/local_time.php)
7. [http://www.pangeaday.org/attend\\_map.php](http://www.pangeaday.org/attend_map.php)
8. <http://www.pangeaday.org/television.php>
9. <http://www.pangeaday.org/>
10. <http://www.pangeaday.org/liveEvents.php>
11. <https://mail.google.com/mail?view=cm&tf=0&ui=1&to=info@pangeaday.com>
12. <http://www.ovi.com/pangeaday>
13. <http://www.pangeaday.org/theaters.php>
14. <http://www.pangeaday.org/advisoryBoard.php>
15. <http://www.pangeaday.org/partners.php>
16. [http://www.pangeaday.org/attend\\_map.php](http://www.pangeaday.org/attend_map.php)
17. <https://mail.google.com/mail?view=cm&tf=0&ui=1&to=info@pangeaday.com>
18. <http://pangeaday.backpackit.com/homepage>
19. <https://mail.google.com/mail?view=cm&tf=0&ui=1&to=info@pangeaday.com>

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Catherine Roberts. (2008-05-10 06:25:45)

I will be here, but my statement is this. Your thoughts will bring thunder and your word will be LAW!!!

### 1.3.15 The Mother of Pangea Day (2008-05-11 01:16)



Jehane Noujaim

[1]image credit

Well, it's Saturday evening here, and, for four hours today, I was not really in Kettering, Ohio in my studio apartment. I was in New York City, Rio de Janeiro, London, Dharamsala, Cairo, Jerusalem, and Kigali plus many other venues that sponsored the Pangea Day event.

If you knew nothing about it or want to know more or want to relive the experience, it's all archived at the [2]Pangea Day Web Site.

[3]In this hopeful talk, Jehane Noujaim unveils her 2006 TED Prize wish: to bring the world together through the power of film.

And, she did it !!!

[4]Thank You Messages to Jehane Noujaim

"The Pangea Day blog has received an outpouring of thanks to Jehane Noujaim – whose vision was the basis for this unique, inspiring world event – from friends in her hometown of Cairo, Egypt:

"Jehane, this is May El Hosseney. I hope I was in Pangea Day to share my wish, I hope it will

come true. I hope one day I can deliver a message or more. Love from the pyramids. Egypt needs people in love to show about true life. Thank you anyway. I'll do my best to be a film director that can send a message all over the worldddd! Neufol!"

"Keep us close." – Ismail Barrada

"You give us hope in a world that has so little of it." – Shahir Maged

"Echta giddden!! Giddden giddden! Ani ani ani!" – Karin El Dib

"Jehane congratulations on bringing the world together, setting an example for people all over the world to get together in an imaginary common consciousness, facilitated by the power of film images and words that resonate. I hope your wish, Pangea Day, becomes an opportunity for people to change from passive recipients of information and images, to agents of change in their everyday lives. Mabrouk, Pangea Day was awesome!" – Karina Shalaby

"Jehane, your wish almost killed me but it was worth it. I love ya." – Stu your cous

"Jehane, your wish almost killed my husband but it was worth it. Congratulations! What a beautiful day." – Amanda

"Dear Jehanie, a beautiful job that expressed your wish well – most proud of you! With love and a hug." – Mom

"Love ya. We miss you." – Pop

Thanks, Jehane!

Act now.

The following organizations, each with international reach, are making specific calls to action on Pangea Day. Please take a moment to express your voice on an important social issue or fund a life-changing project.



[5] Avaaz.org – The World in Action  
Stop the clash of civilizations. Support peace in the Middle East.

[6] Take action



[7] Charity: Water

Make the right to clean water a reality.

[8]Take action



[9] Interfaith Youth Core – Building a Global Interfaith Youth Movement

Experience religious pluralism; get involved in an interfaith dialogue or community service project.

[10]Take action



[11] Kiva – Loans That Change Lives

Lend as little as \$25 to an entrepreneur in the developing world today.

[12]Take action



[13] ninemillion.org – A UNHCR Education and Sports Campaign

Give refugee children worldwide the chance to learn and play.

[14]Take action



[15] ONE – The Campaign to Make Poverty History

Fight global poverty. Join ONE.

[16] Take action



[17] United Nations Population Fund

Stand up for women and protect maternal health.

[18] Take action



[19] The We Campaign – We Can Solve the Climate Crisis

Call on world leaders to prevent the worst consequences of global warming.

[20] Take action



[21] WITNESS – See It. Film It. Change It

Sign the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and tell your story.

[22] Take action

Join a Group

Communicate and connect with other Pangea Day supporters. Help spread the word.



• [23] [Join Pangea Day on YouTube](#) [24] [JOIN NOW »](#)



- [25] Pangea Day on MySpace [26] [JOIN NOW >>](#)



- [27] Pangea Day on Facebook [28] [JOIN NOW >>](#)



- [29] Pangea Day on Facebook [30] [JOIN NOW >>](#)



- [31] Pangea Day on Ovi [32] [JOIN NOW >>](#)

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- [36]Email this Page
- [37]Store

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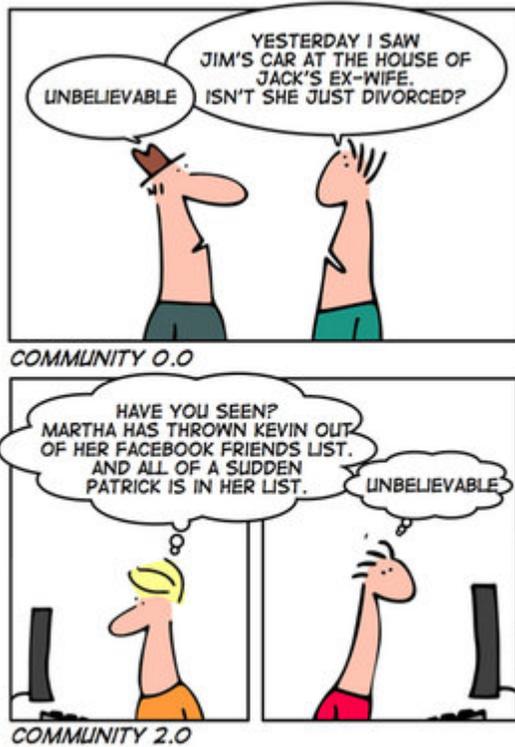
Live video streaming and video on demand donated by Akamai.

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_uacct = "UA-2037511-1";
urchinTracker();
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1. <http://www.ceovisionpdg.org/fr/2002speakers.htm>
2. <http://www.pangeaday.org/>
3. <http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/view/id/55>
4. [http://www.pangeaday.org/post\\_article.php?article\\_id=197&from=home#comments](http://www.pangeaday.org/post_article.php?article_id=197&from=home#comments)
5. <http://www.avaaz.org/pangeaday>
6. <http://www.avaaz.org/pangeaday>

7. <http://www.charitywater.org/pangea>
8. <http://www.charitywater.org/pangea>
9. <http://www.ifyc.org/>
10. <http://www.ifyc.org/>
11. <http://www.kiva.org/pangeaday>
12. <http://kiva.org/pangeaday>
13. <http://www.ninemillion.org/>
14. <http://www.ninemillion.org/>
15. <http://www.one.org/pangeaday>
16. <http://www.one.org/pangeaday>
17. <http://www.unfpa.org/>
18. <http://www.unfpa.org/>
19. <http://www.wecansolveit.org/pangeaday>
20. <http://www.wecansolveit.org/pangeaday>
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23. <http://www.youtube.com/user/pangeaday>
24. <http://www.youtube.com/user/pangeaday>
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26. <http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=272261616>
27. <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5327145764>
28. <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5327145764>
29. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pangea-Day/28558345920>
30. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pangea-Day/28558345920>
31. <http://www.oivi.com/pangeaday>
32. <http://oivi.com/pangeaday>
33. <http://www.pangeaday.org/contactus.php>
34. <http://www.pangeaday.org/privacypolicy.php>
35. <http://www.pangeaday.org/terms.php>
36. <http://www.pangeaday.org/email.php?pg=takeAction.php>
37. <http://www.pangeaday.org/store.php>

### 1.3.16 "I" am a "Community" (2008-05-11 14:15)



[1]

Please Read This Important Paper:

[2]community-model-of-consciousness

1. <http://geekandpoke.typepad.com/geekandpoke/2007/10/>
2. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/community-model-of-consciousness.pdf>

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Our Responsibility to Society & laquo; Our Evolution (2008-05-22 14:03:18)

[...] In a previous post, I pointed toward an important paper about treating our own internal realm as a "community", an approach that lets us be kinder and more compassionate toward unregenerate aspects of our Whole Self. [...]

### 1.3.17 Download My Free Books (2008-05-12 12:25)

✕

[1]image credit

I've been giving my books away for awhile: the e-book versions. The printed/paper versions are at publishing cost plus shipping and handling and you can get those at [2]Lulu.com.

[3]Reality is a 300-page compilation of powerful spiritual writings. I did the gleaning of these excerpts during my initial recovery from a series of devastating experiences.

[4]PlanIt–The Future Fable of An Action Designer is a short story about creative thinking and how it can change our world.

[5]Is Your Soul In Here? A Poet's Struggle With God is my first collection of poetry.

[6]Astrological Repair Manual : my offering of 36 years of experience in learning/teaching, and counselling. It attempts to repair the persistent misunderstandings and psychological perversions of this ancient subject. A Very Positive Book !

"I have summoned the Maids of Heaven to emerge from behind the veil of concealment, and have clothed them with these words of Mine..."

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 327

1. <http://ebooks.du.ac.in/>
2. [http://www.lulu.com/browse/search.php?search\\_forum=-1&search\\_cat=2&show\\_results=topics&return\\_chars=200&search\\_keywords=&keys=&fSearch=zoltai&fSearchFamily=0&fSubmitSearch.x=314&fSubmitSearch.y=21](http://www.lulu.com/browse/search.php?search_forum=-1&search_cat=2&show_results=topics&return_chars=200&search_keywords=&keys=&fSearch=zoltai&fSearchFamily=0&fSubmitSearch.x=314&fSubmitSearch.y=21)
3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/reality.pdf>
4. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/planitshortstory.pdf>
5. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/iysih.pdf>
6. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/arm.pdf>

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Cliff Burns (2008-05-12 13:39:55)

As a fellow on-line publisher, I offer my best wishes to you. Using these new technologies to spread our message without the necessity of agents and editors is the greatest benefit to the writer since Gutenberg started his little corner print shop. Good luck with your endeavors...

Brandi Magill (2008-05-12 17:50:19)

I am sure they are just as inspirational as you Alex. Once I get me computer fixed I will be sure to download them! Thanks for sharing Brandi

### 1.3.18 Pangea Day Retrospective (2008-05-13 04:13)



Jehane Noujaim

[1]image credit

[2]Pangea Day - in Videos

[3]Pangea Day – in quotes

Pssst... The Links Below Are Real Cool.

Pangea Day’s fabulous [4]line-up of thought-provoking, inspirational speakers produced no less stellar a collection of memorable quotes and priceless bits of wisdom. A small sampling of what we heard:

”By sharing stories, we’ve started the process of turning strangers into friends.” - Filmmaker Jehane Noujaim, [5]TED Prize winner and founder of Pangea Day

”We have a responsibility to expose ourselves to our world, to see our common humanity, to learn about other people – not only in times of war, but in times of peace. ” - Ishmael Beah, former child soldier and [6]advocate for peace

”When we look at the [7]earth from [8]space, we can see ourselves, our species, in its brave struggle. Yes, we’re troubled inhabitants of a small planet, but we’re also dreamers of dreams.” - Planetary scientist Carolyn Porco

”Humans are – and must be – sensitive to differences. But we should find hope in realizing how rich and numerous our [9]commonalities are.” - Anthropologist Donald Brown, author of Human Universals

”If we are to prosper together in our increasingly small world, we must listen to – and learn from [10]each other’s stories” - Queen Noor of Jordan

"[11]When we laugh, we change. And when we change, the world changes." – Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the International Laughter Club

"I feel like a hack... I feel I could be doing more... I feel sexy... I just want to feel alive for the first time in my life... I feel so much of my Dad in me that there isn't room for me." – A selection of [12]feelings, sampled live from the Internet, by conceptual artist Jonathan Harris

"We have the capacity and tendency to separate 'us' from 'them.' Once established, we're more tolerant to those we call 'us' and more brutal toward 'them.' But increasingly, science shows there's no limit to who we define as 'us.' Eventually, someday, there might not be any more 'thems.'" - Psychologist Robert Kurzban

"[13]How can films change the world? They can't, but the people who watch them can. By changing minds, we change the world." - Actress Cameron Diaz

#### Responses to TED

Here follows just a small sample of the thousands of comments we've already received.

Barbara A. from Mexico

This has been one of the most inspiring and beautiful events I have ever experienced. Let's never forget what we all felt and experienced today.

Organizer DR from Dominican Republic

As the only organizer of a public event in the Dominican Republic I was pleased incredibly. The show exceeded my expectations completely...

karima saad from United Kingdom

I am speechless. But i am sure of one thing, that while i was attending Pangea Day in London, those 4 hours were felt as if i was part of the whole world as one community, rather than countries divided by borders.

Cmsilva from Portugal

We joined 45 in a private event in portugal. It was great. Next year we'll be more, for sure.

Carolyn from United States

Thank you for doing this. I laughed, I cried, I was enlightened, I was moved and touched and inspired. I watched almost the whole thing without getting up. Too bad I had to watch it alone...

Marina from Brazil

If I had to express my experience in words, I would not be able to. These were the best movies I have seen as an expression of art. And all the movies combined, just changed my way of thinking....

Marcosncosta from China

Loved the event. Hope next year it can be bigger and better.

Galleher from United States

The Alaskans gathered in Anchorage to be witness to this global campfire were inspired and appreciative

LIDIA from Argentina

I didn't know that Pangea existed. I feel too moved to speak and happy that so many people feel that really all of us are ONE.

Biriscalin from Romania

We all are "Pangea Day". We all represent one earth, one life. Now is time to act !

RicardoSilva from Portugal

I've been using the internet since the 90's, but this is truly the first time that I feel that here, for brief hours, was a global community talking. I hear people from Canada to Pakistan, Shanghai, New Zealand, Chile, Romania...

CassieBrady from United States

I have always dreamed of a united world. I never knew how to act on my dreams, so I am so happy that it is finally happening. Imagine peace. Imagine a global community not separate countries. This is what the world needs.

Jacqui from Jamaica

I wish that this had been a public event here in Jamaica for people from all walks of society to see. It was truly a spectacular event , I sat riveted in front of the television.

Sana from United Arab Emirates

Hugs and love from United Arab Emirates.... It aint little...Its a big start considering we are thousands of miles apart and felt the same last night...

Light Sister from United States

Thank you all so much for this World Consciousness Raising Event. In my 59 plus years of life, I have never felt so hopeful about the direction this world is taking...

Nabeelkarim from Pakistan

There are matters greater than that of political, economical and social nature...they are the environmental and humanitarian ones!!! it is clear that a change is required...and each and every one of us can make a difference.

Marcusmeisel from Austria

Austria says thank you for all this work of love, passion, and devotion that went into realizing this dream come true.

Danna from United States

Pangea Day was an incredibly inspiring event!! It brought me both tears of joy and sadness on

several occasions. Best four hours spent in front of the television EVER!

Divamover from United States

Several hours after the "end" of Pangea Day 2008, I am especially moved to see such an outpouring of support and longing from the US. I cannot help but believe that there are many in the US who want a united world...

Umc59 from Canada

i just stumbled onto the last half hour of the pangea day show here in toronto and am sooooo happy i did. i'm 48 yrs old and i got the most wonderful feeling of finally belonging to a community that speaks to me.

Rhea from India

I am 23 years old and I just finished watching the Pangea Day broadcast. it's 4:00 am here and I couldn't go to bed without writing to you and telling you how beautiful, thought provoking it was.

Nabeelkarim from Pakistan

Just for starter...each one of us could just start by helping just one person/or doing something good.....once a day....

IBelieve from Canada

Hello World; What an amazing day! I laughed, shed tears of joy, smiles of love, and tears of compassion.

Sherryl from Australia

A powerful vision and enormous drive has brought Jehane's dream to reality. Confucius c. 500BC said; In his teaching the wise man ...opens the way but does not take them to the place. Pangea Day has opened the way...

1. [http://www.tribecafilmfestival.org/filmguide/Tribeca\\_Talks\\_Pangea\\_Day.html](http://www.tribecafilmfestival.org/filmguide/Tribeca_Talks_Pangea_Day.html)
2. [http://share.ovi.com/pangeaday?utm\\_source=pangeaorg&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_campaign=pangeaday](http://share.ovi.com/pangeaday?utm_source=pangeaorg&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=pangeaday)
3. [http://www.pangeaday.org/post\\_article.php?article\\_id=203&from=home#comments](http://www.pangeaday.org/post_article.php?article_id=203&from=home#comments)
4. <http://www.pangeaday.org/speakers.php>
5. <http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/view/id/55>
6. <http://www.hrw.org/>
7. <http://www.pangeaday.org/filmDetail.php?id=75>
8. <http://ciclops.org/index.php?js=1>
9. <http://www.pangeaday.org/filmDetail.php?id=18>
10. <http://www.noor.gov.jo/projects.htm>
11. <http://www.laughteryoga.org/>
12. <http://wefeelfine.org/>
13. <http://www.pangeaday.org/>

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RainforestRobin (2008-05-13 22:19:05)

Hi Alex, you astound me how prolific you are, and all of such worthy content. I am stunned. There are some amazing posts here as well as photos to go with them. You truly are remarkable. I am going to check out your books. I thought of them the other day. I have been so overwhelmed with work, but actually

thought of them in one of those moments out of the blue and remembered reading about them. That is such a generous offer. How incredibly kind of you. I also loved the quote you sent me about pine trees. They are my absolute favorite tree. I can be in total chaos and stressed and then be alone with the wind and a pine tree and nothing matters. I feel at total peace. I found it interesting that you sent that particular quote. You are very insightful. It often blows me away. Thank my friend.

### 1.3.19 Sweet Words Are Crying Out For Potent Action (2008-05-14 02:34)



[1]image credit

Check out our [2]most recent posts!

Working hard to be a lot nicer—in this blog and in my daily life—not just courteous and kind but proactively NICE {”refined or virtuous” }. So, since I’m building up to May15th and Bloggers Unite for Human Rights, here’s a sneak preview.

[3]”On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the full text of which appears [below].... Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and ’to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.”

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law, Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for

his defence. (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to

just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3)

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments ! Like this post? Get More! [4]Subscribe to this blog.

1. <http://lmighton.wordpress.com/2006/12/09/international-human-rights-day-sri-lanka/>

2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>

3. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/universal\\_declaration.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/universal_declaration.pdf)

4. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

amzolt (2008-08-19 15:59:40)

"International law (IL) functions effectively only when all actors choose to view a given situation on a similar plane." Yes! That's why it's important for citizens to educate others about documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, so we can get on the same page and implement its provisions.

Liara Covert (2008-08-19 11:43:12)

International law (IL) functions effectively only when all actors choose to view a given situation on a similar plane. Some people believe IL came about as a kind of formalized, protectionist policy system for countries that did not wish to share their wealth or knowledge. From this standpoint, the goal was to keep and protect what you already had, prevent other people from getting it—be it land, shelter, weapons, food, whatever. Another view is that IL emerged out of a desire of some people to become more altruistic and encourage other people on a large scale, to do the same.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-07 22:24:40)

Please notice the link below the picture. Rights to it are not mine...

Michael Hawthorne - Neumical's Vocalist (2009-07-07 22:11:54)

Heya please let me know If it possible to use this image of the baby for future use in my band and in my charity project, is it called skapi, I love this photo!! It is the most beautiful picture I have ever seen!!!

### **1.3.20 Bloggers Unite for Human Rights (2008-05-15 03:26)**

[1]Disunity is a danger that the nations and peoples of the earth can no longer endure; the consequences are too terrible to contemplate, too obvious to require any demonstration. "The well-being of mankind," Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, "its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established." In observing that "mankind is groaning, is dying to be led to unity, and to terminate its age-long martyrdom", Shoghi Effendi further commented that: "Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of citystate, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life."

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, The Promise of World Peace



[2]Sign the [3]Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
[4]Read the Declaration

just a few recent Human Rights Stories from around the world

[5]The abuse of human rights councils and commissions

[6]Human rights and motherhood

[7]More children living in fear

[8]Human rights group threatens to sue Chevron

[9]Morocco: Sham Inquiry Highlights Impunity for Police Abuse

[10]Stop blocking a UN human rights monitoring mission in Sri Lanka

[11]Germany: Press for Human Rights Reform in Russia

[12]READ

[13]A BAHÁ'Í DECLARATION OF HUMAN

[14][15]OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHTS

Presented to the first session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

February 1947

[16]

1. <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/uhj/PWP/>
2. [http://everyhumanhasrights.org/sign\\_up/](http://everyhumanhasrights.org/sign_up/)
3. [http://everyhumanhasrights.org/sign\\_up/](http://everyhumanhasrights.org/sign_up/)
4. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/universal\\_declaration.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/universal_declaration.pdf)
5. <http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2008/may/07/yehey/opinion/20080507opi3.html>
6. <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/cebudailynews/opinion/view/20080505-134701/Human-rights-and-motherhood>
7. <http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,23681338-2862,00.html>
8. <http://themadisontimes.com/news/2008/05/08/human-rights-group-threatens-to-sue-chevron/>
9. [http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/05/08/morocc18762\\_txt.htm](http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/05/08/morocc18762_txt.htm)
10. <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/MUMA-7EG8BL?OpenDocument>
11. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/HRW/7eb8a04519db9206db978db57c5930e1.htm>
12. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/bdohoar.doc>
13. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/bdohoar.doc>
14. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/bdohoar1.doc>
15. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/bdohoar1.doc>
16. <https://www.google.com/reader/view/#stream/user%2F05772139121860444900%2Fstate%2Fcom.google%2Freading-list>

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amzolt (2008-05-15 12:01:28)

Somewhat amazing piece of synchronicity that this was published yesterday! New Baha'i World News Service Story SIX BAHAI LEADERS ARRESTED IN IRAN; PATTERN MATCHES DEADLY SWEEPS OF 1980S NEW YORK, 15 May 2008 (BWNS) – Six Baha'i leaders in Iran were arrested and taken to the notorious Evin prison yesterday in a sweep that is ominously similar to episodes in the 1980s when scores of Iranian Baha'i leaders were summarily rounded up and killed. The six men and women, all members of the national-level group that helped see to the minimum needs of Baha'is in Iran, were in their homes Wednesday morning when government intelligence agents entered and spent up to five hours searching each home, before taking them away. The seventh member of the national coordinating group was arrested in early March in Mashhad after being summoned by the Ministry of Intelligence office there on an ostensibly trivial matter. "We protest in the strongest terms the arrests of our fellow Baha'is in Iran," said Bani Dugal, the principal representative of the Baha'i International Community to the United Nations. "Their only crime is their practice of the Baha'i Faith." "Especially disturbing is how this latest sweep recalls the wholesale arrest or abduction of the members of two national Iranian Baha'i governing councils in the early 1980s – which led to the disappearance or execution of 17 individuals," she said. "The early morning raids on the homes of these prominent Baha'is were well coordinated, and it is clear they represent a high-level effort to strike again at the Baha'is and to intimidate the Iranian Baha'i community at large," said Ms. Dugal. Arrested yesterday were: Mrs. Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani,

Mr. Afif Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Mr. Vahid Tizfahm. All live in Tehran. Mrs. Kamalabadi, Mr. Khanjani, and Mr. Tavakkoi have been previously arrested and then released after periods ranging from five days to four months. Arrested in Mashhad on 5 March 2008 was Mrs. Mahvash Sabet, who also resides in Tehran. Mrs. Sabet was summoned to Mashhad by the Ministry of Intelligence, ostensibly on the grounds that she was required to answer questions related to the burial of an individual in the Baha'i cemetery in that city. On 21 August 1980, all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Iran were abducted and disappeared without a trace. It is certain that they were killed. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Iran was reconstituted soon after that but was again ravaged by the execution of eight of its members on 27 December 1981. A number of members of local Baha'i governing councils, known as local Spiritual Assemblies, were also arrested and executed in the early 1980s, before an international outcry forced the government to slow its execution of Baha'is. Since 1979, more than 200 Baha'is have been killed or executed in Iran, although none have been executed since 1998. In 1983, the government outlawed all formal Baha'i administrative institutions and the Iranian Baha'i community responded by disbanding its National Spiritual Assembly, which is an elected governing council, along with some 400 local level elected governing councils. Baha'is throughout Iran also suspended nearly all of their regular organizational activity. The informal national-level coordinating group, known as the Friends, was established with the knowledge of the government to help cope with the diverse needs of Iran's 300,000-member Baha'i community, which is the country's largest religious minority. To view the photos and additional features click here: <http://news.bahai.org> – 8-bp-080515-1-ARRESTOFFRIENDS-632-S —  
Advance release: Please check our website for the final version of this article. Copyright 2008 by the Baha'i World News Service. All stories and photographs produced by the Baha'i World News Service may be freely reprinted, re-emailed, re-posted to the World Wide Web and otherwise reproduced by any individual or organization as long as they are attributed to the Baha'i World News Service. For more information, visit <http://news.bahai.org>. If you have questions about this list or wish to unsubscribe, contact [subscribe@bahai.org](mailto:subscribe@bahai.org)

kashmirblogs (2008-05-15 04:51:22)

Human rights organisationa have become more poltical in nature and less sensitive to basic human rights issues...This is my personal experience...Human rights organisation follow different approches to different countries....I am myself a victim of dual policies of human rights organisations and so are 4.5lakh kashmiri hindus who are living as refugees in their own country...

ARose (2008-05-15 04:14:22)

What a truly wonderful contribution to Human Rights! Well done! :) Thank you for making this! ARose

Marilyn Higgins (2008-05-15 04:08:49)

My favorite Human Right is Article #28: Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized. We don't have that yet. It will take a "paradigm shift" to thinking of the world as one country and all people part of the same society; it also requires major changes in our governance and decision-making systems. But it is not only necessary - it is possible and inevitable! Let's keep working on it! "Set your faces toward unity, and let the radiance of its light shine upon you." Baha'u'llah

Brandi Magill (2008-05-15 16:52:18)  
What a great eye opening article Alex!

Bloggers Unite | Focus Organic.com (2008-05-15 23:43:05)  
[...] What Gives Them The Right! We all matter. Bloggers Unite for Human Rights BLOGAR PARA ACREDITAR Bloggers Unite for Human Rights Ruokaa ei aseita! My charade is the event of the season America's Pay-or-Die Health Care System [...]

### 1.3.21 Human Rights Abuse That's Closest To My Heart... (2008-05-16 05:26)



[1]

Carl Jung, a respected psychologist, wrote a lot about synchronicity: the meaningful relationship of events that appear to have no causal connection.

I felt the meaningful relationship between

1: my blogging (on May 14 & 15) about human rights and

2: the facts of the following story.

The "closest to my heart" part of the title of this post is due to my belonging to the Baha'i Faith, as do these persecuted people...

[2]Barnabas quotidianus

Personal diary of John Barnabas (aka Barney) Leith

Baha'is arrested in Iran - grave news

by Barney

The six of the seven members of the Friends in Iran, the informal group that coordinates Bahá'í activities in Iran in the absence of the formal Bahá'í administration, were all arrested in the early hours of this morning (14 May).

The Universal House of Justice, the world governing council of the Bahá'í Faith, has just sent a message advising us of this grave and distressing news.

Officers of the Intelligence Ministry in Tehran entered the homes of Mrs Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr Afif Naeimi, Mr Saeid Rezaie, Mr Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Mr Vahid Tizfah, conducted extensive searches and took them to the notorious Evin Prison in Tehran.

The seventh member of the group, Mrs Mahvash Sabet, Secretary of the Friends in Iran, has been held in custody since 5 March 2008.

Such dire action on the part of the government has not been witnessed since the heart-rending events in 1980 and 1981, when all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly (the national Bahá'í governing council) of Iran were abducted on 21 August 1980 and disappeared without a trace, following which the reconstituted National Assembly was again ravaged by the execution of eight of its members on 27 December 1981.

Since that time, the Bahá'ís in Iran have not been able to elect their Assemblies and their activities have been coordinated by small informal groups, known as Friends.

This is yet more evidence, if evidence were needed, that the government of Iran is determined to extinguish the Bahá'í Faith in the land of its birth.

You can read more about the ongoing persecution of the

Bahá'ís in Iran [3]here.

[4]Here's a bit of response from the U. S. State Department:

## Arrests of Leadership of Iranian Baha'is

We strongly condemn the May 14 arrest of six leaders of the Iranian Baha'i community– Mrs. Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr. Afif Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Mr. Vahid Tizfahm–by Iranian authorities and the continued imprisonment of a seventh leader, Mrs. Mahvash Sabet. This is a clear violation of the Iranian regime's international commitments and obligations to respect international religious freedom norms. We urge the authorities to release all Baha'is currently in detention and cease their ongoing harassment of the Iranian Baha'i community.

[5]

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/iranbahais.jpg>
2. <http://www.leithjb.net/blog>
3. <http://question.bahai.org/>
4. <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/c2404.htm>
5. <http://www.leithjb.net/blog/2008/05/14/bahais-arrested-in-iran-grave-news/>

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Barney (2008-05-16 12:57:23)

Alexander, many thanks for the the pingback and, more importantly, letting your readers know about the desperate situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran.

isabella mori (2008-05-17 00:04:06)

that is horrible, especially taking into consideration the well-known conditions and practices in iranian prisons. my prayers go out for your friends.

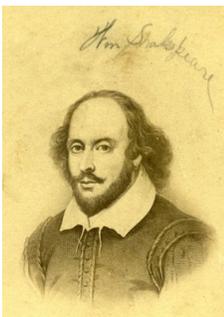
Peter Burns (2008-05-27 21:50:21)

The arrest of a peace loving people the Baha'is of Iran is a violation of all human right,civil rights, and Religious rights and the recent arrests May 14 arrest of six leaders of the Iranian Baha'i community– Mrs. Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr. Afif Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Mr. Vahid Tizfahm–by Iranian authorities and the continued imprisonment of a seventh leader, Mrs. Mahvash Sabet.Should be condemned by all peace loving people of the world Peter

The World Is Watching&#8230; &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-23 20:48:07)

[...] Human Rights Abuse That's Closest To My Heart... [...]

### 1.3.22 Woman / Man / Art (2008-05-17 01:33)



[1]image credit

I found a wonderful site, [2]Scribd, that lets you up and download documents.

I cruised around, uploaded five documents of my own, and ended up at a Shakespeare area. I immediately remembered my spiritual pleasure when I read [3]Venus and Adonis, an epic poem.

The introduction starts this way (it was the 16th Century):

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLEY,  
EARL OF SOUHAMPTON, AND BARON OF TICHFIELD.  
RIGHT HONOURABLE,

I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines  
to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing  
so strong a prop to support so weak a burthen: only, if your  
honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow  
to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you  
with some graver labour.

And this was a man who began this work with these splendid words:

EVEN as the sun with purple-colour'd face  
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn,  
Rose-cheek'd Adonis tried him to the chase;  
Hunting he lov'd, but love he laugh'd to scorn;  
Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,  
And like a bold-fac'd suitor 'gins to woo him.



[4]image credit

Another very strong woman I'm familiar with is Táhirih.

Here's some of [5]what Wikipedia has to say about her:

While in [6]Karbala in [7]Iraq, Táhirih started teaching her new faith. After some of the Shi'ah clergy complained, the government moved her to [8]Baghdad.[9][3] There she started giving public statements teaching the new faith, and challenging and debating issues with the Shi'a clergy. At this point the authorities in Baghdad argued with the Governor that since Táhirih was [10]Persian she should instead be arguing her case in Iran, and the authorities escorted Táhirih and a number of other Bábís out of Baghdad to the Persian border....

After the Báb's arrest in 1848, [11]Bahá'u'lláh made arrangements for Táhirih to leave Tehran and attend a [12]conference of Bábí leaders in Badasht. She is perhaps best remembered for appearing in public without her veil....

She was in her early to mid 30's and was killed in the garden of Ilkhani in Tehran. A prominent Bábí, and subsequently Bahá'í, historian cites the wife of an officer who had the chance to know her that she was strangled by a drunken officer of the government with her own veil which she had chosen for her anticipated martyrdom. Afterwards her body was thrown into a well located in the garden.[13][5] One of her most notable quotes is her final utterance,

"You can kill me as soon as you like,

but you cannot stop the emancipation of women."

1. <http://www.thedctraveler.com/the-dc-shakesepeare-festival-and-someone-hates-hamlet/>
2. <http://www.scribd.com/>
3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/venusadonis.pdf>
4. <http://www.bahaifaithart.com/HistoryPage.htm>
5. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%A1hirih>
6. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karbala>
7. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq>
8. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baghdad>
9. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%A1hirih#cite\\_note-db-2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%A1hirih#cite_note-db-2)
10. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian\\_peoples](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_peoples)
11. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%27u%2711%C3%A1h>
12. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conference\\_of\\_Badasht](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conference_of_Badasht)
13. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%A1hirih#cite\\_note-maneck-4](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%A1hirih#cite_note-maneck-4)

tahirihstarr (2008-10-28 02:09:03)

AMZ: I'm so sorry you've thrown the Covenant out of your life... TahirihStarr\*: It's become man-made. Be happy for me – I am in harmony with the Eternal Covenant or Greater Plan of God and the Evolution of Humanity The Lesser Plan has gone off the rails by shunning people and not practicing equality in its (de)evolution of 'man'. As I was told by a high Indigenous person, they have consulted and find it defective. May the Spirit of Truth reign in the hearts and manifest in the visible world - Starr\*

Starr\* Saffa (2008-10-27 14:46:00)

True to form, The Baha'i internet keepers delete any information regarding Tahirih which they don't want known from Wikipedia. The founder of the Baha'i Faith was under Tahirih's Leadership and Teachings for many years when he was a Babi. Eleven years after her Her glorious ministry, and then Her martyrdom(1852) he began the Baha'i Faith, but never did he mention Her in his writings or give credit for the inspiration She imparted for unfolding a new universal cycle and closing the past paradigm. She wrote in the 1840's: "...the principle of opposition will be changed to that of unity." Tahirih, with divine authority, as the Point of Divine Knowledge, called for the complete emancipation of women world-wide. However, Her figure, when subsumed into the Baha'i religion, serves to keep women in a secondary position through association, as they do not allow women to be elected to the religion's highest decision making body, namely the Universal House of Justice. As a consequence they are making a mockery of everything Tahirih stood for in Her struggle to introduce a new Cycle of Balance for humanity. This is a travesty. However, the truth of the Cosmic Christ Spirit of Tahirih's Message is alive in the hearts of the truthseekers of this Age, and thus Her Message lives. Starr\*

amzolt (2008-10-27 14:52:05)

Starr\*, I'm so sorry you've thrown the Covenant out of your life...

### 1.3.23 The Edge (2008-05-17 21:23)



[1]

Ever felt you were on the Edge?

Once, I felt so edgy I wrote a poem about it:

Sharp Choice

On the edge is where I live, and  
Edges can be fine. So fine they  
Sever wants from acts and leave no  
Blood behind.  
This edge I'm on comes from the  
Depths—a well of yearning  
Yawns—and  
Severance is the  
Price to  
Pay for  
Grace to  
Carry  
On...

Edges are generally created when two aspects of ourselves, or we and another (the "other" could be society) are "at odds"; when two forces are misaligned or actively in conflict.

Here's a reference to a Supreme Edge:

Take thou good heed that ye may all, under the leadership of Him Who is the Source of Divine Guidance, be enabled to direct thy steps aright upon the Bridge, which is sharper than the sword and finer than a hair, so that perchance the things which from the beginning of thy life till the end thou hast performed for the love of God, may not, all at once and unrealized by thyself, be turned to acts not acceptable in the sight of God.

Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 96

Now, to leave you with some psychology:

"Jungians believe that compensation in the service of individuation is the primary transformative function of dreams. Jung (1916a) classifies dreams in three basic categories: reactive, compensatory, and prospective. Reactive dreams simply reproduce an experience that has had a traumatic emotional impact on the psyche. According to Jung, however, most dreams are compensatory. What they compensate is the attitude of the ego in the present. The attitude of the ego is always partial and prejudicial; in the extreme case, it may be utterly defective. Jung defines the ego as identity. That is, the ego is identified with a certain attitude and is disidentified from other, alternative perspectives

of which it is, for whatever reason, unconscious. Compensatory dreams challenge the ego to relate to perspectives to which it has previously been unrelated or ineffectively related. The ego may then seriously entertain, evaluate, and either accept or reject these perspectives.”

[2]Adams, M.V. (2000). Compensation in the Service of Individuation—Phenomenological Essen... Psychoanal. Dial., 10:127-142.

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/around-the-world-147.jpg>

2. <http://www.pep-web.org/document.php?id=PD.010.0127A>

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Perico429 (2008-05-18 14:03:52)

Ever since 1989 I have been living my on the edge, not knowing whether I am here or there. Feeling like the I am just inhabiting a body that does not belong to me.

Alexys Fairfield (2008-05-18 23:14:37)

Alex, Thanks for the nice reflection today. :D

RainforestRobin (2008-05-19 02:37:06)

Hi Alex, I am very touched by your poem. I like the raw honest quality about it. Like you ARE on the edge. You aren't pretending or "telling it safe". But then that is a quality I like about myself any time I have felt on edge. There is no pretense and I have no fear of telling it like it is; life is too real. These are such worthy and beautiful posts you do, both the wisdom and the photos. I LOVED the photos in this post. It really speaks of the edge. You put a lot of thought into this. Thank you my friend. How are you doing?

amzolt (2008-05-19 02:56:01)

Robin, I've been particularly aware of my growth into rigorous honesty. We all "track" our growth in certain areas. The ones we don't track usually trip us up... I'm just a bit better, walking more—still not well enough for much basketball—first day I tried my nervous system stopped talking to my leg muscles. Ended up laughing, bloodied on the asphalt...

Brandi Magill (2008-05-19 13:40:03)

Wearing so many hats, I often find myself on the edge as well. My mind is pulling me in 20 different directions while my heart is telling me to relax and just enjoy life. To be honest I don't think there is a single person who has not felt on the edge at some point of their life. Your mind and body will soon be at one Alex, if anyone can do it, you can

amzolt (2008-05-19 14:07:35)

Well, Brandi, 11 months of abusive medical drugs is prone to waste a body and roil the emotions, while melting the mind. A psychotherapist is posting my story on her blog. It's called "Up The Down Staircase"...

Princess Mediocrity (2009-02-17 00:41:41)

That's way cool. "The Edge." I know the feeling.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-17 01:59:51)  
Princess, So, we're in the same "Club"....

### 1.3.24 Spiritual Flight (2008-05-19 00:27)



[1]

Birds occupy a special place in spirituality:

[2]"Those who bind themselves to a joy  
Do the winged life destroy  
But they who kiss the joy as it flies  
Live in eternity's sunrise."

[3]William Blake

Even humanity itself has been seen as a bird:

[4]Two Wings of a Bird: The Equality of Women and Men

And when our spirit flags, when we are too aware of the material world, when hope takes a vacation:

"Ye are even as the bird which soareth, with the full force of its mighty wings and with complete and joyous confidence, through the immensity of the heavens, until, impelled to satisfy its hunger, it turneth longingly to the water and clay of the earth below it, and, having been entrapped in the mesh of its desire, findeth itself impotent to resume its flight to the realms whence it came. Powerless to shake off the burden weighing on its sullied wings, that bird, hitherto an inmate of the heavens, is now forced to seek a dwelling-place upon the dust. Wherefore, O My servants, defile not your wings with the clay of waywardness and vain desires, and suffer them not to be stained with the dust of envy and hate, that ye may not be hindered from soaring in the heavens of My divine knowledge."

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 327

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/bird-61.jpg>
2. <http://www25.uua.org/ufeta/birds.html>
3. <http://www25.uua.org/ufeta/birds.html>
4. <http://www.bahai.us/node/123>

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RainforestRobin (2008-05-19 02:48:45)

I'm not sure why Alex, but this moved me to tears. It is so beautiful both the words and the photo. The photo reminds me of the rainbow bee eaters that are on in Queensland, Australia where I lived by in the rainforest. I loved the birds there. So many and so colorful. I have always had great dreams of flying (in-my-sleep dreams) where I fly over vast areas of Earth and look down and see the world. They are so real that I often wake feeling like I've traveled. And I always wake feeling very happy and free. Thank you for reminding me of that. Hugs to you, Robin

amzolt (2008-05-19 03:06:31)

Your dreams brought on my remembrance of these words: "...those personages who in a single step have passed over the world of the relative and the limited, and dwelt on the fair plane of the Absolute, and pitched their tent in the worlds of authority and command – have burned away these relativities with a single spark, and blotted out these words with a drop of dew. And they swim in the sea of the spirit, and soar in the holy air of light. Then what life have words, on such a plane, that "first" and "last" or other than these be seen or mentioned! In this realm, the first is the last itself, and the last is but the first." (Baha'u'llah, The Seven Valleys, p. 27)

Brandi Magill (2008-05-19 13:48:23)

I agree with Robin, what a beautiful post Alex. I love the photo you chose to illustrate the article. Flying to me is being free. Free to appreciate the beauty in life's treasures, free to accomplish my many goals and free to hear those four little words "I love you mommy" from my children. Yes I love flying: )

amzolt (2008-05-19 14:00:59)

Thank you , Brandi, for such powerfully encouraging words! Your words, "I love you mommy", carried me back to the meaning of love on this earthly existence—walking down a city street, having my Most Dear Mother whip out her hankie, swiftly apply some of her spittle, grab my little arm firmly, and take a swipe

at something on my face. At the time, I had a strong displeasure for what I recall now with great fondness!  
Alex

Tomas (2008-05-20 10:23:49)

Wow...- THANK YOU. What a wonderful picture! You portray the light that talks much better than my words - my heart passionately applauds and I humbly bow to you. Thank you, dear Alexander M Zoltai

Kaira (2008-05-20 18:06:00)

I loved your post! One time when I was in a very rough patch in my life, a friend of mine dedicated a song to me. This song was about the phoenix and how it can be reborn from its ashes and soar to the sky. I'm not sure where did this metafor come from, maybe greek mythology? Take care!

amzolt (2008-05-20 18:21:24)

Kaira, Thank you so much for your comment. It propelled me into Wikipedia and this article: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenix\\_\(mythology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenix_(mythology)) Part of it says: "The phoenix (Ancient Greek: Φοινίξ, phoinix) is a mythical sacred firebird in ancient Phoenician mythology, and in myths derived from it." Gotta study the rest ! Alex

isabella mori (2008-05-20 21:45:21)

thank you! i, too, was inspired by this post. i have to confess that one of the reasons why i haven't investigated the baha'i much is because i have a problem with the language. something in your post whispered to me, well, if you don't like the language, change it - don't get caught in these appearances! so i did. i submit this with respect: "you are like the bird that soars through the big, wide sky, with the full force of its wings and with complete and joyous confidence. then, hungry, it turns back to water and earth. there, it is trapped by the mesh of desire and finds itself impotent to fly up again to where it came from. powerless to shake off the burden, that bird, a resident of the skies, is now forced to find a home in the dust. therefore, my friends, don't burden your wings with the clay of distraction and empty desires, and don't let the dust of envy and hate stain you, so that you are not hindered from soaring in the heavens of divine knowledge."

amzolt (2008-05-20 22:09:49)

Isabella, The great-grandson of Bahá'u'lláh was left with the task of translating the original Persian and Arabic Writings into English. He'd been educated at Balliol in Oxford and made a decision to use a "Biblical" style. I have no issue with it ( raised by two ministers, mom and dad, and had two sisters who also became ministers [ the Bahá'í Faith has no clergy ;-) ] and find the English elevated and exalted, though I supremely understand a person's aversion to it and I fully support your intention in making your "transliteration"! In another portion of the Bahá'í Writings, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh's son said this: Reveal then Thyself, O Lord, by Thy merciful utterance and the mystery of Thy divine being, that the holy ecstasy of prayer may fill our souls - a prayer that shall rise above words and letters and transcend the murmur of syllables and sounds - that all things may be merged into nothingness before the revelation of Thy splendor. (Compilations, Baha'i Prayers, p. 69) Alex

Transcending the Murmur &laquo; Our Evolution (2008-06-01 02:44:43)

[...] am I telling you all this? A while ago, I read some moving words here on Alexander's blog. They moved me but ... I had a bit of a funny reaction to the specific use of language. Thankfully, [...]

### 1.3.25 Tackled by Life (2008-05-21 12:36)



[1]image credit

I wrote a prayer-poem twelve years ago. Two years ago it came true. The title of this post, Tackled by Life, relates to this part of the prayer: "...quench my ego in Thy Will...".

Going Higher

O sweet God,

Please take this Fire

Swirling in my breast!

Breathe

Thy Breath into my Passion.

May I have no rest from any

Fervor I may feel nor any blaze

Divine; but, quench my ego in Thy

Will and

Love this love of mine...

My recent social networking led to a psychotherapist's blog which led to being asked to write a guest post. It relates to this tackling life can do and how it quenches ego:

[2]Isabella Mori's posting of my story[3]

[4] Explore Home-Based Business

1. <http://strick4life.wordpress.com/2006/09/>
2. <http://www.moritherapy.org/article/up-the-down-staircase/>
3. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>
4. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Evita (2008-05-21 20:54:05)

Beautiful post Alexander - your poem/preyer speaks volumes! Quenching the ego is extremely satisfying on the level of our spirit/soul as it is then that we can reach the higher essence of who we are.

isabella mori (2008-05-21 22:56:00)

what a beautiful poem! i'll draw my readers' attention to it!

up the down staircase (2008-05-21 22:58:19)

[...] with a global agenda, and a nutrition entrepreneur. alexander has also written a beautiful poem that goes with this post. addthis \_url = [...]

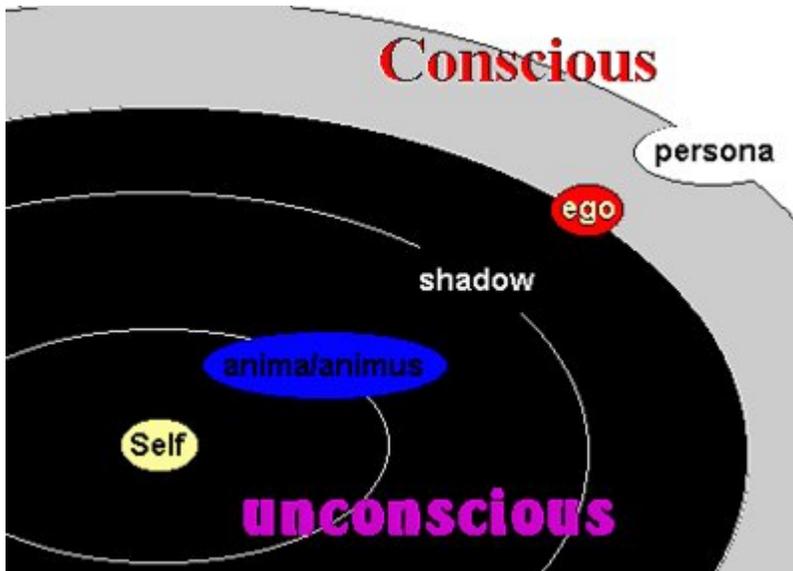
bluerose (2008-05-22 01:39:00)

I wandered by via Isabella's posting of your story. Thanks for sharing it, and this poem as well.

quickie: inspiration (2008-06-18 03:59:38)

[...] alexander [...]

### 1.3.26 Our Responsibility to Society (2008-05-22 14:03)



[1]image credit

Don't let that image fool ya. This post is about our riotous internal lives, not some bone dry realm of abstract psychology.

Even though my highest allegiance is to my Faith, I have studied quite a bit of psychology. I found my most impressive psychologist while I was studying Tarot, Astrology and the I Ching—Carl G. Jung.

[2]Jung says “The psyche itself, in relation to consciousness, is pre-existent and transcendent “. So, while the ego is born, grows, and dies, in the same way as the body, the psyche itself, and especially the Self, is not under the same limitations.

You can inhale the fragrance of a ”Jungian” view of your personality from the site below (this is a simple test but seems to be playing in the right ballpark). Here's my own result:

[3]INFP - "Questor". High capacity for caring. Emotional face to the world. High sense of honor derived from internal values. 4.4% of total population.

[4]Free Jung Personality Test (similar to Myers-Briggs/MBTI)

Basically, according to Jung and his theories of the unconscious, there's a whole zoo of characters beyond our innocent faces. And, the Major task of life is to integrate this menagerie into a Self...

[5] In a previous post, I pointed toward an important paper about treating our own internal realm as a "community", an approach that lets us be kinder and more compassionate toward unregenerate aspects of our Whole Self.

So, what I've been trying to approach in this rather rambling post is an attitude toward our own internal self that lets us relate to others authentically. In the highest sense, we can talk about progressive stages of identifying our "self" to larger and more complex levels of "organization"—an ascending spiral of blossoming compassion.

Every imperfect soul is self-centred and thinketh only of his own good. But as his thoughts expand a little he will begin to think of the welfare and comfort of his family. If his ideas still more widen, his concern will be the felicity of his fellow citizens; and if still they widen, he will be thinking of the glory of his land and of his race. But when ideas and views reach the utmost degree of expansion and attain the stage of perfection, then will he be interested in the exaltation of humankind. He will then be the well-wisher of all men and the seeker of the weal and prosperity of all lands. This is indicative of perfection.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 68

[6] Explore Home-Based Business

1. [http://pandc.ca/?cat=car\\_jung&page=major\\_archetypes\\_and\\_individuation](http://pandc.ca/?cat=car_jung&page=major_archetypes_and_individuation)
2. [http://www.schuelers.com/ChaosPsyche/part\\_1\\_27.htm](http://www.schuelers.com/ChaosPsyche/part_1_27.htm)
3. <http://similarminds.com/jung/infp.html>
4. <http://similarminds.com/>
5. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/05/11/i-am-a-community/>
6. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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rainforestrobin (2008-05-24 21:15:00)

I am once again blown away by your posts. Your deep thought and compassion touches me. I just read a few of them – catching up. I really liked your poem...you are an excellent writer. It would be neat to see them all in a book with photos you chose. Also your deep commitment to human rights jumps off these pages in a brave bold way. I cried reading the freedom of religion article. I cannot get over how much fear motivates people to control or crush that which they fear. And I also can't get over how courageous people the world over STILL speak their truth in the face of oppression, torture and death. Your posts are SO worthy and important. Thank you Alex.

### 1.3.27 Soil and Souls (2008-05-23 13:45)



Just one of my favorite quotes today...

"Holy souls are like soil which has been plowed and tilled with much earnest labor; the thorns and thistles cast aside and all weeds uprooted. Such soil is most fruitful and the harvest from it will prove full and plenteous. In this same way man must free himself from the weeds of ignorance, thorns of superstitions and thistles of imitations, that he may discover reality in the harvests of true knowledge. Otherwise the discovery of reality is impossible, contention and divergence of religious belief will always remain and mankind, like ferocious wolves will rage and attack each other in hatred and antagonism. We supplicate God that He may destroy the veils which limit our vision and that these becloudings which darken the way of the manifestation of the shining lights may be dispelled in order that the effulgent Sun of Reality may shine forth.... Just now the soil of human hearts seems like black earth, but in the innermost substance of this dark soil there are thousands of fragrant flowers latent. We must endeavor to cultivate and awaken these potentialities, discover the secret treasure in this very mine and depository of God, bring forth these resplendent powers long hidden in human hearts. Then will the glories of both worlds be blended and increased and the quintessence of human existence be made manifest."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Foundations of World Unity, p. 76

1. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Imelda / Greenishlady (2008-05-23 15:51:05)

Alexander, I haven't been by in a while, but stopped in today to catch up. I really admire your posts on human rights, especially drawing attention to the arrests in Iran.

### 1.3.28 Prisoners of Conscience (2008-05-24 03:15)

One of our readers commented on liking recent posts on human rights and the Iranian Bahá'ís. Because of the truth that, if one person says something, there are a number of others who feel the same way but haven't mentioned it, I thought I'd do a follow-up post to the one I did on the seven incarcerated Iranian Bahá'ís.

The following story is reprinted from the site of the [1]Bahá'í International Community:



[2] [3] The seven Baha'is who have been arrested are, seated from left, Behrouz Tavakkoli and Saeid Rezaie, and, standing, Fariba Kamalabadi, Vahid Tizfahm, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, and Mahvash Sabet. All are from Tehran. Six were arrested on 14 May 2008 in early-morning raids at their homes, and the seventh was detained in March.

Bahá'í International Community rejects Iranian allegations on recent arrests  
21 May 2008

NEW YORK — Allegations by Iran that six Bahá'ís were arrested last week “for security reasons and not for their faith” are utterly baseless and without documentation, said the Bahá'í International Community today.

“All of the allegations issued in a statement on Tuesday by the Iranian government are utterly baseless,” said Bani Dugal, the principal representative of the Baha'i International Community

to the United Nations, referring to statements made in a press conference given yesterday in Tehran by Iranian government spokesman Gholam-Hossein Elham, at which he acknowledged the arrest and [4]imprisonment of six Bahá'í leaders last week.

“The allegations are not new, and the Iranian government knows well that they are untrue,” Ms. Dugal said. “The documented plan of the Iranian government has always been to destroy the Bahá'í community, and these latest arrests represent an intensification of this plan.

“The group of Bahá'ís arrested last week, like the thousands of Bahá'ís who since 1979 have been killed, imprisoned, or otherwise oppressed, are being persecuted solely because of their religious beliefs. The best proof of this is the fact that, time and again, Bahá'ís have been offered their freedom if they recant their Bahá'í beliefs and convert to Islam – an option few have taken.

“Far from being a threat to state security, the Bahá'í community of Iran has great love for their country and they are deeply committed to its development. This is evidenced, for example, by the fact that the vast majority of Bahá'ís have remained in Iran despite intense persecution, the fact that students denied access to education in Iran and forced to study abroad have returned to assist in the development of their country, and the recent effort by Bahá'ís in Shiraz to provide schooling for underprivileged children – an effort the government responded to by arresting some 54 Bahá'í participants in May 2006,” said Ms. Dugal.

In its coverage of Mr. Elham's press conference, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported that the six Bahá'ís were arrested “for security reasons not for their faith.” The IRNA report also quoted Mr. Elham as saying that the six Bahá'ís were somehow linked to “foreigners, the Zionists in particular.”

Ms. Dugal addressed that issue also, saying:

“The charges linking the Bahá'ís to Zionism are a distortion of history: The Bahá'í Faith has its world headquarters in Israel because Bahá'u'lláh was, in the mid-1800s, sent as a prisoner to the Holy Land by two Islamic countries: Ottoman Turkey and Iran.

“The charge that Bahá'ís are Zionists, which has in fact been made against Bahá'ís for the last 30 years by Iran, is nothing more than an effort by the government to stir animosity against Bahá'ís among the Iranian population at large. This is but the most recent iteration in a long history of attempts to foment hatred by casting the Bahá'ís as agents of foreign powers, whether of Russia, the United Kingdom, or the United States—and now Israel—all of which are completely baseless.

“The real issue, as it relates to Bahá'ís, who are committed to nonpartisanship and nonviolence, is the ideology of the government, which has undertaken a well-documented effort to utterly block the development of the Bahá'í community not only through arrests, harassment and imprisonment but also by depriving their youth of education and preventing adults from obtaining a livelihood.

“We would ask whether issues of state security rather than ideology were involved in recent incidents such as the destruction of a Bahá'í cemetery and the use of a bulldozer to crush the bones of a Bahá'í who was interred there; the harassment of hundreds of Bahá'í schoolchildren throughout

Iran by teachers and school officials in an effort to make them reject their own religion; or the publication of dozens of defamatory anti-Bahá'í articles in Kayhan and other government-sponsored news media in recent months," said Ms. Dugal.

She also noted that over the years, a number of government officials, clerics, and members of the judiciary have in fact made statements in private noting the nonpartisan conduct of the Bahá'í community and the unjustified nature of government charges against Bahá'ís.

She added that the present government's ideology is based in large part on a belief that there could be no Prophet following Muhammad. The Bahá'í Faith poses a theological challenge to this belief.

"Freedom of religion is the issue and Iran itself is a signatory to international covenants that acknowledge the right of individuals to freedom of religion or belief, including the right to change one's religion," Ms. Dugal said.

"What the Iranian government cannot tolerate is that the Iranian people are less responsive to the government's propaganda, because they see the reality — that Iranian Bahá'ís love their country, are sincere in their desire to contribute to its well-being, are peace-loving, and are law-abiding — and that these qualities stem from their beliefs. Consequently, there is growing sympathy for the Bahá'ís. Increasingly, people at all levels of the society are coming to their defense both privately and publicly, and there is growing interest in and attraction to the Bahá'í Faith amongst the population," Ms. Dugal said.

## [5] Explore Home-Based Business

1. <http://www.bahai.org/>
2. <http://news.bahai.org/multimedia/slideshow.php?storyid=634>
3. <http://news.bahai.org/multimedia/slideshow.php?storyid=634>
4. <http://news.bahai.org/story/632>
5. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Francis Hayden (2008-05-24 13:18:03)

The fundamental principals of the Baha'i Faith are indeed challenging to any person or persons attempting to establish and maintain power by old world means, including brute force and intimidation. If one looks at the behavior of Baha'is and their institutions one can see a remarkable consistency with their message, which is one of avoidance of all partisan political activity. So while the ideas of Baha'i might be seen as a threat to the established order in Iran, the Baha'is themselves there, in their interaction with their countrymen, speak only in the most general terms about principles of justice and the truth of Baha'u'llah's message, and are faithful to their religion's injunctions never to criticize the government. Therefore the accusations of the Iranian government against the Baha'i leaders are baseless and they are no practical threat, anymore than the U.S. Baha'i community would be to the government of the United States. Baha'u'llah's methods are not only peaceful but patient, affirming, and always seeking to learn from other, to gently persuade, and to show forbearance and forgiveness to the nth degree.

### 1.3.29 Perfectionism . . . (2008-05-25 05:51)



[1]

My father was obsessive about doing things "right". I think quite a bit of my rebelliousness from 18 to 42 was stimulated by the primal urge to break the hold of my father's perfectionism. He was so right in a multitude of details and processes yet so wrong in the wide and deep arena of simple humanity...

As a writer, I've long since realized that my eyes and brain need help (other eyes or computer programs) to rid my words of flaw and imprecision. I also indulge in the sub-domain of poetry: here is where the perfect phrase breaks the rules and the clearest statements drip with emotion...

Various blockages to creativity and productivity begin with statements like: "I'd better wait till I know for sure." or "Maybe they won't like it this way." or "I don't think I can get away with it." Certainly we need to be aware of all the pertinent facts before acting. We need to consider the effect of our actions on others and act with honesty.

Still, perfectionism can take the most common common sense and warp it into uncommon hindrances.

Life isn't black and white, either/or, cut and dried.

It's infinite shades of grey with colorful glows swirling inside. It's both/and. it's alive and kicking!

Human growth is a process, not a set of rigid rules. If Perfectionism was the Rule, Forgiveness would not exist . . .

"All beings, whether large or small, were created perfect and complete from the first, but their perfections appear in them by degrees. The organization of God is one; the evolution of existence is

one; the divine system is one. Whether they be small or great beings, all are subject to one law and system. Each seed has in it from the first all the vegetable perfections. For example, in the seed all the vegetable perfections exist from the beginning, but not visibly; afterward little by little they appear. So it is first the shoot which appears from the seed, then the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruits; but from the beginning of its existence all these things are in the seed, potentially, though not apparently.

”In the same way, the embryo possesses from the first all perfections, such as the spirit, the mind, the sight, the smell, the taste – in one word, all the powers – but they are not visible and become so only by degrees.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 198

## [2] Explore Home-Based Business

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/people-international-014.jpg>
2. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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rainforestrobin (2008-05-29 15:50:51)

Holy mackerel, I needed to hear this so much. Your writing is gutsy and punchy. I like this!!! I’m going to put it on my wall to remind me. It is SOOOOOOO freeing, and beautifully written. WOW! Such important insights you have. There is a difference between doing things well and taking pride in what we do...AND letting perfectionism trap us, suck the life out of us, immobilize us, even permanently stop us. This is HUGE message that we ALL need to read. Thank you ALEX!! You are wise my friend. Also, thank you for your kind note. It made me smile and made my day. Seriously. :)

Imelda / Greenishlady (2008-05-25 11:41:09)

How right you are, Alex! I think perfectionism can lead to a terrible paralysis - inability to start something for fear of not doing a perfect job of it. Few people would have known I was a perfectionist at certain things, because I never actually did those things at all! Now that I’ve let go, and work on a principle of ”Begin... and go from there”, life is much better. I like your choice of quotation to accompany this post.

Javan (2008-06-19 10:31:24)

Somehow i missed the point. Probably lost in translation :) Anyway ... nice blog to visit. cheers, Javan.

### 1.3.30 Our Children Must Have PEACE ! (2008-05-26 21:06)



[1]image credit

”The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.”

Bahá’u’lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 286

Highlighting the crying need for peace, especially for our children, is this quote from OneWorld.Net’s article, “[2]International Efforts ‘Still Failing’ Child Soldiers.”

”Existing strategies have not had the desired impact. If further progress is to be made, it must be recognized that child soldiers are not only an issue for the child rights specialists, but should be on the agendas of all those involved in conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building and development,”

In spite of the dire circumstances affecting our hearts and minds, there is a deep and lasting hope that’s much more than a pipe dream:

”The Great Peace towards which people of good will throughout the centuries have inclined their hearts, of which seers and poets for countless generations have expressed their vision, and for which from age to age the sacred scriptures of mankind have constantly held the promise, is now at long last within the reach of the nations. For the first time in history it is possible for everyone to view the entire planet, with all its myriad diversified peoples, in one perspective. World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet—in the words of one great thinker, “the planetization of mankind”.

”Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horrors precipitated by humanity’s stubborn clinging to old patterns of behaviour, or is to be embraced now by an act of consultative will, is the choice before all who inhabit the earth. At this critical juncture when the intractable problems confronting nations have been fused into one common concern for the whole world, failure to stem the tide of conflict and disorder would be unconscionably irresponsible.”

From The Promise of World Peace Download [3]Word Doc or [4]PDF

“If the learned and worldly-wise men of this age were to allow mankind to inhale the fragrance of fellowship and love, every understanding heart would apprehend the meaning of true liberty, and discover the secret of undisturbed peace and absolute composure.”

- [5]Bahá’u’lláh

## [6] Explore Home-Based Business

1. <http://www.bahai.org/>
2. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/160639/1/7263>
3. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/the\\_promise\\_of\\_world\\_peace.doc](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/the_promise_of_world_peace.doc)
4. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/the\\_promise\\_of\\_world\\_peace.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/the_promise_of_world_peace.pdf)
5. <http://www.bahauallah.com/>
6. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Evita (2008-05-27 21:56:28)

The quotes offered here are extremely powerful. I believe that the awakening is happening and will continue to become stronger and stronger - I know that there are still a lot and I mean a lot of people tied to old conditioned patterns of action and thought, but I know that the essence of our being will eventually shine through so that "our kids" will enjoy a more evolved world in which they can experience life at its fullest!

Catherine (2008-06-18 08:50:16)

Dr Taylor teaches us how to attain deep inner peace - easily, simply, without drugs, anytime we want it. Forgive me for doing everything I can to be sure everyone reads this book and sees this video, but I think all of us benefit and in the larger sense, if everyone reads this, our world will benefit in a very large way.

### 1.3.31 Your Turn . . . (2008-05-28 04:13)



[1]image credit

What does that picture "say" to you? Could you write a caption for it? How about a short paragraph explaining what you see happening? What about a short story? Well, it's your turn !

I did this a month or so ago and it seemed like the right time to try it again.

I hope you'll take this mild challenge: write a phrase, sentence, paragraph, or story about that picture. Post it in the Comments, and I'll post all the comments day-after-tomorrow.

I normally post every day but I'll extend this post's lead to give you a chance to crank up your creativity !

[2]

1. <http://www.thedailypage.com/isthmus/article.php?article=5568>

2. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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rainforestrobin (2008-05-29 15:38:15)

NOTE: The dog's leg creeping into the tub (by the boys hand). Little boy: "Ooooh, I love you so much."  
Dog: Wags tail. Little boy: Looks around quickly then says, "Hey, come on in the tub. Quick! Mom's not looking. Ssshhh, don't splash so much. Gosh you're BIG, move over! Ooow, your claws are scratching my leg. Move over some more. Little boy: Pushes dog away a bit Dog: Looks dejected: :( Little Boy: Looks at dog and says, "Aaaw, that's okay. We can both fit in here. I'll make room for you, 'cause you're my bestest ever friend in the whole world." Dog: Licks boy's face and wags his tail, splashes water and suds everywhere. Little boy: Giggles and wraps his arms around the dog's neck. "Luv in the Tub." You can't beat it! :) RainforestRobin [www.nakedineden.com](http://www.nakedineden.com)

Brandi (2008-05-29 14:16:35)

Nothing like a bubble bath and the company of your best friend to end the night: )

Marilyn Higgins (2008-05-29 03:08:44)

Man's best friend is his dog; but a dog's best friend is his kid!

Maggie (2008-05-29 11:12:18)

"Don't tell mom the water's still running!" or "When are you coming in? The water's so cool!"

Catherine. (2008-05-28 14:09:53)

Laughter is God's sunshine, with a Gentle impression of Love from a child of innocence in spirit, mind, and body !

Amarendra (2008-05-28 15:04:17)

Thank You Love, for being Here Now! I experience God intimately by embracing ALL of life lovingly!

Alexys Fairfield (2008-05-28 16:44:16)

Thanks for drawing my bath honey. What would I do without you?

Paul (2008-05-28 17:49:39)

Unconditional Love.

Sophia (2008-05-28 20:24:36)

Mmmmm.... nothing like the smell of wet dog.

Jeanne (2008-06-07 19:49:39)

I wish this kid would let my head go so I can go sleep somewhere!

### **1.3.32 And, The Winners Are . . . (2008-05-30 02:35)**

The winners are...

Everyone who posted a comment about [ what they saw in ] this picture from the post two days ago.

Thing is...

Anyone can do this with any picture I post. Your impressions and feelings are the other half of why I blog...

The winner's comments below { there's even a short play down there! }:



[1]image credit

9 Comments [2]»

Laughter is God's sunshine, with a Gentle impression of Love from a child of innocence in spirit, mind, and body !  Comment by Catherine - @ [3]2:09 pm -> | May 28, 2008 Thank You Love, for being Here Now! I experience God intimately by embracing ALL of life lovingly!  Comment by [4]Amarendra<!-- @ [5]3:04 pm -> | May 28, 2008 Thanks for drawing my bath honey. What would I do without you?  Comment by [6]Alexys Fairfield<!-- @ [7]4:44 pm -> | May 28, 2008 Unconditional Love.  Comment by [8]Paul<!-- @ [9]5:49 pm -> | May 28, 2008 Mmmmm.... nothing like the smell of wet dog.  Comment by [10]Sophia | May 28, 2008 <!-- @ [11]8:24 pm -> | Man's best friend is his dog; but a dog's best friend is his kid!  <!-- @ [12]3:08 am -Comment by Marilyn Higgins | May 29, 2008 "Don't tell mom the water's still running!" or "When are you coming in? The water's so cool!"  <!-- @ [13]11:12 am -Comment by Maggie | May 29, 2008 Nothing like a bubble bath and the company of your best friend to end the night: )  Comment by [14]Brandi<!-- @ [15]2:16 pm -> | May 29, 2008 NOTE: The dog's leg creeping into the tub (by the boy's hand). Little boy: "Ooooh, I love you so much." Dog: Wags tail. Little boy: Looks around quickly then says, "Hey, come on in the tub. Quick! Mom's not looking. Ssshhh, don't splash so much. Gosh you're BIG, move over! Ooow, your claws are scratching my leg. Move over some more. Little boy: Pushes dog away a bit Dog: Looks dejected:  Little Boy: Looks at dog and says, "Aaaw, that's okay. We can both fit in here. I'll make room for you, 'cause you're my bestest ever friend in the whole world." Dog: Licks boy's face and wags his tail, splashes water and suds everywhere.

Little boy: Giggles and wraps his arms around the dog's neck. "Luv in the Tub." You can't beat it! ✖ RainforestRobin [16]<http://www.nakedineden.com>  <!-- @ [17]3:38 pm --> Comment by rainforestrobin | May 29, 2008

[18]

1. <http://www.thedailypage.com/isthmus/article.php?article=5568>
2. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/2008/05/28/your-turn/#postcomment>
3. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-194>
4. <http://iamthatam.blogspot.com/>
5. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-195>
6. <http://soulmeetsworld.com/>
7. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-196>
8. <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/%7Eparoth>
9. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-197>
10. <http://visionsoftheworld.blogspot.com/>
11. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-198>
12. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-199>
13. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-200>
14. <http://trueoptimalhealth.com/>
15. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-201>
16. <http://www.nakedineden.com/>
17. <file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/723w0tbs/723w0tbs-body.tex.lynx.html#comment-202>
18. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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### 1.3.33 The Girl Effect . . . (2008-05-31 02:58)



[1]

[2]image credit

Both images (the same person) are from National Geographic. The one on the left taken in 1984, the right in 2002, in Afghanistan.

The woman was interviewed in 2002. Here's an excerpt:

Had she ever felt safe?

"No. But life under the Taliban was better. At least there was peace and order."

Had she ever seen the photograph of herself as a girl?

"No."

She can write her name, but cannot read. She harbors the hope of education for her children. "I want my daughters to have skills," she said. "I wanted to finish school but could not. I was sorry when I had to leave."

Education, it is said, is the light in the eye. There is no such light for her. It is possibly too late for her 13-year-old daughter as well, Sharbat Gula said. The two younger daughters still have a chance.

This is a story repeated far too often in our world but there is strong reason for hope!

One among many reasons for hope is a site called [3]The Girl Effect and I can't urge you strongly enough to click that link and at least watch the really awesome video !

Here is [4]a PDF file of their Fact Sheet and here's an excerpt from that Fact Sheet:

### The Ripple Effect

- When a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later and has 2.2 fewer children.
- An extra year of primary school boosts girls' eventual wages by 10 to 20 percent. An extra year of secondary school: 15 to 25 percent.
- Research in developing countries has shown a consistent relationship between better infant and child health and higher levels of schooling among mothers.
- When women and girls earn income, they reinvest 90 percent of it into their families, as compared to only 30 to 40 percent for a man.

## Population Trends

- Today, more than 600 million girls live in the developing world.

## Girls Count !

Here are two videos from their site:

[5]19-year-old Shumi from Bangladesh

[6]18-year-old Addis from Ethiopia

”The world of humanity has two wings – one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’í World Faith, p. 288

As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs.

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 133

[7]

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/afghan-girl.jpg>
2. <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2002/04/afghan-girl/index-text>
3. <http://www.girleffect.org/#/home/>
4. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/thegirleffect\\_factsheet.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/05/thegirleffect_factsheet.pdf)
5. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e\\_XemXxJQ4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e_XemXxJQ4)
6. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFxcUT4oCxU>
7. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Evita (2008-06-01 21:36:48)

Alex - thank you so much for introducing me to the Girl Effect and the Global Giving Project - this does not seem, but IS a fantastic idea! It is so much easier than people think to make a difference. I will be sure to promote it on my site very soon too.

motherwintermoon (2008-06-10 21:07:34)

Wow! I watched The Girl Effect video and I thank you abundantly for posting the information and the link! The fact that there is an organization promoting this concept fills me with hope and moves me profoundly in mind, heart, and spirit. I'm not blogging currently, but I still have my posts up, my welcome mat out, and my door open. Well, I'm off to read more of your posts!

Tomas (2008-07-25 23:01:45)

it is hard to comment anything. The situation looks awful indeed, yet I don't see any other solution than return to our spiritual origin. As man as girl - we both are equally precious to God and God's love will show us the way in each concrete case. I think that making theories on who is worthy the care more leads to the distortion of the truth. In any case, each of us is responsible for his actions and any politic cant free us from that duty.

anzolt (2008-07-25 23:03:00)

Thanks, Tomas !

Our Evolution (2008-07-24 04:19:48)

[...] will fail to address the very basic issue of poverty reduction in developing countries.” In a previous post I highlighted a wonderful project, The Girl [...]

## 1.4 June

### 1.4.1 Transcending the Murmur (2008-06-01 02:44)



[1]

Today we have a treat !

Isabella Mori, psychotherapist and owner of the blog, [2]Change Therapy, relates her spiritual insight

...

In the late 90's, early 2000's, I was working in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, Canada's "poorest urban postal code". I did outreach counselling and worked out of a number of places, one of them First United Church.

First United Church in Vancouver is a mission church – it focuses mostly on providing services to people who are extremely marginalized: morning soup for people who are homeless, foot care for people with disabilities, advocacy for single mothers, health care for survival sex trade workers, etc.

Now at First United Church they had this wonderful morning service. Right in the middle of people sleeping off their hangovers in the pews and drug users finding a moment's quiet for their overwrought minds, each weekday morning at 8:45, a handful of people would congregate to sing, read a bible verse and reflect and pray together. It was the most beautiful thing – church, I believe, as intended by Jesus.

Almost right from the beginning of me working out of First United, every day I'd be there – usually Wednesday and Friday mornings – I'd make sure to participate in these services. I loved the songs and the little discussions around the readings, mostly from the bible, sometimes from some other religious material.

Towards the end of each service, we'd say the Lord's Prayer, in different versions. I really enjoyed the Maori version. But when we said the "normal" version – I just didn't want to say it. I had a real problem with it, particularly when it comes to "... and lead us not into temptation." What do you mean, lead us not into temptation?? I imagined a God looking down at us thinking, hmmm, this Isabella down there, should I lead her into temptation today? That kind of God didn't look at all palatable to me, and I wasn't going to pray to him!

A few months into me participating in these services, the minister who usually led the service came up to me and said, "Listen, I've noticed you show up here every Wednesday. I'm going on vacation, it's summer, most everyone else is on vacation, too – could you lead the service while I'm away?"

I was a bit flabbergasted but being the sport that I am I said, "Ah, sure, I guess." But then I remembered: "Wait, I can't do that! Haven't you noticed how I never say the Lord's Prayer?"

"No, I haven't. I thought you liked the Maori Prayer."

"I love it. But the other one, the usual version ... "

"What about it?"

I explained to him my conundrum. (What a blessing, now that I think of it. I felt so comfortable with this guy that I had no problem telling him what I thought of this God who's toying

with me – “Should I lead her into temptation today? Shouldn’t I?”)

What he said next has made a huge difference in my life. Let me paraphrase:

“Isabella, there are many different ways of interpreting this. For example, you could see it as meaning, ‘as I am going down the path of temptation, please help me steer away from it, lead me somewhere else.’

You can do this with anything in the Bible. As a matter of fact, I encourage you to do that. Read the Bible in such a way that it gives you the most benefit. Let the Bible be something that God has written for YOU. Make it your own!”

It was one of those moments where something that I had known intellectually for a long time all of a sudden made sense to me on a very deep, transformative level. It was as if Pastor Bruce had showed me a door that I had passed by for decades. All I needed to do was open it and walk through.

It opened the door for me to go back to and discover Christian texts – the Bible in its many translations, the beautiful words of the 13th-century woman mystic Julian of Norwich, the more contemporary writings by Brother Roger of Taizé, to name a few – as well as other spiritual texts that had heretofore not really touched me, most notably 12-step literature.

It changed my life.

Spirituality had always been an important part in my life but after this, I reached a level of commitment and passion that I had always longed for but could never completely feel in my bones. My lifelong interest in Buddhism deepened, I felt free to reclaim my strong Christian roots planted by my deeply religious Lutheran minister grandfather, I gained a deep appreciation of the wisdom of the 12 steps, and the Pagan stirrings that had been with me since the early 80s unfolded into a beautiful, nurturing and creative spiritual practice.

Why am I telling you all this? A while ago, I read some [3]moving words here on Alexander’s blog. They moved me but ... I had a bit of a funny reaction to the specific use of language. Thankfully, I had a little conversation with Alexander about that and showed him my own rewrite of the quote. In response he quoted a Baha’i text:

“Reveal then Thyself, O Lord, by Thy merciful utterance and the mystery of Thy divine being, that the holy ecstasy of prayer may fill our souls - a prayer that shall rise above words and letters and transcend the murmur of syllables and sounds - that all things may be merged into nothingness before the revelation of Thy splendor.”

Compilations, Bahá’í Prayers, p. 70

... and that reminded me of my experience with Pastor Bruce.

Yes.

Let’s rise above words and letters and transcend the murmur of syllables and sounds - that all things may be merged into nothingness before the revelation of God’s splendor.

Isabella Mori is Canada's blogging psychotherapist and talks about spirituality, psychology, creativity and social justice on her blog [4]Change Therapy.[5]

[6]

1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/1153041972\\_475347893f2.jpg](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/1153041972_475347893f2.jpg)
2. <http://moritherapy.org/>
3. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/05/19/spiritual-flight/>
4. <http://moritherapy.org/>
5. <http://moritherapy.org/>
6. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Marilyn Higgins (2008-06-01 06:15:43)

Lovely and transcendent thoughts! Nice sharing!

Loraleigh Vance (2008-06-01 16:49:22)

Beautiful! Life really does depend on the way we choose to view it. Thank you

learning to listen (2008-06-01 18:01:57)

[...] is – or was – a different story. so why don't you trundle on over and visit alex and hear what happened that summer morning in a short but unforgettable conversation among the drunks and hookers in the downtown eastside. [...]

travelerstaes (2008-06-02 09:47:15)

Thank you, you've blessed me this morning with your words.

christian (2008-08-24 20:03:55)

Let me begin by saying that i really like your site amzuri.wordpress.com a lot now.. back to business lol I cant say that i agree with what you typed up... care to explain more?

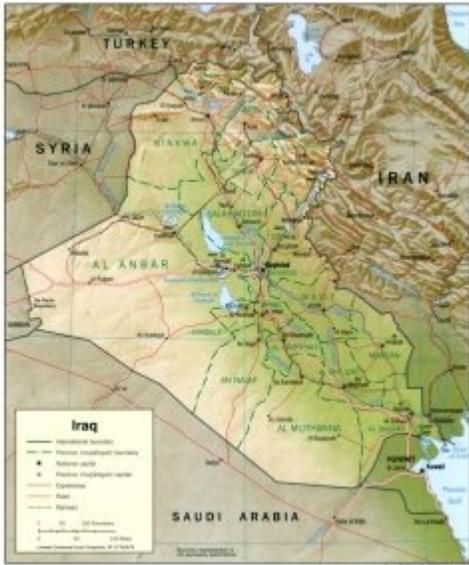
amzolt (2008-08-24 22:30:01)

Christian, I will explain more, over time, since I cover topics that need more than one post to be explained. Do you have any specific questions? Alex

october 2008 buddhist carnival, part 2 (2008-10-23 18:15:55)

[...] sacred texts our own, get our own individual learning from them. (i wrote a whole post about that tailored type of study a while ago over at alex's blog). i don't quite agree with phil's interpretation – but in a [...]

## 1.4.2 Mideast Youth - Thinking Ahead (2008-06-02 04:46)



[1]

[2]image credit

I've received permission from Esra'a Al Shafei to reprint an article she wrote on [3]Mideast Youth - Thinking Ahead. Here's a bit of bio about her:

"A 21 year old student from a Kingdom the size of a bathtub in the Gulf: Bahrain. She comes from a long line of lift engineers and personnel managers. She likes hardcore acoustic noise-terror music and people who can take a joke. She thinks college ultimately does not matter in the slightest, but unfortunately, some kind of socio-political imposition of cultural norms forces her to attend. She enjoys drinking flavored milk and writing about herself in 3rd person to remind herself of her existence."

And, here's her article, Iraqi Youth Use Music To Deal With Chaos:



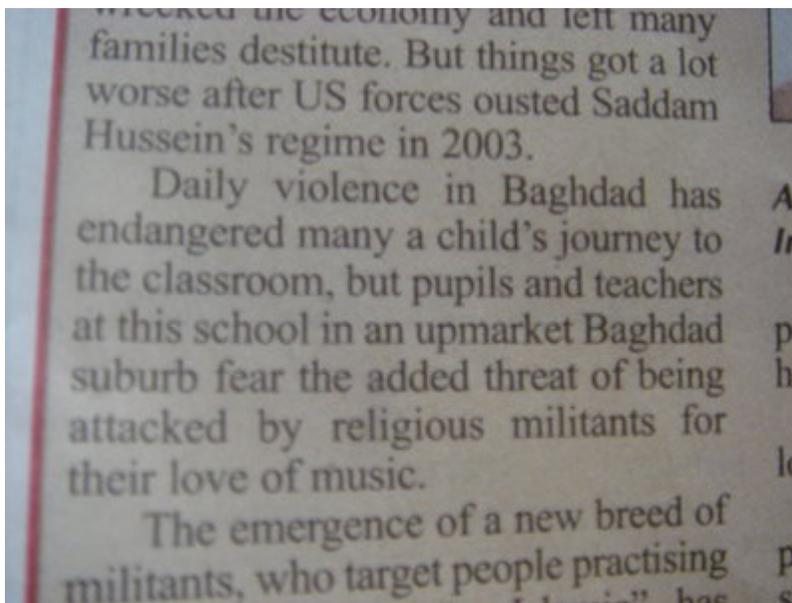
[4]

[5]Iraqi youth use music to deal with chaos

Author: [6]Esra'a (Bahrain) - June 1, 2008

I've always wondered how Iraqi youth must feel now that at least 5 years have passed since the war started, with their situation only getting direr. Religious extremism there is worse than I expected, or at least that's how the media right now is making it seem. Lately [7]an article from Baghdad by Reuters explores how some youth deal with the war around them; through their passion for music.





[...]

Despite hardships, the school provides all instruments, ballet costumes and musical scores — and offers a cherished escape from daily life for pupils like Husam al-Deen, a 17-year-old cellist.

“My most joyful time is at school,” he said. “It’s a beautiful feeling — we forget the problems on the street, the war, the Americans. We forget everything until we go home.”

I bet after reading this article, you too might feel lucky that something you love so much (if you love music, and I can’t imagine anyone who doesn’t) comes so easy in your life while others have to risk their lives just to play it.

For the heavy metal fans out there, there’s a prominent band called [8]Acrassicauda in Baghdad who are seeking official refugee status as what they do is extremely risky as well:

Original members Firas (bass), Tony (lead guitar), Marwan (drums), Faisal (rhythm guitar) and Waleed (lead vocals) were only able to play 3 shows before the war started in 2003. Soon after, Waleed retired from the band and fled the country, leaving Faisal to fill the void of lead singer. Due to increased security precautions throughout Iraq, it became difficult to practice or even get through a show without serious problems. As the situation worsened in Baghdad they began receiving death threats from insurgent groups and religious fundamentalists accusing them of Satan-worship. Eventually, it proved impossible to find any venue that was safe to perform in.

You can read more about them at their blog [9]here. You can see how much they have to deal with just so they can practice and play their music. It’s an increasingly depressing situation for musicians and music lovers in Iraq.

[10]

1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/iraq\\_rel199.jpg](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/iraq_rel199.jpg)
2. <http://bbsnews.net/maps.html>
3. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/2008/06/01/iraqi-youth-use-music-to-deal-with-chaos/>
4. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/>
5. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/2008/06/01/iraqi-youth-use-music-to-deal-with-chaos/>
6. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/author/esra/>
7. [http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080530/wl\\_nm/iraq\\_school\\_dc\\_2](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080530/wl_nm/iraq_school_dc_2)
8. <http://www.myspace.com/wwwacrassicaudas5com>
9. <http://www.heavymetalinbaghdad.com/blog.php>
10. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/>

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Tomas (2008-06-02 15:21:27)

Wow, thank you for the wonderful article. It gave me a good shake, the victims become the heroes here in all senses of a word. I have read “When I hear the sound of a helicopter droning over my head, I play louder.” and was pierced with the stunning beauty of the spirit of the musician - I even felt some sort of good envy to him (sorry for such vocabulary, but that’s the truth). The story inspires the desire to seek for the alike spiritual heigh and thus portrays the safety in my peaceful shelter as the greatest poverty. That was the challenging indeed.

amzolt (2008-06-02 17:20:22)

Thank you for your comment, Tomas ! Two extracts stand way out for me: ”I have read “When I hear the sound of a helicopter droning over my head, I play louder.” and was pierced with the stunning beauty of the spirit of the musician -” and: ”I even felt some sort of good envy to him (sorry for such vocabulary, but that’s the truth). The story inspires the desire to seek for the alike spiritual heigh and thus portrays the safety in my peaceful shelter as the greatest poverty. Alex

Digital Media for Change & Week 2: Freedoms, Vision, and Purple Cowness (2009-08-03 22:09:57)  
 [...] night before class I spent a couple of hours reading and listening and following hyperlinks about Esra’a Al Shafei’s work with Mideastyouth.com. Esra’a will be coming to Monterey and speaking about [...]

### 1.4.3 How Does Music Affect You ? (2008-06-03 06:17)



[1]image credit

If you didn’t read yesterday’s post, please give it a go, o.k.?

Those inspiring kids had profound results from relating to music. One important factor was that they all played music. Having grown up in a musical family, I know the power of ”making music”. Psychologists and Teachers understand that power, too !

But whether you have music affect you by making it or just listening to it, it does have some rich rewards.

What's your experience with music?

How does it affect you?

Why do you think music has such effects on people?

Do you dare leave a comment ???

[2]

1. <http://www.classicalmusic.org.uk/classical-music-for-babies.html>

2. <http://alexanderzoltai.truewealthathome.com/goland15>

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tercero (2008-06-03 06:28:46)

Listen man, you really think you're going to get some sort of response from these SWINE? From these apathetic kids of now-in-day-culture?? We have banished the way of the Bard with pyrotechnics and high-class gimmicks...music is no longer a fantasy but a function for fucked america...corporations create music for the masses and now we are plagued with corporate creativity being spewed into the gutter of gutless children... You ask what's my experience with music? What is my experience with life more like it! My life IS music, I AM music...do we not have vocal chords?! UGH, I DESPISE the phrase, "i cant sing" apathy! such angst against this adolescent mentality of failure and fear...bred by officers of finance no doubt...yes yes, the golden calf...well my friend who is a seeker for comments and creativity i share your lust for life- comment one of my posts! anything! please! I demand something from this community of posts so mundane and immature with sorrow sad poems that speak of lament, WHERE ARE THE LIVERS? drunk with apathy? NOT ME! I am a music man, our generations next dylan hendrix morrison diddley dreamer fucking cunt who will revolt against the social norms- without revolution there is no evolution- the mark of inner eccentricity is the mark of inner electricity- the most grotesque is gorgeous- fuck the mother, kill the father, fuck you for demanding a comment, fuck me for seeking soul. LIFE! LOVE! LIBERTY! GIVE ME ALL I SEEK MY DEATH.

bwerner (2008-06-06 07:35:04)

Muisc is harmony and vibration, vibration lets vibrate our soul and puts it into the harmony alike the music is. Therefore by meditating use meditation music to put your soul into harmonic vibvrations. Werner

Evita (2008-06-06 20:42:28)

I LOVE music!!!! But most importantly I love happy music! There is a big difference I feel in people who listen to "happy" music vs "angry" music. Even though both can be forms of art, I dare to say that one serves the human soul and being better than the other. Music can change an emotion in an instant and has such an amazing power over us. It can make us laugh, cry or all sorts of other things. I personally cannot imagine a world without music. But should it go away, there is always the music of nature that is eternal.

Barbara (2008-06-09 04:12:54)

Music has been, is and will always be a part of my life. I am a writer of music as well as words. Music

soothes my soul and I am so grateful that I have the ears to hear it, the heart to feel it, and the openness to create it.

anonymous (2008-06-09 04:23:00)

Whoohoo tercero tak a chill pill... i'm sure u lov music but dude u can't blame todays society for likin the music they like... I lik music especially CHRISTIAN music but occasionally I listen to "the world's" music and their r songs that I disapprove of lik songs that say the f word more times than u do talkin about music...

motherwintermoon (2008-06-10 21:31:33)

There are wonderful songs that evoke deep feelings of sadness in me because I remember them from traumatic and distressing times in my life. I enjoy songs that tell stories, keeping the tradition of story-telling through song, and songs that are inspirational, playful, or motivational. I find soft, soothing, soulful instrumentals great for clearing away negative energies. "Music to my ears" is a subjective experience.

Maciee (2008-06-23 15:58:24)

I feel that music is an art, that comes from the heart, even a fart is art.

tercero (2008-06-24 05:05:46)

art is an awesome expression of essence- IT IS A BLESSING. AS IS INTERNET YELLING. good sailing, sailor tailer tall tales writing legend: THE OPERA- life

Matt (2008-09-29 18:23:13)

People who listen to happy music tend to be more relaxed, more loving, and live happier lives.

amzolt (2008-09-29 22:57:14)

Matt, Absolutely true !!!

Liara Covert (2008-12-10 03:17:53)

Music is soul. It defies words. The truth is only ever felt.

amzolt (2008-12-10 08:26:39)

Liara, I totally agree—the heart is the seat of wisdom!!

#### 1.4.4 Everything is Plundered (2008-06-04 02:07)



[1]

[2]image credit

Anna Akhmatova

1889 - 1966

The poem below takes on vast meaning when it's known how much suffering and betrayal stalked this woman's life. She was praised by other writers and poets but condemned by her government.

Why do the people who suffer so tragically have such power to inspire us to rise above suffering?

What is it about the human soul that makes it shine like gold when the fire is hottest?

[3]Everything is Plundered

Everything is plundered, betrayed, sold,  
Death's great black wing scrapes the air,  
Misery gnaws to the bone.  
Why then do we not despair?

By day, from the surrounding woods,  
cherries blow summer into town;  
at night the deep transparent skies  
glitter with new galaxies.

And the miraculous comes so close  
to the ruined, dirty houses -  
something not known to anyone at all,  
but wild in our breast for centuries.

By: Anna Akhmatova

tr. by Stanley Kunitz with Max Hayward

[4]

1. <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/6/6e/Petrov-vodkin-akhmatova.jpg>
2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Petrov-vodkin-akhmatova.jpg>
3. <http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/2008/06/03/everything-is-plundered/>
4. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Catherine. (2008-06-04 15:42:35)

The only limitation you will ever have, is the limitation of your own thinking!!!

#### 1.4.5 Prayer . . . (2008-06-05 14:41)



[1]

Today, I was led to include excerpts on Prayer from various Holy Books and Spiritual Traditions.

Since your comments are the other half of this blog, this author prays you'll consider these quotes and add your opinions, ideas, criticisms, or feelings.

"He to whom the sanctuary of true prayer is revealed  
Deems it shameful to turn back to mere formal religion."

Rumi, The Masnavi, Vol 1 (E.H. Whinfield tr)

"Take for instance, a cut hand; if you pray for the cut to be healed and do not stop its bleeding, you will not do much good; a material remedy is needed.

"Sometimes if the nervous system is paralyzed through fear, a spiritual remedy is necessary. Madness, incurable otherwise,. can be cured through prayer. It often happens that sorrow makes one ill, this can be cured by spiritual means."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 65

"A servant is drawn unto Me in prayer until I answer him; and when I have answered him, I become the ear wherewith he heareth...."

Qur'án 83:28.

"...pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you..."

King James Bible, Matthew

"An offering, consisting of muttered prayers, is ten times more efficacious than a sacrifice performed according to the rules (of the Veda); a (prayer) which is inaudible (to others) surpasses it a hundred times, and the mental (recitation of sacred texts) a thousand times."

Hindu, Laws of Manu

"Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud, so that no prayer can pass through."

Kesuvim (Writings), Eichah (Lamentations)

”For I know words of prayer are effective with Ye, which tend to a good object.”

The Zend-Avesta, - Yasna

[2]

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/pray1.jpg>

2. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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georgewesley (2008-06-06 04:27:57)

Alexander, Food for the soul here, huh. Your blog is so wonderfully far-ranging. It has really evolved. LOTS here to explore.

Liara Covert (2008-06-10 00:13:20)

In all religion, human beings can trace a common thread. This inspires coming closer together as Humanity rather than diverging and fragmenting into separated parts.

amzolt (2009-01-02 10:59:24)

Palo, I don't think it's copyrighted.

Palo (2009-01-02 10:09:28)

hullo and agreat new year to u all may i use the pic called prayer for a T-shirt design... enjoy

#### 1.4.6 A Woman's Bravery . . . (2008-06-06 17:08)



[1]

Bushra Jamil

Winner of the Ida B. Wells Award  
for Bravery in Journalism

[2]Women's e-News Video of the Presentation

From the OneWorld.Net story [3]From Baghdad With Love:

"Former teacher Bushra Jamil returned to Iraq in 2003 to start the country's first progressive radio station for women, which has flourished over the years despite the constant threat of violence and government opposition.

- Radio Al-Mahaba is the first radio station in Iraq designed for and by women.
- The station is credited with reaching out to and connecting women from all walks of life.
- Jamil has been commended with several congressional and journalism awards for her efforts.

"In Baghdad right now, refrigerators, electric stoves, heaters, air conditioners, televisions, and computers operate for one or two hours on a good day. There are plenty of days when it isn't safe to go outside to shop or work or visit neighbors. And even when there's light to read, Iraqi sources estimate that as many as 75 % of women in Iraq are illiterate—a rate that has grown steadily over the past 10 years of warfare and civil strife. Here and in the rest of Iraq, people count on transistor radios for news and entertainment, to lift their spirits and to let them know what's happening in the world...

"The station sees its mission as 'contributing to the establishment of a secular democratic society where all are equally treated and their rights are protected by law... and as joining Iraqis with love, kinship, commitment, respect, and most important, cumulative knowledge.' In an NPR interview, Jamil gave one small example of how that works in practice. 'On our legal program, a woman called crying because her husband beat her. She had children and no job, and didn't know how she could get by without him.' The next caller and the one after that both asked the host to pass their numbers on to the first, so they could share experience and support."

[4]

1. <http://womensenews2007.aptinet.com/cgi-bin/video.cgi?image>, 23
2. <http://womensenews2007.aptinet.com/cgi-bin/video.cgi?movie>, 23
3. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/160798/1/>
4. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Catherine. (2008-06-07 04:12:16)

Love is strengthened by working through conflicts together.!

Liara Covert (2008-06-10 00:10:44)

Pioneers can inspire while they also encourage. I enjoy this story and the uplifting feelings it evokes.

### 1.4.7 Depression and Living (2008-06-07 15:31)

✕

Depression and Living

Peopleized by: [1]Alexander M Zoltai - Saturday, 07 June 2008

[2]Addy Compelling and frank discussion of depression and manic depressive illness.

[3]Alex: What's your "definition" of depression?

[4]Addy: For my definition of depression you need to look beyond the common associations with the word...'I was depressed for a few days with all the stress of uni,' or 'Man, it's so depressing that XXX and I broke up,'...depression for me is a mental state which exists for a prolonged period of time that affects EVERY area of their life. Mentally, physically and emotionally!

It impairs the ability to think, work, emote, exercise, everything some people take for granted - it affects all the things we do and want to do, even to the point that we are doing exactly what makes us happy yet happiness is not felt. It's not something which can be snapped out of or fixed with a few self help books.

It is an illness which destroys lives and people need to start understanding it far more.

[5]Alex: What's the difference between depression and bi-polar?

[6]Addy: The depression for bipolar can be illustrated by merely looking at the alternative diagnosis for clinical depression, which is "unipolar depression".

In other words, depression has 'one pole' - which is that of feeling down, sad, completely pointless in life, desiring death because nothing feels good.

Whereas bipolar - which is having two poles - means you get twice the fun, so to speak! As well as dealing with the utter downs of depression you also get the extreme highs of mania, a state where you feel you're one of the greatest people to have ever lived. You mind races with ideas, everything looks rosy, your sex drive goes through the roof, you don't need food or drink and you have limitless energy.

Both poles with bipolar are extremely dangerous, and the differences between the two illnesses are abundant, but then so are the similarities.

[7]Alex: Can depressed people "succeed" in life?

[8]Addy: Hell yeah!

Well known people who suffered from depression include:

Abraham Lincoln, Joanna Lumley, Kim Wilde, Paula Yates, Dyan Cannon (Singer), Dorothy Parker (author), Virginia Woolf (author), Sir Winston Churchill, Florence Nightingale, John Cleese, Tony Hancock (comedian), Sergei Rachmaninoff (composer), Clara Bow (1920's film star), Sarah Lancashire (actress), Trisha Goddard (tv presenter), Denise Welch (actress), Zach Braff (actor)

Then there's bipolar:

Spike Milligan, Nicola Pagett (actress), Vivien Leigh (actress) Jeremy Brett (actor), Freddie Starr (comedian), Sir James Goldsmith (businessman), Jess Yates (Tv presenter father of Paula Yates), Vincent Van Gogh, Robert Schumann (composer), Ludwig Van Beethoven, Stephen Fry (actor, comedian, raconteur)

Are you telling me these people didn't succeed in life???

[9]Alex: Does it make sense to say that society "causes" depression?

[10]Addy: Is society the sole cause of depression? No.

Does society contribute to the causes of depression, YES. Merely because very few members of society know what depression is.

A lot of people are so hung up on it being a 'weakness' or 'personality trait' or 'something someone needs to just snap out of' that they refuse to see it as an illness. As mentioned earlier it's the common misconception that depression is merely a passing period of the blues which causes the problem.

The stigma attached to admitting you suffer from it, or any mental illness, is HUGE. It can (and has) cost people their entire life! Jobs, family, friends, lovers, possessions, dreams, futures.

So it's not really society itself which is causing depression but the misconceptions within society, which is what I have been trying to do with my blog. Raise awareness of mental health, show people that those suffering from mental illness are not weak - but in fact are so so very strong!

[11]Alex: Is depression something that "follows" creativity around?

[12]Addy: Much like with my answer to question 3, so many of the most creative minds you can think of have suffered from depression and/or bipolar at various times in their life that it has become a little "in" to say that bipolar (especially) is the creative illness. In fact it's become almost popular to suffer from bipolar that it is trivialising the seriousness of the illness.

More needs to be done to understand the illnesses - and more importantly, the PEOPLE who suffer from them - rather than just throwing labels on people.

[13]Alex: What else would you like to add?

[14]Addy: Much more work needs to be done to understand that people who suffer from mental illness are just that - PEOPLE. We are no more to blame for our illnesses than people who have diabetes, cancer or HIV. The misconceptions, judgements and labelling needs to stop. It's about time the stigma of mental illness gets the spanking it so rightly deserves! So drop by the blog and get to know ME, as well as learn a whole lot more about my life than you might want to know.

Addy's Page: [15][www.myjourneywithdepression.com](http://www.myjourneywithdepression.com) Authors Page:  
[16]Alexander M Zoltai

powered by [17]Peopleized!

[18]

1. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/)
2. [http://www.peopleized.com/index.php?option=com\\_comprofiler&task=userProfile&user=998&Itemid=186](http://www.peopleized.com/index.php?option=com_comprofiler&task=userProfile&user=998&Itemid=186)
3. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
4. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/)
5. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
6. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/)
7. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
8. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/)
9. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
10. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/)
11. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
12. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/)
13. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,1052/Itemid,186/)
14. [http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com\\_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/](http://www.peopleized.com/component/option,com_comprofiler/task,userProfile/user,998/Itemid,186/)

15. <http://www.myjourneywithdepression.com/>
16. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
17. <http://www.peopleized.com/>
18. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Depression and Living | Mental Health News | Mental Health and Wellness (2008-06-07 16:06:51)

[...] you need to look beyond the common associations with the word I was depressed for a few days with all the stress of uni, or Man, it s so depressing that XXX and I broke up, depression for me is ... Continue Reading... [...]

Alexys Fairfield (2008-06-08 00:00:58)

Hi Alex, Good interview. Depression is a serious issue and we have to embrace it tenderly to solve its mystery. Btw, I have tagged you. See my site.

&nbsp; Depression and Living&nbsp;by&nbsp;diabetes.MEDtrials.info (2008-06-07 15:43:24)

[...] the stigma of mental illness gets the spanking it so rightly deserves! ...article continues at amzolt brought to you by diabetes.medtrials.info and [...]

phantomforever9 (2008-06-08 19:26:47)

Thanks for the information on how to deal with depression. We recently wrote an article on genetics and depression. It is widely known that depression results from a combination of many different factors. Environmental factors such as stressful life events can trigger the development of major depressive disorder (MDD), but doctors suspect that there may another, unheard-of underlying factor – genetics. <http://brainblogger.com/2008/06/04/interactive-effects-of-genetics-on-depression/> Sincerely, Kelly

amzolt (2008-06-10 18:10:33)

Kelly, This article seems to lean heavily toward the existing treatment paradigm–drugs...

Depression and Living: Addy interviewed by Alexander M Zoltai | Overcoming Mental Illness (2008-06-10 09:46:01)

[...] Read the interview Depression and Living on Our Evolution [...]

judi moran (2008-09-17 16:43:01)

Dear Alex, Thank you so much for this informative and at the same time personal interview about depression and manic depression. As you know, I have suffered from both in the past. Addy is right on that one of the biggest obstacles a victim of this illness faces is the stigmatism of mental illness. I could tell many a personal story of how that has affected me on less significant and more devastating levels. Those of us who have been warriors in this battle against mental illness have been given a great gift, though. A compassion that reaches to the very depths of the soul. This illness is both a curse and a gift. BTW, I have written a book about my own experience with manic depression. It will not be published until after I get my first book published. But then I hope it will find an audience and give others a glimpse into how ignorance and fear of mental illness can almost destroy people. If it weren't for Jesus, I would not be writing this to you today. When I lost all because of this illness, He remained. And the fragrance of His presence during those abandoned hours will never be equaled in its sweetness in this lifetime. Care, Jlo

amzolt (2008-09-17 19:30:09)

judi, Thank you for such an in-depth response! I look forward to your book because I'm reweaving my conceptions of what depression actually is... Let me offer one of my favorite spiritual quotes about depression (even though it may seem like it's talking about "normal" depression, I feel it does speak to the "clinical" variety as well: "If we suffer it is the outcome of material things, and all the trials and troubles come from this world of illusion. "For instance, a merchant may lose his trade and depression ensues. A workman is dismissed and starvation stares him in the face. A farmer has a bad harvest, anxiety fills his mind. A man builds a house which is burnt to the ground and he is straightway homeless, ruined, and in despair. "All these examples are to show you that the trials which beset our every step, all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene. "Today, humanity is bowed down with trouble, sorrow and grief, no one escapes; the world is wet with tears; but, thank God, the remedy is at our doors. Let us turn our hearts away from the world of matter and live in the spiritual world! It alone can give us freedom! If we are hemmed in by difficulties we have only to call upon God, and by His great Mercy we shall be helped." (Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 110)

#### 1.4.8 Broken ? (2008-06-09 02:31)



[1]

Catch your problems when only a link is broken and the chain of life is still holding

or

you can ignore the signs and face this :

"It's all broken,  
Even though there's

More–more  
Time, more  
Chances, more  
Work...

It's all been broken !

Mending struggles to  
Begin.”

[2]

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/broke1.jpg>
2. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Liara Covert (2008-06-09 08:17:39)

If you recognize you feel broken, that is the first step toward healing.

Brandi Magill (2008-06-09 15:23:27)

I completely agree with Liara. Recognizing the feeling and choosing to do something about it is key. We all feel broken at times, we're only human.

Tomas (2008-06-09 19:09:02)

Your advice offers me two ways of response. I can either muse about the broken link and talk about others in sense of what our life should look like, or admit that my broken link made me the viewer without the right to become the actor on life stage. After my trauma I was returned to life again, but since then I am alive just in my dreams- my sickness took me out of life without any hope to enter the world of the healthy again. The above creates a problem. It may look that I became just lazy... but do the people in a nursery home too are lazy and silently suffer only because their unwillingness to leave their comfort zone? While we can muse about the broken links without stopping, it would be better to talk about the destiny. Sorry for the truth of the dependent. While philosophy explores the dreamlands, the disabled do just what their are helped to do. All other plans bring just pain and sorrow for personal sickness. However, did my trauma had though something in common with my consciousness? No, of course. thus my talk about the destiny isn't just the musing. In case some benefactor would support me, I could blog further on, but that would be not the merit of me but the result of free gift that enabled me to move on one more step. Catch of the problem and the restoring of the chain are two different things. All I can to do is just to send you my best wishes.

amzolt (2008-06-09 19:16:31)

Tomas, I'm sure my situation is much less severe than yours but I've recently come through some very debilitating health issues. I realized that, even if the medical experts can't heal me, I've still gained a tremendous spiritual boost by dealing with the suffering and letting it "teach me"—binding my life with a spiritual link even if the physical one breaks down. I pointed out the necessity of spotting broken links

before the whole chain breaks, true, but I've yet to mention what to do if a broken link is found. Maybe in a future post . . .

rainforestrobin (2008-06-09 21:17:48)

I like this thought. for me it's over extending that does it. I am trying to learn to recognize overextending BEFORE I get sick from too much demand on me, too many demands on me and too often demands on me. I am so good a "dealing with" that I over extend and do NOT want to do that anymore. I refuse to. Everything can just wait. I used to think that just because I was good at something, coping, dealing, etc. that I should do it. I now know this to be untrue. So now I try as much as anyone can to prevent the broken links from happening instead of living in constant repair/revcover mode. Excellent post, REALLY made me think! Thanks my friend!

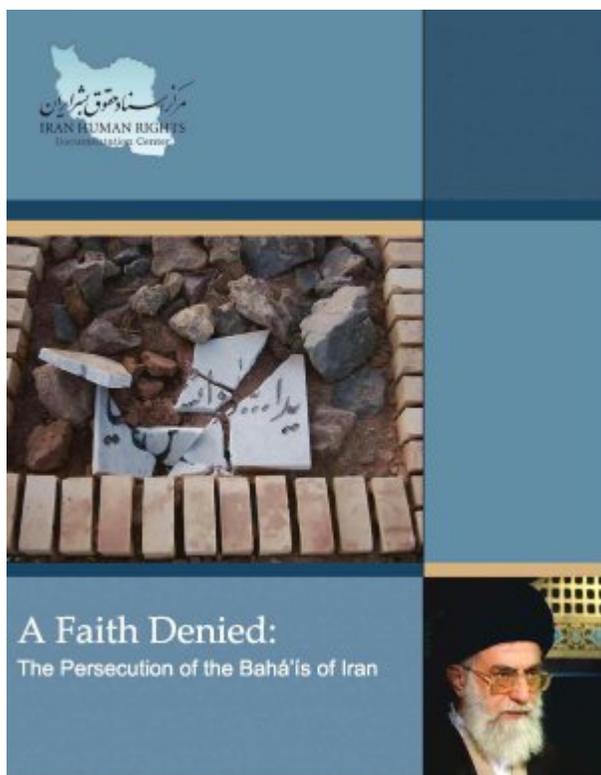
Evita (2008-06-09 22:59:00)

What a profound picture, post and conversation. I personally don't think that we are ever truly broken, perhaps in the physical but not in the spiritual. Our souls are divine and when there is a problem in the physical, if we could just find the ability to look more within where one can always find the stillness to be, if not find complete healing altogether. But of course in order for this to happen one must first understand and have faith in the power within.

Liara Covert (2008-06-15 04:56:37)

Whenever life experience prompts you to open your senses and your mind, this expands your awareness. Its a real blessing. Many human beings don't realize everything that happens to them is indeed a blessing. Instead, they are often conditioned to judge what is good or bad, right or wrong. As you evolve to transcend such duality, you begin to see you're blessed by whatever circumstances you have been given. You have the power to teach others greater love, self-acceptance and forgiveness, by setting an example with your own soul awakening and self-growth.

## 1.4.9 Religious Minority in Iran (2008-06-10 02:26)



[1]image credit

About three weeks ago, I posted a story about the arrest and detainment of the leadership of the Baha'i Faith in Iran. It was published here to highlight the plight of people denied the basic human right of Belief.

Six days ago, the Universal House of Justice, the world governing body of the Baha'i Faith, sent a letter to the believers in Iran.

I'm posting it here as an example of how religion can support human rights:

TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN

(Department of the Secretariat)

3 June 2008

To the believers in the Cradle of the Faith

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Almost three weeks have passed since the recent arrest of the members of the distinguished body termed the “Friends in Iran”. No reliable information regarding their circumstances or whereabouts is available. This lack of news and the fact that these dear ones are deprived of access to their families and to legal counsel to defend their rights are causes of deep concern to the Bahá’ís of the world and to all those who seek justice and equity.

What is a source of comfort to our grief-stricken hearts is the courage and steadfastness you have manifested in the face of this crisis. You continue to discharge your spiritual obligations in unity and resolutely adhere to the Divine Teachings. Relying on heavenly grace, you are exerting efforts to protect and safeguard the interests of the Faith. The support that the press and other mass media have given to the oppressed believers in Iran, the advocacy of their cause undertaken by social activists, and the sympathy voiced by Iranian intellectuals evoke our hope and deep gratitude.

Observe how an increasing number of Iranians, who in honouring their ancient traditions, value human rights, believe that the time has now passed for ignorant prejudices to cause division and discrimination amongst people, and recognize that the true exaltation of the nation of Iran is to be attained through unity in diversity. Rest assured that the Iranian people will exert themselves to fulfil such a vision. How regrettable that a small band of those, their hearts darkened by the clouds of prejudice, have yielded to hatred and animosity, are incapable of comprehending the truth that Bahá’ís have no intention but to serve the world of humanity and to assist in the establishment of a spiritual civilization, attribute to you baseless conspiracies, persecute you for your religious beliefs and practices, and seek to inflict harm upon you. Yet, you recall the counsels of Bahá’u’lláh, Who asserts: “That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race.”

Strive, then, to exemplify these words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “It behoveth the loved ones of the Lord to be the signs and tokens of His universal mercy and the embodiments of His own excelling grace. Like the sun, let them cast their rays upon garden and rubbish heap alike, and even as clouds in spring, let them shed down their rain upon flower and thorn.” Despite the current crisis, pay no heed to oppression and cruelty and, inspired by the Divine Teachings, act in the opposite manner. Focus your thoughts on being a source of good to those around you.

Exert every endeavour to serve your fellow citizens—heirs to a culture rich and humane—who themselves suffer from many an injustice. Avoid all divisiveness and conflict, consort with everyone with kindness and sincerity, and engage with your compatriots in the discussion of ideas and the exchange of thoughts on matters with which they are anxiously concerned. Ignite in their hearts the flame of hope, faith, and assurance in Iran’s glorious future and in the bright destiny of humankind which you well know is sure to come to pass.

We supplicate in the Holy Shrines for the protection of the believers in the Cradle of the Faith.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]

1. <http://poetryofpeace.wordpress.com/category/persecution/>

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Liara Covert (2008-06-15 01:18:58)

Many examples of behavior in this physical world are not the kind that promote love, tolerance and forgiveness. Rather than fuel the fire or contribute to the conflict, it is meaningful to teach yourself not to react and be controlled by negative emotions. Everything is like a test.

#### 1.4.10 Teach The Men and Boys . . . (2008-06-11 03:21)



[1]

”First and foremost, violence against women and girls, one of the most blatant and widespread abuses of human rights, must be eradicated. Violence has been a fact of life for many women throughout the world, regardless of race, class, or educational background. In many societies, traditional beliefs that women are inferior or a burden make them easy targets of anger and frustration. Even strong legal remedies and enforcement mechanisms will have little effect until they are supported by a transformation in the attitudes of men. Women will not be safe until a new social conscience takes hold, one which will make the mere expression of condescending attitudes towards women, let alone any form of physical violence, a cause for deep shame.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1995 Oct, [2]Turning Point For All Nations

”They have been trained, with all means, and literally conditioned into resolving conflicts in a violent way. Through their parents and most of the adults in their life they have learned that the strongest prevail and that to use your power over the weaker is the way to proceed in life.”

From: [3]In Search of Meaning Blog

"If a woman has done everything in her power to reduce her risk, then a man who has the proclivity for abuse or need for power will just move on to another woman or target," Katz added. "It's about the guy and his need to assert his power. And it's not just individual men, it's a cultural problem. Our culture is producing violent men, and violence against women has become institutionalized. We need to take a step back and examine the institutionalized polices drafted by men that perpetuate the problem."

From: Jackson Katz: [4]Violence Against Women Is a Men's Issue[5]

[6]Video of Mr. Katz

COMMENTS PLEASE !

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/oppression1.jpg>
2. <http://www.onecountry.org/oc72/Turning%20Point%20full%20text.htm>
3. <http://robertkrzysnik.wordpress.com/2008/06/10/unlearning-violence/>
4. <http://us.oneworld.net/external/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.rhrealitycheck.org%2Fblog%2F2008%2F06%2F02%2Fjackson-katz-violence-against-women-is-a-mens-issue>
5. <http://us.oneworld.net/external/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.rhrealitycheck.org%2Fblog%2F2008%2F06%2F02%2Fjackson-katz-violence-against-women-is-a-mens-issue>
6. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rG0M9Y6GuI>

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Catherine. (2008-06-11 05:48:20)

To get out of difficulty,one must go through it.!

Liara Covert (2008-06-15 01:16:54)

Violent impulses emerge when a creature forgets the meaning of love. Punishment and reprimand don't teach love. To teach human beings to live according to their soul is something that can only be done through demonstrating the power of love and forgiveness. People behave as they do because of conditioning. To inspire changes in behaviour, you need to change how you treat people and reverse conditioning. To criticize and judge just fuels the fire.

### 1.4.11 Verse One (2008-06-12 01:35)



[1]

This post is one in a series. All poems are from my [2]free-to-download book, *Is Your Soul In Here*? I'll keep the series going as long as interest is shown through your comments. If there are enough comments, I'll publish them in their own post !

Again?

Creeping up a  
Hill of life from a  
Valley too well-known;  
This time, this  
Time reach some  
Height not leading  
Back to have-to;  
This time, this  
Time free enough to  
See beyond these  
Patterns locked in  
Self so locked in  
Dust.

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/hill.jpg>
2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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damyantig (2008-06-12 01:56:04)

I like the spiritual quest in these lines, would love to read more.

damyantig (2008-06-12 03:10:10)

Thanks for adding me to your RSS feed. I look forward to coming back here often.

Liara Covert (2008-06-15 01:13:31)

All human beings emerge from dust and someday return to the dust of their creator. This cyclical pattern reminds each human being that life is immortal. Forms change but the eternal soul continues to evolve and grow at your own pace.

the fearless blog (2008-06-15 20:25:36)

x

the fearless blog (2008-06-15 20:32:39)

This one is my favorite of all the verses because I can relate to it...finding yourself where you don't want to be, hoping to be somewhere else but then worrying you may end up back where you started from. There are so few "fearless" souls who truly live; the rest of us regret, lament and "try" to live hoping to do better next time. As creatures of habit, we seldom break free of what is safe in order to attain what may be great or at least different. I struggle everyday "to live" fully, to live a great life, to choose the mountains and not the valleys but yet find myself many times walking the valleys. However, the valleys, too, have greatness in them and plenty to enjoy. Thank you for sharing these. I hope to read more.

rainforestrobin (2008-06-17 18:46:53)

Oh Alex, I think this is my favorite. It would take too long here to explain why I relate to it but I love it's sense of yearning and boldness. It speaks to me of courage, determination, awareness, freedom and the quest for LIFE. It speaks to me of breaking from old habits, decay and inability to see clearly. It speak of the necessity for great clarity. I LIKE IT!!!!

#### 1.4.12 Verse Two (2008-06-13 03:21)



[1]

This post is one in a series. All poems are from my [2]free-to-download book, *Is Your Soul In Here*? I'll keep the series going as long as interest is shown through your comments. If there are enough comments, I'll publish them in their own post !

#### On The Line

Playing a deadly game—  
Stakes so high  
I gamble my heart.  
Anguish loses meaning in  
Angst lost in love.  
Love—word that holds more  
Meaning than it can  
Bear—bears up the  
Heart that's forgotten  
Itself.  
Suffering won for  
Passion's gesture—  
Heart's most welcome  
Resurrections—repeated until...

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/dead.jpg>
2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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Evita (2008-06-13 20:18:30)

Interesting...I have to say I wasn't really into the words until I read the part about "love" - how powerful "Love - the word that holds more meaning than it can bear" That alone spoke volumes to me - I love reading anything about love as really ...love is all there is. But I guess to me this poem appears to be about someone taking the chance to fall in love, trying to comprehend it, perhaps getting hurt, but of course going for more. After all it is in our nature to love, and thus love we seek no matter what price usually comes with it.

Liara Covert (2008-06-15 01:11:04)

Love is indeed very powerful. It teaches us to dissolve any negative energy we might generate when we forget the power of love. Soul love awakens your heart centres.

#### 1.4.13 Verse Three (2008-06-14 04:14)



[1]

This post is one in a series. All poems are from my [2]free-to-download book, Is Your Soul In Here ? I'll keep the series going as long as interest is shown through your comments. If there are enough comments, I'll publish them in their own post !

Trauma

Pain sits  
Heavy in the  
Heart un-  
Healed.  
Rips at  
Judgment,

Opens the  
Sealed to  
Rip at feelings  
Floating in the  
Past, to bring them  
Up, to make them  
Last till  
Time, if gracious, can  
Mend the  
Wound, till space is made that's  
Not  
Marooned.

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/broken-heart.gif>
2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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Liara Covert (2008-06-14 12:48:19)

Any wound can be healed. Unresolved issues only resolve when the creator of those energies is ready to let go and move on.

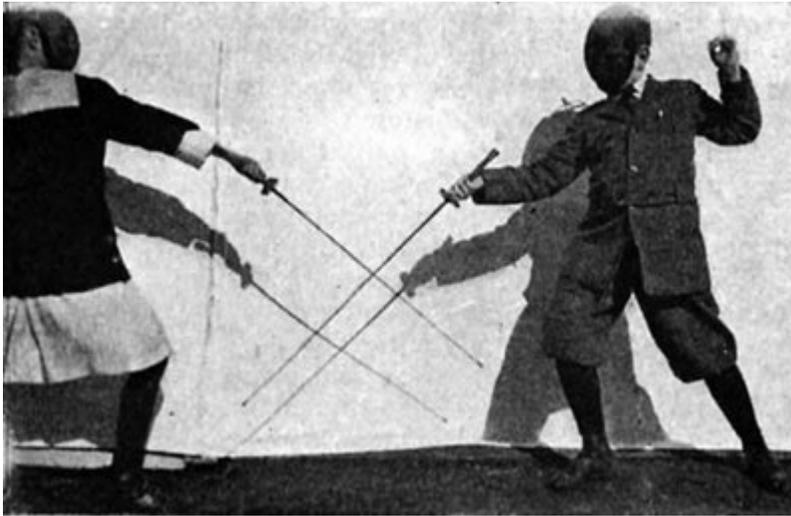
rainforestrobin (2008-06-17 18:34:24)

YES YES YES!!! These are incredible writings and insights. And so BEAUTIFULLY written. Just wonderful! I am blown away!

Chandler (2008-06-23 18:35:44)

Wonderful blog, glad I found you! You inspire some great thought and can't wait to see more from you!

#### 1.4.14 Verse Four (2008-06-15 05:24)



[1]

This post is one in a series. All poems are from my [2]free-to-download book, *Is Your Soul In Here*? I'll keep the series going as long as interest is shown through your comments. If there are enough comments, I'll publish them in their own post !

Lament

“Loving her now is  
Suffering you say, so  
Quit man!”

“Nay, my heart  
Cannot, she's my  
Soul's  
Touché...”

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/fencing.jpg>

2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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Loraleigh Vance (2008-06-15 16:37:12)

Simple words conveying deeper meanings. I'm enjoying your poetry very much!

bwerner (2008-06-15 17:42:17)

Really inspiring verse to think about existence and life greeting Werner  
<http://personal-developmentblog.com>

rainforestrobin (2008-06-17 18:32:13)

Wow, I can so relate to this poem. Right or wrong it was how I once felt about someone. I did have leave in the end, but realize that they would still be part of my soul. But that is another whole long story. Your poetry is incredible. So good to be back over here. I've a had a couple of rough weeks of work and more to come but this is a good break! I also realize this poem could be referring to "something" we love and not always someone. It could be my rainforest, the woods, Earth, sweet life itself. Very very beautiful, Alex. Hugs, RainforestRobin

#### 1.4.15 Verse Five (2008-06-16 03:41)



[1]

This post is one in a series. All poems are from my [2]free-to-download book, Is Your Soul In Here ? I'll keep the series going as long as interest is shown through your comments. If there are enough comments, I'll publish them in their own post !

Imperious

“Back so  
Soon with

Scars so  
Fresh,  
Willing to be  
Pressed against the  
Sharp  
Edge of  
Pain?”

“Howling yet from  
Severance  
Won and  
Sacrifice obtained by  
Standing in the  
Prow of  
Life and  
Facing every  
Tempest hot, I turn  
Again and  
Lay it down—my  
Blood a warming  
Storm of  
Victory.”

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/tempest.jpg>
2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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isabella mori (2008-06-16 04:59:31)  
beautiful, alex!!!! thank you!

Evita (2008-06-16 19:53:04)

It is interesting to read these verses as they remind me so much of how I used to write when I was in my late teens. I had pain in my heart and believed that pain was necessary to experience love - wow have I grown since then. I now know that in cases of pure love - there need be no pain.

amzolt (2008-06-16 19:58:53)

“I totally agree with you ! My book records poems from a major transitional time in my life that is still teaching me Love’s Lessons...” Alex

robert bourne (2008-06-16 21:28:49)

I find most of my poems come from transitions in life love and other wise

rainforestrobin (2008-06-17 18:37:58)

There are so many great lines here but this one is STELLAR: "Standing in the Prow of Life..." You have really lived! Your life and wisdom is reflected in your poetry VERY VERY strongly. You whole heart is here. WOW!

Nards (2008-06-26 11:12:16)

"Sacrifice obtained by Standing in the Prow of Life and Facing every Tempest hot" This is the verse that 'spoke' to me. An inexplorable feeling captured and explained beautifully - Thank you Alex - Nards

anzolt (2008-06-26 12:56:37)

Nards, It's oh, so wild ! "I" write poetry but never imagine what it can mean to others and it always does mean—so many things, so deeply different—yet, we all dance to the same meaning at depth. Must be evidence of a Power far Greater than us or the poems, eh? Alex

#### 1.4.16 Verse Six (2008-06-17 03:12)



[1]

This post is one in a series. All poems are from my [2]free-to-download book, Is Your Soul In Here ? I'll keep the series going as long as interest is shown through your comments. If there are enough comments, I'll publish them in their own post !

Her

Blazing eyes dancing in a  
Dew-fresh, dawn-sweet smile; and  
Her  
Swaying to  
Pulsations  
Deep and  
True, so true...

And with all the other reasons to  
Adore this soaring soul, there's no  
Reason left to leave her  
Aura's web.

Yet, the  
Dying from her  
Passion breeds a  
Rhythm all its own and its  
Beat is birthing  
Magic in my  
Soul...

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/dance1.gif>
2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

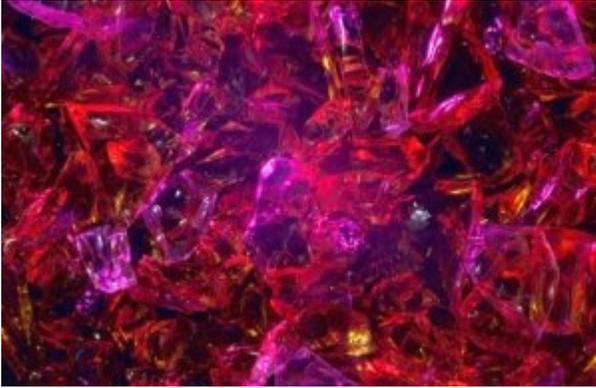
---

robert bourne (2008-06-18 23:51:12)  
this poem expresses emotion I have felt..and still feel to this day

robert bourne (2008-06-17 21:41:05)  
I really liked this part: Yet, the Dying from her Passion breeds a Rhythm all its own and its Beat is birthing  
Magic in Soul

Liara Covert (2008-06-18 23:55:43)  
Magic can be found in romance and at the same time, it is created by the mind and projected by the soul.  
We experience precisely what we ask for, even when we remain consciously unaware about our soul-level requests.

### 1.4.17 Verse Seven (2008-06-18 03:21)



[1]

This post is the last in a series from my [2]free-to-download book, Is Your Soul In Here ?

Perspective

Pebbles of sadness  
Play in the streets;

Rocks of grim circumstance  
Bred them in grief.

Fire and  
Pressure of God's sweet  
Decree is the  
Crucible making them  
Gems.

Small, perfect  
Diamonds are born through  
Pain;  
Pearls rise from crushing-dark  
Depths;  
Rubies remember calamity's  
Breath;

Jewels all prove  
Spirit's dread  
Grace.

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/jewels1.jpg>
2. <http://amzolt.googlepages.com/home>

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Liara Covert (2008-06-18 23:53:51)

I resonate with the overall message but don't sense that all crystals or gems resonate grief. I feel their energy, as positive vibrations of resilience, strength and joy.

Evita (2008-06-18 19:52:07)

Oh I love this verse as it completely and loudly speaks to me about resilience! There are so many people in the world that have overcome something difficult only to rise up and become something or someone great to the world. (I am not talking about being famous here) While others sit by and wallow in their situations, instead of rising up to the occasion that life is offering them. What a motivational and strengthening verse!

amzolt (2008-06-18 20:15:23)

Evita, This Writer inspired the poem: "The heart is like a box, and language is the key. Only by using the key can we open the box and observe the gems it contains." (Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 60)

amzolt (2008-06-19 00:41:05)

Liara, I agree that, in general, gems do not resonate with grief. The poem is a merging of the physical conditions that form gems, the situation of the pebbles (children) and rocks (parents), and the grace of God, even in trying circumstances... Alex

Liara Covert (2008-06-19 00:49:11)

Gems are sometimes considered doorways to other dimensions. Their uses in places like Atlantis and Lemuria reflected they contain incredible power and insight many human beings have not yet tapped into. I like your use of symbolism. Its always meaningful to expand my initial impressions of thoughts and images.

Liara Covert (2008-06-19 01:41:35)

In addition, human beings each create their own hardships. A common mindset is to aspire to be more perfect, more highly-valued, almost let's say, "gem-like." Life experience teaches people to raise awareness and transcend any false reflections they may choose to see. Each person must learn to love him or her self unconditionally before it will feel like other people cherish them like treasured gems. What self-reflection to you see in a particular gem?

RainforestRobin (2008-06-24 03:59:18)

Hi Dear Alex, I was just about to write a comment and then saw that you had already written those thoughts to Liara in comment number 4, so you stole my thunder! :) :) AND in doing so it made me smile because I realized we were on the same wave length here. How cool! I found the analogies in this poem touching and just beautiful. Thanks!

anzolt (2008-06-24 05:28:00)

Dear Robin, Your comment about wavelengths made me stop and think. Then, I clicked your name and was re-introduced to your website and the praises you've received. So, having you be here and thanking me is a deeply-felt honor! Alex

### 1.4.18 One-Man Peacekeeping Force (2008-06-19 02:40)



[1]

The Play

[2]Adapted from A True Story

The Actor: Sait Sanli, a 64-year old former butcher and cattle-raiser in southeastern Turkey.

The Scene: 10 years of [3]blood feuds (or, vendettas).

The Action: Sanli personally facilitates the end of 446 potentially bloody disputes. 67 families are on his waiting list...

And the Actor says: "The cost of the suffering that these feuds cause cannot be estimated. One person may be killed, but the lives of 100 people are affected. Based on the tradition here, when one person commits a crime, every one of their relatives is responsible," says Sanli, who has a grey mustache and deep set brown eyes. "We are really suffering here from a gap between the official law and traditional law. What I'm trying to do is fill in that gap, to prevent things from escalating. I'm a messenger."

Enter Mazhar Bagli (a sociologist at Diyarbakir's Dicle University): "It's not easy to do what [Sanli's] trying to do. He's going against something very ancient."

An aside from the Narrator: "Ten years ago, he decided to let his eight children run the business and dedicate himself full-time to peacemaking."

The Actor: "I am trying to show people the importance of forgiveness, how important it is in our holy book, and to show them how much they have been sacrificing by seeking revenge....

The main thing is making people think about how they are acting, about what kind of example they are setting. I try to appeal to that sense in people. I'm trying to show people that there's a different way to do things, that there's a different way to live...."

The Author: He gets little sleep (maybe 2 hours a night), never stops thinking about others, and says, when he does fall asleep, he feels at peace . . .

Written in response to [4]Postcards from the Funny Farm...

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/blood1.jpg>
2. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/160892/1/>
3. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blood\\_feud#Blood\\_feuds.2Fvendetta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blood_feud#Blood_feuds.2Fvendetta)
4. <http://postcardsfromthefunnyfarm.com/>

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jan4insight (2008-06-19 03:56:02)

What a terrific, inspiring story! Thank you for sharing it with us. Blessings.

Catherine. (2008-06-19 05:37:06)

We are spiritual beings having a human experience.!

soulMerlin (2008-06-20 00:36:02)

Hi Alexander, Thanks. One Word seems an excellent way for me to keep up with whats going on, so I've joined it - and read the original article. Now I'm sure my face will go red when you tell me the reason you presented it in play form. (I know I'm going to curl in embarrassment when you tell me :( I'm going to bed now and I'll have another look in the morning. henry

soulMerlin (2008-06-20 00:44:05)

Trying to get to sleep.....Dreams are easy....Wow! :) thank you henry

amzolt (2008-06-20 00:46:42)

soulMerlin, I cast it in the form of a play 'cause I wanted to be different and creative; not just the same old, quote-comment-quote-comment...

Amazing Visions: Blog Carnival Edition 2 | Postcards from the Funny Farm (2008-06-21 21:05:55)

[...] [amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/06/19/one-man-peacekeepi...](http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/06/19/one-man-peacekeepi...) [...]

isabella mori (2008-06-22 00:14:10)

beautiful, alexander! now you've made me curious. that's a good thing.

Damien (2008-07-01 01:17:11)

I liked it. It reminds me of the short story "Patriotism" by Yukio Mishima. Really made me think about forgiveness. Thank you for the linkback to my site/contest.

Postcards from the Funny Farm &raquo; Blog Archive &raquo; Amazing Visions Contest Wrapping Up (2008-06-29 16:49:27)

[...] One-Man Peacekeeping Force posted at Our Evolution. [...]

### 1.4.19 Think Globally ~ Act Locally (2008-06-20 06:23)



[1]

You Be The Judge

First Statement:

1 July 1912

Talk at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New York

”The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture, tillage of the soil.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Foundations of World Unity, p. 37

Second Statement:

”Strive as much as possible to become proficient in the science of agriculture, for in accordance with the divine teachings the acquisition of sciences and the perfection of arts are considered acts of worship.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ’Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 144

Third Statement:

[2]Late 1990s

"It has been estimated that without the use of pesticides food production would drop by 40 %, resulting in both a dramatic increase in food costs and the associated problems of starvation."

Fourth Statement:

[3]Wikipedia

"Intensive farming or intensive agriculture is an agricultural production system characterized by the high inputs of capital, fertilizers, labour, or labour-saving technologies such as pesticides relative to land area. This is in contrast to the concept of Extensive Agriculture which involves a low input of materials and labour with the crop yield depending largely on the naturally available soil fertility, water supply or other land qualities."

Fifth Statement:

[4]March 2001

"Imagine the surprise of going online and discovering that the vitamin and mineral content of vegetables has drastically dropped....Some of the differences in vitamin and mineral content were enormous—a 50 % drop in the amount of calcium in broccoli, for example. Watercress down 88 % in iron content; cauliflower down 40 % in vitamin C content—all since 1975."

Sixth Statement

[5]June, 2008

"Global food prices are expected to rise further as world leaders failed to take concrete actions to reverse the trend. "

Seventh Statement:

June, 2008

[6]Hungry Farmers Urge Local Control over Food

”...they emphasized the importance of protecting the land, water, and seeds rights of communities necessary to grow food... [to] guarantee a dignified future to peasants and indigenous people....Otherwise, the farmers said, the poor in their communities would remain at the mercy of the large corporations that dominate agricultural production now and are largely responsible for the spiraling price of staple foods across the planet. ”

Call In The Jury !

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/farm.jpg>
2. [http://www.ldcsb.on.ca/schools/cfe/worc/NEXUS/pages/agriculture\\_food!.html](http://www.ldcsb.on.ca/schools/cfe/worc/NEXUS/pages/agriculture_food!.html)
3. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intensive\\_farming](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intensive_farming)
4. [http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2001/mar2001\\_report\\_vegetables.html](http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2001/mar2001_report_vegetables.html)
5. <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/Rome-meet-fails-to-define-the-cause-of-current-food-crisis/324032/>
6. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/160879/1/>

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Evita (2008-06-24 14:13:52)

Oh don't even get me started on the agriculture and pesticide issues... We are willingly poisoning our food and planet and not many people seem to think that this is a critical problem that should be addressed ASAP! I am not sure how and when the human race gave away its inability to think and reason but I do know that until more and more people start waking up it is not looking too good for them or the planet. Having said that, I know "that we each need to be the change we want to see" and hence without judging the actions of others, I adopt Earth friendly living into every possible aspect of my life the main one for this topic is eating locally grown organics! And it feels great that I am nourishing my physical body the right way and trying to nourish the planet too by not subjecting it to the chemicals and various other as much as possible.

Tomas (2008-06-27 22:44:35)

The title "Think Globally Act Locally" touched my heart. It relates to all aspects of our life, define our steps. While my activity has nothing in common with the agriculture and thus all consequent thoughts would be just nice musing, I would name Think Globally Act Locally my motto and am deeply convinced that should be the definition of any human activity. While all our works in the concrete are the local, they ought not to lose the global perspective that gives meaning to all we are doing here and now. Think Globally Act Locally opens the door to the eternities and make the giants totally all people- the warning humbles the notable and helps us recognize the divine light in the eyes of each other Peace and love <http://trustlight.blogspot.com/2008/06/god-blesses-you.html>

amzolt (2008-06-27 23:10:19)

Tomas ! What a truly wondrous and splendid comment! Your word-painting is getting close to your other arts!!! Alex

#### 1.4.20 Blue Sky Thinking for a Green Future (2008-06-21 03:04)

Just a simple little post today...

Simply Shocking!

It appears that no matter what the world governments' policies are (or, will be) we face some dire adaptations if we want the human race to remain on earth.

There were three different scenarios created and run through a complex climate model by the United Kingdom's Meteorological Office, Hadley Centre.

It didn't matter which model was run. Bottom-line, we're in for a rough ride:

Climate researcher and author Mark Lynas, who was a participant in the production of the recent report, [1]Carbon Scenarios: Blue Sky Thinking for a Green Future, said:

"This means that all scenarios see the total disappearance of Arctic sea ice; spreading deserts and water stress in the sub-tropics; extreme weather and floods; and melting glaciers in the Andes and Himalayas. Hence the need to focus far more on adaptation: these are impacts that humanity is going to have to deal with, whatever now happens at the policy level."

If the governments get their collective act together and the corporations allow them to institute binding laws; and, if the corporations abide by those laws { If humanity ever needed Faith, this is THE time... }, there seems to be a dim bit of light . . .

[2]From the press release on Monday 9 June, 2008:

"When the panel of experts set out to develop a set of scenarios about climate change, the general public thought there was a trade-off between economic growth and carbon reduction. In fact, the scenario that delivers the most carbon reduction, also, delivers long-term economic growth by replacing a pick 'n' mix of complicated, confusing and opaque policies with a clear, long-term carbon price", concludes report author Paul Domjan."

1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/cs\\_web2.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/cs_web2.pdf)
2. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/advanced\\_pr\\_cs.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/advanced_pr_cs.pdf)

## 1.4.21 How to Talk to a Climate Skeptic (2008-06-22 00:39)



[1]

"O ye peoples of the world! Know, verily, that an unforeseen calamity is following you..."

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 209

My last post was based on what I consider to be truth. However, one study by one organization may not be convincing to those who (for various reasons...) deny there's a global climate crisis.

So, to add more ingredients to the soup, here are a comment from one of the world's most popular blogs, a complete catalog of responses to denialists from an environmental news and commentary blog, and a link to an actual brick-and-mortar institution that focuses on the earth's climate.

Cory Doctorow at [2]BOINGBOING:

"Have you noticed that whenever you mention climate change online a bunch of people show up with identical objections – almost as though there was a list of talking points somewhere on the Internet that astroturfers and denialists used to derail discussions of the most grave existential crisis facing the human race today?"

He then quotes [3]GRIST:

"Below is a [set of links to] the articles in "How to Talk to a Climate Skeptic," a series by Coby Beck containing responses to the most common skeptical arguments on global warming. There are four separate taxonomies; arguments are divided by:"

\* [4]Stages of Denial

- [5]Scientific Topics
- [6]Types of Argument
- [7]Levels of Sophistication

And, for those enamoured by a more scientific approach:

”[8]The Worldwatch Institute is an independent research organization known around the world for its accessible, fact-based analysis of critical global issues. Worldwatch research is the gold-standard for sustainability analysis for decision makers in government, civil society, business, and academia.”

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/storm.jpg>
2. <http://www.boingboing.net/2008/06/17/debunking-the-climat.html>
3. <http://gristmill.grist.org/skeptics>
4. <http://gristmill.grist.org/skeptics#Stages%20of%20Denial>
5. <http://gristmill.grist.org/skeptics#Scientific%20Topics>
6. <http://gristmill.grist.org/skeptics#Types%20of%20Argument>
7. <http://gristmill.grist.org/skeptics#Levels%20of%20Sophistication>
8. <http://www.worldwatch.org/>

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atomcat (2008-06-22 00:50:47)

Hi I don't ask people to believe anything. I do however, ask them to do their own research. I would like everyone to read and understand Agenda 21 and Cloak of Green. If you still think Global warming is a real threat, so be it. [www.windfarms.wordpress.com](http://www.windfarms.wordpress.com) Thanks for your time Ron

Robert (2008-06-22 20:05:42)

Alexander, this is very useful indeed, thanks for all the research you have done...

Liara Covert (2008-06-23 02:16:29)

Human beings have hidden reasons for their own beliefs. until they uncover the hidden reasons, they won't be equipped and empowered to shatter their own myths.

contratto-di-lavoro-apprendistato (2008-07-04 18:31:04)

Keine Zweifel ist es eine gute Seite!

amzolt (2008-06-24 17:27:10)

Liara, Thanks for bringing up the commonsense approach! Evita, Right! Education!!!

amzolt (2008-07-04 20:49:43)

Sure wish I could read that comment.....

Evita (2008-06-24 14:06:38)

I just ask people to stop looking at it politically and look at it from a common sense perspective...for hundreds of thousands of years no exhaust, factories, etc. and a population of around a billion. Then in the last hundred years, cars, factories, chemicals and destruction of nature to the nines, not to mention a population explosion of up to almost 7 billion. And the Earth is not going to react to that? I know the skeptics will

be skeptics and those in denial will be there until they choose to change, but I think it also comes down a lot for people to knowing their science. Most people in our society do not understand how the atmosphere works or the impact basic combustion reactions have on it, so they cannot tie in the ideas and hence choose to stay ignorant or in denial. The reason for this, is of course the fact that IF they should accept climate change then they will have to change their habits and we know how open to change the human race is. Plus it makes a person feel bad and we also know that most people do not like feeling bad and hence if they deny the occurrence then they can pretend it does not exist and hence do not have to feel bad. No matter what, human beings today are living SEPARATED from nature not with it and that is our biggest downfall. Whether one believes in climate change or not, there is no way one can dispute that fact. And it is that separation that I believe is bringing about the chaos we are experiencing in terms of weather events and climate shift on this planet today.

woman (2008-07-02 14:19:43)

Good site, great job! ^^

amzolt (2008-07-02 16:12:16)

woman, Thank you for that encouraging comment!

casa-vacanza-livorno (2008-07-01 14:39:39)

Ist hier viel erledigte Arbeit, offensichtlich. Guter Aufstellungsort !

amzolt (2008-07-01 17:20:56)

casa-vacanza-livorno . . . Sure wish I could read your comment... Alex

Robert (2008-07-08 14:35:13)

Alex, in cases as above this can help you to understand such short things in a foreign language (German in the above cases): [http://translate.google.com/translate\\_t](http://translate.google.com/translate_t) In short, they are happy with your site. ;-)

amzolt (2008-07-08 14:39:38)

Thanks, so much, Robert!

amzolt (2008-07-12 19:32:07)

Hey! Thanks for the compliment!!!

treatment-for-asthma (2008-07-12 12:50:22)

OOOh! What a nice site you've got in here:))

## 1.4.22 Thunderbird Magic (2008-06-23 04:14)



[1]

[2]image credit

Today's post is a gift from Liara Covert who writes the [3]Dream Builders blog. She shows us that ancient myths are alive and well, inside each of us...

The Thunderbird legend is timeless. Some people believe it began as a myth of Native American tribes in the Pacific Northwest and the Great Lakes. Yet, the legend spread much wider. This great creature has been sighted by non-native people on many different continents.

Native American myths suggest the sizable Thunderbird is a guardian Spirit with innate power to influence changes in the elements and energy shifts, in everything. It has penetrating vision and even changes form to help regenerate and stabilize the energy grids of the Earth.

Legend says the magical creature flew with a whole whale in its claws and saved a Chilkat tribe from starvation. As lightning shoots out from its eyes and thunder pearls from its wings, you might imagine everyone would hear it coming. Wisdom reveals the depth of your faith and the nature of your beliefs determine all you will sense and experience.

As it happens, the Lakota and other tribes believe that if you have repeated dreams of birds, the medicine or "alternative healing way" is part of your destiny. Yet, if you envision a Thunderbird, you

are destined to be a 'Heyoka,' that is, to learn to channel and heal with electromagnetic energy.

According to Laughing Deer in the Encyclopedia Mythica, Heyoka is "one who does things backwards or opposite...Spirit chooses who is Heyoka; it is a very difficult path to follow."

Of course, difficulty is relative. Conditioning may have also taught you choose your own destiny. With this in mind, you're never alone. Discerning that the Thunderbird serves the Great Spirit beyond enables you to realize you are also guided in ways you hadn't foreseen by forces you have yet to understand.

Some people believe a Heyoka is a trickster to be feared, ridiculed and revered. Negative perception does not recognize illusion is part of the teaching medicine of Heyoka. Human beings won't grasp life in the same way. Heyoka practices are sacred and have magical meanings that carry over into your life. Will you be empowered to shift your consciousness?

Heyokas are said to embody divine strength. They are trusted interpreters of dreams and heal with innate insights that even they themselves underestimate. They may unexpectedly enter your dreams or your apparent reality. Why? To remind you not to get too serious about your current mental state, physical form, thoughts and beliefs. Human beings are encouraged to be humble, to detach from their conditions and to recognize Spirit wields all power. You only determine how you will react to a given set of impermanent circumstances.

Thunderbird magic itself relates back to the mythical bird's role as a catalyst in the lives of human beings. It triggers revelation, transformation and energy shifts beyond superficial perception. Heyoka behavior, awakened by the Thunderbird, defies the status quo to awaken your senses to change your own behavior. The magic you hold within yourself enables you to initiate changes at the cellular level of your being. Thunderbird magic leads you back to rediscover the dormant magic within yourself.

After all, from birth, you master the art of producing your own illusions. Your perception is full of them. By extraordinary or mystical influence, you produce desired effects or results in every area of your life. How much of this do you realize? Supernatural elements are forces of your own nature. Thunderbird magic opens a doorway into another dimension of your soul. As you raise your awareness, you prepare to explore infinity.

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/thunder.jpg>
2. <http://www.justart.ca/thunderbird-panel-stan-wamiss-158-pictures.htm>
3. <http://blog.dreambuilders.com.au/>

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Loraleigh Vance (2008-06-24 00:57:58)  
I love this! Gave me goosebumps!

Liara Covert (2008-06-24 13:01:38)  
Loraleigh, divine spirit surrounds human beings in forms that everyone hasn't yet evolved to perceive or accept. Stories that perpetuate and reinforce the Thunderbird legend are a friendly reminder to open your senses wider. As you do, you will embrace more of what your being has in store for you. The magic is

bubbling up inside you, waiting to be rediscovered.

Spirit Dreamer (2008-07-31 00:00:35)

The (nimikee) Thunderbird shown to me with an American Indian Warrior, together both came to my vision from the sky coming from the east. I took four photos of my vision after I prayed so many times and gave thanks for the vision. I only show the photos to other American Indians as myself.

amzolt (2008-07-31 00:35:05)

Spirit Dreamer, Thank you for sharing your experience with us !

Turtle Woman (2009-03-06 02:46:51)

Thank You for sharing your visions. I too have dreamed numerous times of the Thunderbirds. For I have been visited by more than 1 and wondered what it is they want from me. I have moved from the East (pa) to Oklahoma in my search for answers. Still looking but know I will find the answers.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-06 03:01:11)

I, too, spent time in Oklahoma! Marvelous!! Then there was the Sweat Lodge...

### **1.4.23 Detachment Means Never Having To Say You're Sorry... (2008-06-24 02:33)**

"We can appreciate without attaching ourselves to the things of this world. It sometimes happens that if a man loses his fortune he is so disheartened that he dies or becomes insane. While enjoying the things of this world we must remember that one day we shall have to do without them."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 134

[1]  URBAN MONK.NET WWW.URBANMONK.NET WISDOM. SUCCESS. LOVE.

I'm featuring two recent posts from UrbanMonk.net, both dealing with the widely recognized (and, frequently misunderstood) spiritual principle of Detachment.

The first post, [2]Attachment: Understanding the Origen of Human Suffering, contains these ideas:

"This teaching is marvelous, for there is nothing in there that cannot be verified simply by looking into your own experience. Look deeply into your own life, the times you have cried, the times you have raged. What was the cause of it all? The next time you are in pain, pause, and look. Ask yourself – why? What am I holding on to?

"Without attachment, suffering does not exist. Let go of your attachments, little by little. By

and by you will see the freedom, the happiness that is there.”

”We have spent so much of our lives, every waking moment, following desire. We expend huge amounts of energy and time; we make extreme sacrifices, in the hope of finding happiness by attaining them. But as Lorne Ladner says in [3]The Lost Art of Compassion , rarely does it occur to us the very way we go about seeking happiness has been causing our problems.”

There is much more of interest !

Part Two, [4]How Our Cravings and Attachments Cause Our Pain and Suffering, goes even deeper into this vital spiritual principle:

”...when we crave, when we cling, we do not see people as they are. We are projecting our neediness, our sorrows – all the garbage inside us – onto them. And it is an insult. For them not to be seen as a human being; but for what they can do for us. Make me feel good, make me feel loved, make me feel safe, feed me, take care of me, impress my friends. That is all they are reduced to – a function, a service.

”And it is just as likely they are doing it to us too, and then what do we have? Not two human beings together, but two images, two roles, two cardboard cut-outs. Where has the humanity gone? This is so cruel, and yet so painstakingly common that it simply seems normal.”

”A rich man could have everything he wanted, and enjoy them all the more without the cravings, the attachments. There is nothing wrong with having most of the things we desire. Naturally, some cravings are just plain nasty – wanting to hurt another person is a fine example. But if you want money, or love, or any of those, then go for it. Does removing your attachment to health mean you stop exercising, stop looking after yourself?

”Most definitely not! Chasing new joys, setting new goals, all of these can still be pursued, but from a place of freedom, and not from the unease of craving.”

There is also much more of interest in this second post of the series !

Reading the full articles would reap great spiritual profit; just be careful you don't become attached



to what's said... [5]

”Our greatest efforts must be directed towards detachment from the things of the world; we must strive to become more spiritual, more luminous, to follow the counsel of the Divine Teaching, to serve the cause of unity and true equality, to be merciful, to reflect the love of the Highest on all men, so that the light of the Spirit shall be apparent in all our deeds, to the end that all humanity shall be united, the stormy sea thereof calmed, and all rough waves disappear from off the surface of life's ocean henceforth unruffled and peaceful.”

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 87

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/kubrickheader.png>
2. <http://www.urbanmonk.net/309/attachment-understanding-the-origin-of-human-suffering-part-1/>
3. <http://www.amazon.com/gp/redirect.html?ie=UTF8&location=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2FLost-Art-Compassion-Discovering-Psychology%2Fdp%2FB000GG4ZJ0%3Fie%3DUTF8%26s%3Dbooks%26qid%3D1210268184%26sr%3D8-1&tag=persdeveteaco-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=9325>
4. <http://www.urbanmonk.net/321/how-our-cravings-and-attachments-cause-our-pain-and-suffering-part-2/>
5. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/heartsmile.gif>

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Albert | UrbanMonk.Net (2008-06-24 05:49:05)

Thank you so much for the links; I'm glad you enjoyed the articles.

Liara Covert (2008-06-24 12:57:45)

Many wise individuals offer ideas for reflection. How human beings choose to interpret the words shapes in which direction their evolution evolves. Many people may share a similar experience and describe it using very different words and gestures. The path we are all on may differ, but the destination is the same.

Evita (2008-06-24 13:57:16)

Oh Alex, I feel like you wrote this just for me!!! I feel the exact same way and have been able to detach myself from things and people (in a compassionate way of course) but those close to me (i.e. my parents) do not understand at all as they are not and choose not to grow spiritually in any way shape or form and so it has recently put me at a crossroad. I know that how I treat my material items is my business and if I should choose to detach from them - it is my experience - but as you said others are attached to US, the way we were and hence project their pain and suffering out of their attachment. Ah, such an energy is not positive at all. I am trying to not let it get to me. Thank you so much again for this inspirational post and words that encourage me to stay of the path which I know is right for my spirit.

## 1.4.24 Big Green Purse ~ A Book & A Crusade (2008-06-25 02:59)



[1]

[2]image credit

*What realizes and promotes the fact that 85 cents of every dollar spent in the marketplace is spent by a woman and that big business responds faster to consumer demand than any other market force?*

Answer:



[3]

[4]Grist, an environmental journalism site, has a compelling article on the book [5]Big Green Purse and its author, Diane MacEachern, a longtime conservationist.

Just a few Q &As from the [6]riveting interview:

**Q.** There's this notion out there that you can save the world by buying all this stuff – as long as it's green.

**A.** In every single chapter, the very first suggestion is buy less, consume less, reduce – clearly we have to cut back on the total amount of stuff that's being produced. But I do think that being a conscious consumer is a very powerful tool, because consumer dollars are the lifeblood of manufacturers. So we can either use them to tell manufacturers what to make or we can just continue to let manufacturers tell us what to buy.

**Q.** Do you feel like environmentalists have been too quick to dismiss shopping as a route to change?

**A.** I think that the power of green consumerism has not been harnessed by the environmental movement. You've got all kinds of companies wanting to be green and natural and eco-friendly, and you've got the environmental movement saying, "Whatever you do, don't buy anything." ... The light bulbs are a perfect example ... people have to change their light bulbs anyway, so why not buy the option that makes the most sense? If you have people sit in the dark, that's literally a turn-off.

**Q.** Does your book address the challenges of buying green on a budget?

**A.** First of all, there's so much cushion in people's budget that they don't realize. People will say to me, "I can't buy organic; it's too expensive," and then I look in their refrigerator and it's full of bottled water. They may be spending \$10 to \$15 a week on bottled water, but they don't want to spend \$6 for a gallon of organic milk.

**Q.** How can the environmental movement change its message to be more effective?

**A.** I do think some groups are doing a pretty good job in starting to provide information ... but now I think the next step is to start getting the message out to people who aren't necessarily in the environmental community. We don't need to talk to other environmentalists; we need to talk to garden clubs and women's clubs and church groups and all these people who are not as fully aware of what the opportunity is.

What would be great is if Safeway would put an environmental spokesperson in the store. "On Saturday, as you're coming through the store, there's going to be these five people wearing green vests, and if you have any questions about green shopping, you can ask them." Wouldn't that be fabulous?

## [7] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/big11.jpg>
2. [http://www.biggreenpurse.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=85](http://www.biggreenpurse.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=85)
3. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/big-green-purse-cover\\_v200.jpg](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/big-green-purse-cover_v200.jpg)
4. <http://www.grist.org/feature/2008/06/20/>
5. <http://astore.amazon.com/gristmagazine/detail/1583333037/102-1183543-3665742>
6. <http://www.grist.org/feature/2008/06/20/>
7. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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AWeekinthelifeofaredhead (2008-06-25 03:24:50)

I have noticed how many times Brian and I seem to take out the garbage compared to when I was growing up (in a family of four). It seems like there is so much waste in the packaging... It's good to stop by and read your blog again. Catherine, the redhead blogger

Diane MacEachern (2008-06-25 17:52:17)

Thanks so much for helping to spread the word about the power of the purse! Whether someone spends a dime or a dollar – or nothing at all – we can move manufacturing in a cleaner, greener direction. We vote with our purses and pocketbooks every day! Let's make every vote count.

amzolt (2008-06-25 19:46:43)

Diane, Just a bit stunned... I assume you "saw" the link back to your site and used it to discover my post... A shout goes out to Grist, too, for leading me to you! Alex

### 1.4.25 Fighting War With NonViolence (2008-06-27 04:13)



[1]image credit

"It is my hope that this standard of the oneness of the world of humanity may be upraised with the utmost solidity so that the Orient and Occident may become perfectly reconciled and attain complete intercommunication, the hearts of the East and West become united and attracted, real union become unveiled, the light of guidance shine, divine effulgences be seen day by day so that the world of humanity may find complete tranquillity, the eternal happiness of man become evident and the hearts of the people of the world be as mirrors in which the rays of the Sun of Reality may be reflected. Consequently, it is my request that you should strive so that the light of reality may shine and the everlasting felicity of the world of man become apparent."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 12

Do you feel like world peace is a fantasy? Here's an excerpt from the article, [2]Has Your Town Declared Peace Yet?, from a site named YES!, back in April of 2006:

"...citizens in 32 Wisconsin cities, towns, and villages had cast ballots for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. Voters in tiny villages in the North Woods and the Door Peninsula, in the regional urban centers of Madison and La Crosse, and in the small cities that are the heart of the Badger State, sent a clear message."

If you read that with a bit of skepticism because they "declared" peace in 2006 and the war is still raging, realize that each and every attempt to Wage Peace does add up. Also, the more individuals do take action, the faster the sum of all actions will bring Global Peace...

Waging Peace is not a new concept and the power of nonviolence is a [3]Force More Powerful than the hate and rancor of violence. One of the big reasons there's still war is simply because not enough people are waging peace...

And, just to add to your understanding that you can Wage Peace, check out this excerpt from [4]Peace Brigades International:

"PBI is an international NGO that has been promoting nonviolence and protecting human rights since 1981. The founders of PBI shared a profound conviction that ordinary people can take action to stop war and human rights violations even when their governments cannot or will not."

[5] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://www.cartercenter.org/peace/index.html>

2. [http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?id=2699&utm\\_source=jun08&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=N23\\_Town](http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?id=2699&utm_source=jun08&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=N23_Town)

3. <http://www.afmpgame.com/>

4. <http://www.peacebrigades.org/index.php>

5. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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amzolt (2008-06-30 04:58:14)

Yes, I love Yes! ! I subscribed to your blog in my RSS Reader and added a link to your book order page on my blog... Alex

Parke Bures (2008-06-30 03:48:38)

Yes! is a great magazine, and source of hope for us all. I have written extensively about the possibility of making a peaceful world, and I strongly hope that more and more of us will begin dreaming those dreams, and doing the work to get there.

### 1.4.26 Mercy . . . (2008-06-28 06:15)



Just a brief exploration of mercy from a few of the world's religions and spiritual traditions:

Mercy is what we get when faults are overlooked.

That which Allah openeth unto mankind of mercy none can withhold it; and that which He withholdeth none can release thereafter. He is the Mighty, the Wise.

The Qur'an (Pickthall tr), Sura 35 - The Creator

Justice itself can be a Mercy.

God, however, as has been pointed out in the very beginning of these pages, does not only punish the wrongdoings of His children. He chastises because He is just, and He chastens because He loves. Having chastened them, He cannot, in His great mercy, leave them to their fate. Indeed, by the

very act of chastening them He prepares them for the mission for which He has created them. "My calamity is My providence," He, by the mouth of Bahá'u'lláh, has assured them, "outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and mercy."  
Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 115

Sometimes, humans use apparent mercy to entrap others.

Therefore, the truly great man does not injure others and does not credit himself with charity and mercy.

Tao, *Chuangtse* (Lin Yutang tr)

We certainly could use more human mercy in our world !

Bounty waits on squalid hunger, gifts dispel the suppliant's fear,  
Gold revives the poor and lowly, mercy wipes the mourner's tear,  
Tender care relieves the stricken by the gracious king's command,  
Charity with loving sweetness spreads her smile o'er all the land!  
Hindu, *Mababharata* (R. Dutt, abridged tr)

It's our duty as spiritual beings to be merciful.

This is the hour when ye must associate with all the earth's peoples in extreme kindness and love, and be to them the signs and tokens of God's great mercy. Ye must become the very soul of the world, the living spirit in the body of the children of men.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 20

[1] *Unleash The Life Within*

1. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-06-28 18:06:21)  
Mercy mercy me!

amzolt (2008-06-28 19:07:34)

Alexys, "Mercy" c.1175, "God's forgiveness of his creatures' offenses," from O.Fr. *mercit*, *merci* "reward, gift, kindness," from L. *mercedem* (nom. *merces*) "reward, wages, hire" (in V.L. "favor, pity"), from *merx* (gen. *mercis*) "wares, merchandise." In Church L. (6c.) applied to the heavenly reward of those who show kindness to the helpless. Meaning "disposition to forgive or show compassion" is attested from c.1225. As an interjection, attested from c.1240. In Fr. largely superseded by *miséricorde* except as a word of thanks. Seat of mercy "golden covering of the Ark of the Covenant" (1530) is Tyndale's loan-translation of Luther's *gnadenstuhl*, an inexact rendering of Heb. *kapporeth*, lit. "propitiatory." <http://www.etymonline.com/>

## 1.4.27 Prayer . . . (2008-06-29 02:18)



[1]

A brief exploration of prayer from a few of the world's religions and spiritual traditions:

"Beware lest ye harm any soul, or make any heart to sorrow; lest ye wound any man with your words, be he known to you or a stranger, be he friend or foe. Pray ye for all; ask ye that all be blessed, all be forgiven."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 73

"Then said I, Abraham prayed first for the Sodomites, and Moses for the fathers that sinned in the wilderness..."

Deuterocanonical Apocrypha, Esdras 2 (Ezra 4)

"The bird of God, who at the portal sits?  
Behoves so long that Heaven first bear me round  
Without its limits, as in life it bore;  
Because I, to the end, repentant sighs  
Delay'd; if prayer do not aid me first,  
That riseth up from heart which lives in grace.  
What other kind avails, not heard in Heaven?"

Divine Comedy of Dante (Henry Cary tr), Purgatory Canto 4

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."

King James Bible, Acts 8:22

"It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally."

LDS (Mormon), The Pearl of Great Price

"She can hardly conceive of a person in full spiritual health whose life is not one of prayer."

St. John of the Cross, Ascent of Mount Carmel

"An offering, consisting of muttered prayers, is ten times more efficacious than a sacrifice performed according to the rules (of the Veda); a (prayer) which is inaudible (to others) surpasses it a hundred times, and the mental (recitation of sacred texts) a thousand times."

Hindu, Laws of Manu - 85

"O ye who believe! seek help with patience and with prayer, for God is with the patient."

The Qur'an (Rodwell tr), Sura 2 - The Cow

"LORD, in trouble have they sought Thee, silently they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been at Thy presence, O LORD."

Nev'im (Prophets), Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 26,16-17

"Now, being equipped with this lofty Morality, equipped with this noble Control of the Senses, and filled with this noble Attentiveness and Clear Consciousness, he chooses a secluded dwelling in the forest, at the foot of a tree, on a mountain, in a cleft, in a rock cave, on a burial ground, on a woody table-land, in the open air, or on a heap of straw. Having returned from his alms-round, after the meal, he sits himself down with legs crossed, body erect, with attentiveness fixed before him."

The Eightfold Path, Buddha, the Word

[2] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/pray1.png>
2. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

Catherine. (2008-06-29 05:46:21)

There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world, and that is an idea whose time has come.!

#### 1.4.28 "...the celestial tree of love..." (2008-06-30 04:18)



I think we all have known the feeling that we finally understand love.

I think we all have known the feeling that we'll never understand love.

I think most folks have had periods when they've oscillated between these states—sometimes within hours or minutes of each other...

My personal experience is that the only reliable and fertile understanding of love is what our highest spiritual traditions have bestowed.

Today's Excerpts:

O SON OF LOVE! Thou art but one step away from the glorious heights above and from the celestial tree of love. Take thou one pace and with the next advance into the immortal realm and enter the pavilion of eternity. Give ear then to that which hath been revealed by the pen of glory.

Bahá'u'lláh: The Hidden Words, Persian #7

The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, "Asl-i-Kullu'l-Khayr" or "Words of Wisdom", p. 155

Be most loving one to another. Burn away, wholly for the sake of the Well-Beloved, the veil of self with the flame of the undying Fire, and with faces joyous and beaming with light, associate with your neighbor.

Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Selection CXLVII, p. 316

[1] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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amzolt (2008-06-30 05:32:29)

Liara, "Its a matter of learning to work through the invisible barriers created by the ego..." Absolutely ! Your words reminded me of the many references in the world's Scriptures about Veils... And, to put that together with your idea, I'd say that some veils, though so very sheer they seem to disappear are yet strong enough to blind our spiritual perception... Alex

Catherine. (2008-06-30 05:04:08)

Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day.!

amzolt (2008-06-30 05:12:28)

It appears we must love every day to see the good in it... Alex

Liara Covert (2008-06-30 05:21:20)

All human beings have the ability to understand and experience unconditional love. Its a matter of learning to work through the invisible barriers created by the ego that block the authentic sensations and experiences. The truth is only a belief away. Choose to savor love and invite it into every part of your being.

## 1.5 July

### 1.5.1 "...the wine of certitude..." (2008-07-01 02:39)



There are so many opinions about how to know what God wants for us (and, this is one of them...).

Of course, God's Wishes are not a matter of opinion.

Anyone who tells you they know what God wants for your life should be treated kindly but certainly not believed automatically.

Our soul's growth is too important to entrust to human care...

"...they that tread the path of faith, they that thirst for the wine of certitude, must cleanse themselves of all that is earthly – their ears from idle talk, their minds from vain imaginings, their hearts from worldly affections, their eyes from that which perisheth. They should put their trust in God, and, holding fast unto Him, follow in His way. Then will they be made worthy of the effulgent glories of the sun of divine knowledge and understanding, and become the recipients of a grace that is infinite and unseen, inasmuch as man can never hope to attain unto the knowledge of the All-Glorious, can never quaff from the stream of divine knowledge and wisdom, can never enter the abode of immortality, nor partake of the cup of divine nearness and favour, unless and until he ceases to regard the words and deeds of mortal men as a standard for the true understanding and recognition of God and His Prophets."

Bahá'u'lláh: The Kitáb-i-Íqán, pp. 3-4

[1] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

amzolt (2008-07-02 16:55:47)

Thanks, Liara !

Liara Covert (2008-07-02 04:20:21)

Each human beings senses deep inside what God is. Its a matter of moving to embrace what you have always known.

amzolt (2008-07-01 04:48:34)

Glad I could be of Service... Alex

Catherine. (2008-07-01 05:29:44)

Be kind.Everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.!

amzolt (2008-07-01 05:32:33)

You've indicated the "other side" of loving God...

ravenscawl (2008-07-01 04:21:36)

Alex Fantastic! just what I needed! Thank you for sharing this teaching!

### 1.5.2 Can You Hear The Crying ? (2008-07-02 01:35)

Check out our [1]most recent posts, too!



[2]image credit

There is no doubt that children need our protection ! Certainly in our families and communities but also in our Global Community !! Abusing children is like spitting on our Future ! I found a site that details statistics on, effects of, and therapy for Child Abuse: [3]www.jimhopper.com . Also, he has

[4]Mindfulness – An Inner Resource for Recovery from Child Abuse. Here are some of Mr. Hooper’s articles: Child Abuse Statistics spacer

[5]Introduction - Unavoidable Controversies & Biases, in Historical Contexts

[6]Sources of Statistics - Official Numbers, Actual Numbers, & Estimates

[7]Statistics Are Human Creations - Tools to Avoid Being Confused & Misled

[8]Official Statistics: International - Includes 2006 United Nations Report

[9]Retrospective Survey Research Methods - Tools for Critical Understanding

[10]Prevalance of the Sexual Abuse of Boys

Child Abuse Effects and Resources for Healing spacer

[11]Effects of Child Abuse - Basic Information & Frameworks

[12>About Therapy & Recovery - Resources to Inform Your Search

[13]Resources for Spouses, Partners, Friends, etc. - Suggestions & Resources

[14]Resources for Parents & Caregivers - Books, Videos & Web Resources

[15]Additional Resources - Hotlines, Book & Article Suggestions, Web Sites

[16]Frequently Asked Questions - Pointers to Helpful Resources

Check out our [17]most recent posts, too!

Please leave *Your* thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

*Let’s have a conversation !*

You can also explore and discuss the ideas of this post at

[18]Our *Evolution’s* Forums.

Make It Easy !

[19]Subscribe Free

in a reader or your email

For FREE Subscriptions to our monthly newsletter just send us an email at  
amzolt {at }gmail {dot }com

1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
2. <http://geminigirl107.wordpress.com/2008/04/05/april-is-child-abuse-awareness-month/>
3. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/>
4. <http://www.jimhopper.com/mindfulness/>
5. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#s-intro>
6. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#s-sources>
7. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#s-statistics>
8. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#unrpt>
9. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#meth>
10. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#boys>
11. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#effects>
12. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#help>
13. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#res2>
14. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#res1>

15. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#adres>
16. <http://www.jimhopper.com/abstats/#faq>
17. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/>
18. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
19. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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rainforestrobin (2008-07-03 00:37:05)

Boy, there is nothing I could add here to what you've posted or to what EVITA has said. Other than I know there lies within me a fierceness SO POWERFUL to protect children that few would recognize me if I had to protect a child...any child. I am not a mother but I LOVE children and they LOVE me, flock to me, take to me instantly. I understand them because I remember what it is like to BE a child. I know what it's like to be fully aware, to "see" with eyes and heart wide open in this world. Children ARE God. But then aren't we all... Wonderful post Alex with dramatically moving photos. Thank you for caring this much...thank you.

Catherine. (2008-07-02 05:11:24)

Let your heart guide you. It whispers,so listen carefully.!

Evita (2008-07-02 14:28:54)

I will never understand how people, but especially parents can abuse their own children. So many people want, await, rejoice in having this miraculous being and then at some point along the line put this being through some sort of abuse - whether it be physical, mental, emotional or psychological. Too often I think it stems out of this false sense of ownership that parents exhibit upon their children. That is so sad because again you craved this being with all your heart and then once you have it, sometimes, some people take it for granted in the saddest of ways. We must realize that whether they are our children biologically or not a) no one has the right to enforce their will upon another and b) we should all care collectively for the children of this world!

amzolt (2008-07-02 16:06:20)

Catherine, Your comment is wonderfully poetic!

amzolt (2008-07-02 16:07:51)

Evita, Thanks for the perceptiveness and rigorous honesty!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-22 18:22:12)

More info supplied by Jo: With pleasure. This information about secret politics, Bilderberg-group, secret phedophiles networks used to blackmail businessmen and politicians and for own consumption, Opus Dei secret child sacrifice, King of Malta-power, secret European Stay-Behind networks, Gladio, ... must go around the world ... maybe linked with 9/11 ... during our Dutroux-case, the Belgium cesspool was opened a little, but with their Absolute Power, "The Organisation" has closed it again, and created "Child Focus" to controle everything again ... Very interesting and good document website, this [www.isgp.eu](http://www.isgp.eu)

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-22 13:11:38)

This all seems very interesting but could you give a little more detail about these organizations along with all the names?

Jo001 (2009-03-22 13:03:45)

"Child Focus, or the European Center for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children, was founded in 1998 by Daniel Cardon de Lichtbuer and headed by this person ever since. In 2005, de Lichtbuer became chairman of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC), headquartered in Washington and founded in 1999. Who is this Lichtbuer? First of all, he is quite big in the financial world, with former positions in Banque Bruxelles Lambert, the Belgian Bankers' Association, VP Bank Liechtenstein (with Nikolaus von Liechtenstein), Thomas Cook Traveller Cheques and the European Financial Marketing Association. He also has been executive president of the aristocratic Europa Nostra. But things become really problematic upon reading that de Lichtbuer is a member of the honorary committee of Cercle de Lorraine, together with Maurice Lippens and Etienne Davignon. Equally worrying is his position as honorary executive president of the Koninklijke Vereniging der Historische Woonsteden en Tuinen van België, together with prince Alexander de Merode (former chair) and Count Ghislain d'Ursel. Davignon used to be a board member too. There's another indication that de Lichtbuer might not be the best choice for an anti-child abuse organization: 1998, Stef Janssens, 'The names from the cover up', p. 33: "In 1989, [Nicolas] de Kerchove d'Ousselghem [CEPIC; chef de cabinet of Vanden Boeynants; contact of VdB to the PIO intelligence organization] and Paul Vankerhoven, CEPIC member and co-founder of Cercle des Nations [among many other things]... were employees of the magazine 'Revue Belge'. This right-wing magazine had as manager the present director of the Center for Missing Children and former BBL-director Daniel Cardon de Lichtbuer. What in itself is not reprehensible, but does say something about the milieu in which the present director of this Center was involved with." To clarify, that milieu appears to be the highest level child abuse milieu ... " (uit: www.isgp.eu)

Liara Covert (2009-04-18 16:56:03)

To consciously send love and healing out into the world makes a positive difference. Situations are healed one person at a time. Every effort and intention makes a difference.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-18 17:10:08)

Thank you for that Caring response, Liara!

### 1.5.3 So, What Is The Truth ? (2008-07-02 23:07)



[1]

I've spent quite a bit of time recently doing what that man in the picture could be imagined to be doing—praying...

I've finally decided on a definite Direction for this blog.

I don't wear a tie anymore.

I don't sit in leather chairs, either.

And, I certainly don't wish to demean anyone for their clothes or furniture, but to powerfully invoke the Sameness in each of us when we get down to our basic Human Necessities...

Anyone who doesn't think attention to God and His Scriptures is the way to guide one's life—whether Hindu, Buddhist, Sabian, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, Islamic, or other Major recipients of God's Wisdom—might think my change in direction to be less than "profitable".

What is "Profit"?

I'll choose an extremely appropriate definition from [2]WordWeb:

"The advantageous quality of being beneficial"

I wish my blog to be beneficial. I wish to provide the clearest indication of TRUTH that I can find. I wish to aid my fellow human beings to the maximal extent of my ability.

So, stay tuned...

I intend to raise the entire discussion to the level of Principle.

I intend to give you the Best information I can find!

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/change.jpg>
2. <http://wordweb.info/>

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amzolt (2008-07-03 18:31:22)

Wilma, Thanks for that gloriously encouraging comment!

amzolt (2008-07-03 18:31:53)

Catherine, As always, your comment brings a fresh perspective !

Wilma (2008-07-03 05:17:10)

Life is not a straight line and thoughts grow. Fantastic to go with the flow and staying with your thoughts and their direction. The question "for the sake of what bigger purpose" guides me and it looks it does you too. Love Wilma.

Catherine. (2008-07-03 06:01:12)

I have a hard time to keep up with you're great writings..but I trie to pitch in a comment now and then--my comment about the the truths--would be. Each man must invent his own way.!

rainforestrobin (2008-07-03 00:29:18)

Ooooooh! This sounds interesting. I can't wait to see what is coming! I was reading almost holding my breath, thinking you were going to show us right there what you are going to do. Alas, I will have to wait and see! :) I've been thinking a lot about my site as well and what direction I want to go. And I don't want to do a second blog as I can hardly handle this one. Maybe more categories....hmmm...not sure yet. I will stay tuned! Hugs, R

#### 1.5.4 Health & Well-Being (2008-07-03 17:43)

[1]



Very hard to imagine having well-being without having health first.

Of course, there's a certain strain of human who, blinded by rank materialism, chases a "well-being" that shrivels their soul...

The quote I'll share today clearly puts the horse before the cart.

I do want to clarify one word in that quote, "Kingdom". Many folk are biased against that word when used in the context of spirituality. They're usually correct in fearing the hidden agendas of people

who use that word way too often and, unknowingly, for their own benefit.

I'll clarify it with another short quote by the same Author:

"This will be the paradise which is to come on earth, when all mankind will be gathered together under the tent of unity in the Kingdom of Glory."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 22

"If the health and well-being of the body be expended in the path of the Kingdom, this is very acceptable and praiseworthy; and if it is expended to the benefit of the human world in general—even though it be to their material benefit and be a means of doing good—that is also acceptable. But if the health and welfare of man be spent in sensual desires, in a life on the animal plane, and in devilish pursuits—then disease is better than such health; nay, death itself is preferable to such a life. If thou art desirous of health, wish thou health for serving the Kingdom. I hope thou mayest attain a perfect insight, an inflexible resolution, a complete health and spiritual and physical strength in order that thou mayest drink from the fountain of eternal life and be assisted by the spirit of divine confirmation."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Baha'i World Faith, p. 376

## [2] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/health.jpg>

2. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Catherine. (2008-07-04 04:56:06)

The entire history is but a transformation of human nature. Enjoy when you can, and endure when you must.

amzolt (2008-07-04 07:43:17)

As Always, Catherine, you find a refreshing perspective!

Tomas (2008-07-05 07:47:34)

People are used to rejoice over the quotes in spite of the fact that the words of wisdom hurt them IN CASE of the attempts to fit the truth to themselves in the concrete.

amzolt (2008-07-05 16:45:08)

Tomas, If only more people believed and submitted to, "The Truth shall set you free".

### 1.5.5 Freedom ! ? ! (2008-07-04 21:35)



[1]

Today is the United States of America's premier celebration of liberty and freedom.

Had a discussion in my neighborhood coffee shop today about how America is binding it's citizens into materialistic and corporate and short-sighted captivities—just imagine the poor folk "chained" to their televisions and believing what they see...

Of course, "freedom" and "liberty" can be perceived from the material plane or the spiritual plane.

First, just today, from a [2]New Zealand news source, there's a story of the joyous liberation of French-Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt—six years in captivity:

"She bathed fully dressed to shield herself from her watchful male captors.

"Asked if they raped her, she said: 'I have had painful experiences . . . but I don't want to talk about this here, now at this time of happiness.'"

"Her attempts to escape captivity brought punishments – being chained at the neck, deprived of food and made to trek between camps barefoot.

"In the letter to her mother released last year, she wrote: 'I've tried to keep my head above water, but Mom, I have given up. . . Your daily suffering, and the suffering of everyone, makes death

seems like a sweet option.”

And, on this Western holiday of liberty and freedom, I give you the words of an Eastern man, held captive for 40 years:

”Materially, man is the prisoner of nature; the least wind disturbs him, the cold hurts him, the heat incommodes him, a mosquito irritates him; but when we consider the intelligence of man, an elephant is powerless before him, a lion is his prisoner, and a boy of twelve can lead twelve hundred animals. Man dries up the sea, inundates the desert, circumnavigates the globe, discovers what is under the earth, rides upon the air and creates new sciences. These are the signs of the crowning spiritual power of man—that power which can make nature his prisoner.

”Reflect on the divine forces. What has assembled us together? It is not a material but a spiritual force which has created this bond between our hearts, this attraction and affection for one another—a power stronger than reason, a power which founds nations, creates human unity and makes us renounce the world to discover sciences and organize laws which work through all creatures. Man, the victim of a mosquito, by his spiritual intelligence is conqueror, for by spirit he is completed; he stands upright and gives well-being to humanity.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, Divine Philosophy, p. 95

### [3] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/prison.jpg>
2. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/4607880a12.html>
3. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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Catherine. (2008-07-05 00:25:53)

A great topic,for this fourth of July 08.. None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who believe they are free. You can’t say that civilization don’t advance,however for a war they kill you in a new way..

Linda (2008-07-05 00:57:41)

A wonderful article to make folks think of who is free and those who wish to be! Thank you for sharing.

Liara Covert (2008-07-05 09:36:02)

To open oneself up to love enables one to discover a different kind of freedom. To gain insight into a story of gaining independence and freedom, you may choose to read *Stolen Lives: Twenty Years in a Desert Jail* - 2001 pages and *Freedom: The Story of My Second Life* - 2006 - 256 pages by Malika Oufkir

amzolt (2008-07-05 16:34:48)

Catherine, Always glad to see your comments!

anzolt (2008-07-05 16:35:44)

Liara, Thanks, so much, for the book recommendations!

anzolt (2008-07-05 16:58:23)

Linda, So glad you showed up! Thanks for the encouragement...

### 1.5.6 Peace... When? (2008-07-06 01:16)



[1]

[2]image credit

People vary greatly in their beliefs about world peace, from passion so strong it impels strident action to a hopeless blurr when they imagine the future.

Some say man is, by nature, violent.

Others, that world peace is inevitable.

My belief, when I gaze across the stretches of recorded history and see humanity slowly but surely embracing unity of family, then unity of tribe, then village, city, state, and nation, my belief is that unity on the global level will arrive. Not easily nor quickly but as surely as the next spring...

The spiritual quote for today uses the words, "Holy Spirit".

To give that Title a little more clarity:

"The descent of the Holy Spirit is not like the entrance of air into man; it is an expression and a simile, rather than an exact or a literal image. No, rather it is like the entrance of the image of the sun into the mirror – that is to say, its splendor becomes apparent in it."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 105

Here is today's quote:

"Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. To establish these great fundamental principles a propelling power is needed. It is self-evident that the unity of the human world and the Most Great Peace cannot be accomplished through material means. They cannot be established through political power, for the political interests of nations are various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. They cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak... Therefore, it is evidenced that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of all the Manifestations of God, is impossible except through the divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit. Other powers are too weak and are incapable of accomplishing this."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 11

### [3] Unleash The Life Within

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/worldtopobathy2004013x5400x27001.jpg>
2. <http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/>
3. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>

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isabella mori (2008-07-06 02:03:31)

thank you for this post, alex. as always, beautiful and inspiring. i think it is very important that we constantly think and talk about peace, and meditate on it. peace means harmony, it means nonviolence. in this, all goodness is encompassed. and i disagree with those who say that too much peace would be boring. bring it on, i say, let's bring on peace, and if indeed it turns out that it is boring and colourless - well, we'll cross that bridge when we get there.

Liara Covert (2008-07-06 03:36:33)

Your views offer reason for further reflection. It isn't up to human beings to impose their will on other human beings. Yet, it is up to each human being to take responsibility for raising self-awareness and recognizing that every thought and action affects everything else. In this sense, each person is actually changing the world in steps that are immeasurable, but pertinent.

amzolt (2008-07-06 04:21:21)

Isabella, Bravo !!!

amzolt (2008-07-06 04:23:22)

Liara, Yes, a billion little, sincere steps could just about do it !

Catherine. (2008-07-06 04:46:54)

A good question,about Peace.! If we knew what it was we were doing,it would not be called research,would

it?

Liara Covert (2008-07-06 10:12:14)

The logical, human mind is unable to measure the steps necessary to create peace. If peace is invisible and immeasurable, yet like the truth, "felt," no predictable route will get Humanity to that particular mindset. That doesn't mean it isn't possible, for anything is possible.

amzolt (2008-07-06 14:26:55)

Catherine, So, so True !

amzolt (2008-07-06 14:27:07)

Liara, Oh, SO Perceptive !!

soulmerlin (2008-07-07 02:18:59)

Yes, I do believe that everything is spirit and that the trick is to see it thank you henry

amzolt (2008-07-07 03:11:24)

Henry, Very well put !!!

### **1.5.7 Humanity Is Starving For Unity ! (2008-07-07 02:49)**



[1]image credit

From [2]G8: [3]Global Food Security Plan Expected, on Inter Press Service comes this:

"A landmark agreement on ensuring global food security is likely to emerge from the G8 summit... The agreement would reflect an intertwining between soaring food prices, climate change, and surging energy costs, conference sources say."

Does this sort of action foreshadow a coming organic unity of human kind?

Does even the effort being made, whether the agreement leads to betterment of the problems or not, show the utter necessity of a global focus on unity?

Here are today's quotes:

"The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 19

"...by 'Oneness of Mankind' is meant an organized unification, not mere brotherhood. It is not a humanitarian principle, it does not imply a theoretical abstract conception, but a promise that the world is going to be unified politically, socially, economically and religiously."

Shoghí Effendí, Extracts from the USBN

"Conceived of as an end in itself, the national state has come to be a denial of the oneness of mankind, the source of general disruption opposed to the true interests of its people. From the depths of man's divine endowment stirs response to the affirmation of oneness which gives this age its central impetus and direction. Society is undergoing transformation, to effect a new order based on the wholeness of human relationships."

Bahá'í International Community, 1947 Feb, A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments !**

**[4] Unleash The Life Within**

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1. <http://borgenproject.org/>
2. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43087>
3. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43087>
4. <http://www.uriinternational.com/amzolt>
5. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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soulMerlin (2008-07-08 01:56:46)

It is a pity that either so many do not unwrap the gift, or in doing so, notice the differences in colour, size and shape that their gift has in comparison to the others and do not realise that they all work in the same

way. (as long as they are wound up or switched on) henry

soulMerlin (2008-07-08 01:58:22)

oh yes....the gifts do not come with batteries included...we have to supply the energy. :) henry

amzolt (2008-07-08 02:43:11)

Thanks for that, Henry ! ;-) !

amzolt (2008-07-17 15:14:40)

peter, thank you for such an astute and impassioned response!

peter vajda (2008-07-17 15:07:45)

Consciousness, unconsciousness and leadership I'm experiencing a deep sense of sadness as I reflect on an event at the recent G8 summit meeting in Japan in July, 2008. The event was a six-course lunch followed by an eight-course dinner where the agenda was — hang on to your hat, and take a deep breath — famine and the global food crisis. First, some details: · Participants were served 24 different dishes during their first day at the summit — just hours after urging the world to reduce the “unnecessary demand” for food, and calling on families to cut back on their wasteful food use. · The dinner consisted of 18 dishes in eight courses — including caviar, smoked salmon, Kyoto beef and a “G8 fantasy dessert”. · The banquet was accompanied by five different wines from around the world, including champagne. · African leaders — including the leaders of Ethiopia, Tanzania and Senegal, who had taken part in talks during the day — were not invited to the function. · The dinner came just hours after a ‘working lunch’ consisting of six courses. The lunch/dinner misstep is a metaphor for the unconscious, hypocritical and insensitive behavior many leaders and managers manifest when they espouse values that purportedly support the well-being of their organizations and then engage in the sort of excesses and unethical behavior that only undermines their integrity, respectability and credibility. Betrayal and the corporate world of today. Betrayal and mistrust are rampant in the corporate world today. Take, for example, corporate bosses who paint a rosy picture of the future, then show thousands of workers to the door, then pile work on the unfortunate individuals who remain. Or those who urge employees to take care of their health, then denigrate them for using the gym on ‘company time’ while expecting them to work 70-hour weeks, including weekends. Then there are those leaders who drive their organizations into the ground financially and walk away with huge bonuses and severance packages for doing so — while their employees walk away with nothing. These and many other examples of daily betrayal are creating a pervasive atmosphere of mistrust in the workplace. The excessive spending and lavish consumption of the G8 participants points to the difference between consciousness and unconsciousness when it comes to living life by taking the high road, to living life by following one's inner moral compass and to living life by serving others. Consciousness and unconsciousness defined There are four basic levels of consciousness: · Not conscious (instinctual, ego-driven) — The behavior of the G8 leaders is simply being unconscious — allowing their lower-level, ego-driven, base, and selfish desires to drive, completely unaware of the consequences and the impact on greater good' of the community. · Subconscious —habitual, robotic, reactive. · Conscious — aware, intelligent, conceptual, reflective · Superconscious — (intuitive, guiding, truthful, loving, universal It's not about contempt for others. It's about being conscious! Awake! Aware! The behavior of the G8 folks is one of being unconscious — allowing one's lower-level, ego-driven, base, instinctual, selfish and blind desires to have free reign, completely unaware of the consequences and the impact on the “larger good” of the community, of humanity. It's not about arrogance. It's not about greed. It's not about politics. It's not about contempt for others. It's about being conscious! Awake! Aware! It's about the fact that no one — NO ONE — said, “Wait a minute! What are we doing

here? Something doesn't feel right to me." No one! That's unconsciousness. That's being disconnected from our True and Real Self. Unconscious. Consciousness is about spiritual (not theological, not religious) intelligence and the fundamental principles that govern the behaviors of our leaders. It's about honesty, sincerity, self-responsibility and self-awareness. It's about living one's core values — assuming one has core values and has thought consciously about how to live them at 9:00 Monday morning. It's about integrity. It's about walking the talk. It's about being a business person and human being at the same time. It's about taking the high road. How does it apply to you? Consciousness is about viewing my life right here and right now, from the 25,000-foot level and asking: "What am I doing right here, right now?" "Who am I being, right here, right now? Am I acting in alignment with my core values?" "Is there harmony between what I think, say, feel and do, and if not, why not? How can I create that harmony for myself?" "What am I thinking about and what do I think about what I'm thinking about?" "Am I 'going along to get along' even though I know it's inappropriate?" Consciousness is simply about being decent right where I am. That's who successful and truly respected leaders and managers are. Consciousness is simply about having and showing character and working for the highest good of all concerned, right where I am. That's what successful and truly respected leaders and managers do. Consciousness is about showing up, authentically, with integrity, and acting to make the workplace, and the world, a better place — for everyone — even if it's uncomfortable and inconvenient. Pure and simple. Consciousness tugs on our sleeve consistently as we reflect on the following questions: · How aligned am I with my core values? · When my colleagues, bosses, direct reports, clients, friends, and family observe my behavior, do they consistently observe me "walking my values talk?" · Do I ever act in a way that others might perceive as arrogant, haughty, egotistical or greedy? If so, do I care? If not, why not? · Do I show concern for my fellow at work, at home, at play, when I comment on the world at large, and when I'm out and about? · At what level of consciousness do I live my life most of the time? · Have I ever spoken up when I felt I needed to tug on someone's sleeve about their inappropriate behavior? · Do I gloss over unethical or immoral workplace behavior as the "cost of doing business?" · Do I exhibit the change I'd like to see everyone else exhibit? · Have I ever betrayed another person? Have I ever been betrayed? How did I feel in either or both event(s)? (c) 2008, Peter G. Vajda, Ph.D. and SpiritHeart. All rights in all media reserved.

### 1.5.8 Interview with Liara Covert (2008-07-08 03:24)



[1]

[2]image credit

”Thank thou God for that thou hast had such a revelation in the world of dreams.”

Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha v2, p. 244



[3]

Liara, would you tell us about the images on your blog—the woman at the table and the fish?

The painting is an oil on canvas called ”The Sorceress” (1911) by John William Waterhouse. Upon closer look, it juxtaposes diverse symbols, including a jaguar, leopard, elixirs, books, floating spirits in a hazy setting framed with arches. In my own way, I relate to each symbol. I’m a jaguar woman, leopard woman, alternative chemist, and spiritual counsellor of sorts who values the mysteries of human existence and beyond.

Fish remind human beings that deeper insights are always available through exploring the unconscious mind. Each person has inner power to bring profound ideas to the surface. As a dream analyst, I encourage clients to explore their true selves which includes uncovering thoughts, beliefs, feelings and behaviors and why they have become part of their identity.

Your blog, [4]Dream Builders, shows a very wide range of topics. Would you comment on the top three by count of posts—Success Principles, Self Improvement, and Consciousness? Tell us why you write about them and what you hope to impart to your readers.

Each human being has his or her own ideas about success. As each person has constant opportunities to learn, views of success may change or limit self-growth. Many people don’t recognize the origin of their beliefs or source of external influence. I invite readers to raise their own consciousness about how and why they judge, create values, and perpetuate patterns that may not serve them. I encourage people to step back and be more open to thinking and perceiving differently.

What they used to think may lose importance. Its part of the process of getting-to-know oneself.

Through a process of raising self-awareness, I have come to discern versions of success and self-improvement are measurable, while others are also immeasurable. I detach from comparison and judgment to evolve into the roles of an observer.

Your first two categories, Astral Dreaming and Business Strategies, are, to most folk, worlds apart. Would you comment on this?

Everything is connected, although links may not seem obvious. Writing itself is a tool in the process of self-discovery. Since the birth of this blog, I’ve progressively eliminated articles and topics

which no longer serve my purpose. I will continue to do this based on what makes sense and what doesn't. I've learned certain perceptions must be dissolved in order to awaken the power that lies dormant inside your being. You know what I mean inside yourself, when a thing just feels right.

Your blog's structure (like your writing) veers from the road of conformity. You have categories displayed, but not the usual lead article. Tell us why you decided on this format.

Inner guidance orients my action. I don't think of my choices as "conforming" or "not conforming" but rather, as intuitive choices. I don't model myself or my blog on other people, but I'm inspired by traits I discern in the energy of others. One need not always know, explain or understand why one acts. I sense what I do and have done is worthwhile for what it is, period. To offer lessons learned is a resource that enables people to move ahead 'their way' in their own sense of time. Positive feelings grow inside me and my reader audience grows as I take initiatives to get closer to my chosen destiny.

Please relate a bit about your education [which is also elaborated on her site]:

As 'a woman of the world,' I have come to value unconventional training because in my view, traditional education alone doesn't prepare students for the truth of reality. To 'learn on your feet' means to adjust and adapt without a map or a rulebook. It means learning the value of listening to your instincts and developing resourcefulness. I have learned more about myself and human nature from real-life conditions than I ever did in a class. Even dramatisations don't equate to issues of survival.

Would you elucidate this statement from your blog?

"Her perspectives have been enriched and expanded by her experiences in more than 55 countries."

I have studied, worked and/ or travelled though parts of more than 60 countries. You might say I have actively sought ways to develop myself while I also assisted or interviewed people for research purposes. Travel has enabled me to explore foreign languages and cultures, to challenge myself and come to expect the unexpected. Astral dreaming and other experiences stretch or expand my sense of time and space. Experience continues to teach me there is far more to life than I ever imagined.

Thank you, Liara !

While preparing for this post, our email included me asking Liara if the lead quote was suitable.

She didn't just say yes:

"Thank thou God for that thou hast had such a revelation in the world of dreams."

Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha v2, p. 244

## Liara's Interpretation

Human beings have infinite opportunities to trigger their own revelations in the world of dreams. Some people believe they dream throughout life and look forward to awakening when death comes to the physical body. Other people explore different notions of dreams, from those they consider conscious and unconscious goals, to nighttime reveries, to the magical places they envision with the mind as doorways to infinite dimensions of time and space.

Its up to you to forge your own paths, to rethink sensing and existing. You define your own dreams. What you think and believe transform into your life. You get out of it what you're ready and willing to experience. You limit yourself or expand your possibilities based on your energy vibration. The more you explore dreams, the more you will learn about your authentic self. As you learn to lift up your thoughts and feelings to higher vibrations, you will discover your inner power extends into physical, mental, spiritual and other planes. Your current observations are conditioned. Dreams permit you to move beyond what you thought you knew. Dreams enable you to better understand your own mental states and those of other people. This enables you to shed light on your moods, ego and many areas of your life.

Love & Light,

Liara

## [5]Dream Builders

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/circe-the-sorceress-1911.jpg>
2. <http://www.johnwilliamwaterhouse.com/pictures/circe-the-sorceress-1911.html>
3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/zen.gif>
4. <http://blog.dreambuilders.com.au/>
5. <http://blog.dreambuilders.com.au/>

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Catherine. (2008-07-08 06:04:46)

Great interview,good questions,and very informative answers.. a bit complex to leave a comment to this.. in hoping that this little comment will fit inbetween some how? Only when you become ruthless with yourself,replacing self-pity and self deception,will you truly begin to own and escalate your power!!

amzolt (2008-07-08 13:31:34)

Catherine, I think your comment fits beautifully and I hope you and Liara can have a bit of discussion !

Alexys Fairfield (2008-07-08 20:19:21)

Hi Alex, This post delves not only into the depth and perception of Liara Covert, but also the perspicacity of you, the interviewer. I appreciated learning more about Liara in this form. She is nothing short of spectacular in her thinking and ideology. Thanks to both of you for peeling off another layer of consciousness.

amzolt (2008-07-08 20:53:11)  
Alexys, If Angels can be Gems, You ARE !!!

RainforestRobin (2008-07-09 18:31:11)

Great interview. Great questions and answers. (For me)the two parts that comprise the "meat" of this interview....and Life for that matter...are: "It means learning the value of listening to your instincts and developing resourcefulness. I have learned more about myself and human nature from real-life conditions than I ever did in a class. Even dramatisations don't equate to issues of survival." I ABSOLUTELY AGREE. That is the story of my life! If we want to know Life then LIVE. Really LIVE. The other part was this: "Its up to you to forge your own paths, to rethink sensing and existing." I encourage everyone reading this to awaken to Life and look beyond "the script", because there is indeed a world so vast as to be delightfully incomprehensible : )....and yet at the same time a world/a Life Force that is so completely familiar, we feel as if we always knew it and it always knew us. We feel like we are going home. We are. It is when we step into "the unknown" that we truly get to know ourselves and Life.

amzolt (2008-07-09 18:37:27)

Robin, Oh, so glad you came by and commented. I can only hope you and Liara can meet in the physical now some day...

Liara Covert (2009-06-06 18:04:58)

Alex, I am grateful that you give me the opportunity to get to know myself in new ways while we also teach each other. It is a pleasure to connect with kindred spirits through your blog. Blessings, love and healing to you!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-06 19:22:45)

Wow! What a terrific time-delayed comment to this post!! Ya know, I still get people finding this post through searches...

### 1.5.9 Food, Health, and Common Sense (2008-07-09 09:50)



[1]

There are so many claims circulating about what's healthy to eat.

If you want to do a little research, take a look at this [2]Google search for "healing" + "food".

Of course, there is that organization (in the USA) that's set itself up as the guardian of health. One problem with that idea is that they seem to spend an inordinate amount of time peddling drugs...

To be fair, here's [3]an FDA official's opinion:

"'Health claims are not your fad-of-the-week,' says Jim Hoadley, Ph.D., a senior regulatory scientist in FDA's Office of Food Labeling. Instead, he says, for health claims to be used, there needs to be sufficient scientific agreement among qualified experts that the claims are factual and truthful."

Put that together with the ravages of the MegaAgriBusinesses and it may seem nearly hopeless that we could stem the tide of malnutrition and food shortages or get back to the simple idea that Food Is Healthy for Human Bodies.

Again, in the spirit of fairness as well as perspective, here's a quote from near the turn of the last century:

"At whatever time highly-skilled physicians shall have developed the healing of illnesses by means of foods, and shall make provision for simple foods, and shall prohibit humankind from living as slaves to their lustful appetites, it is certain that the incidence of chronic and diversified illnesses will abate, and the general health of all mankind will be much improved. This is destined to come about. In the same way, in the character, the conduct and the manners of men, universal modifications will be made."

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, pp. 152-155

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/foodhealth.gif>
2. <http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=gmail&q=healing%20food>
3. <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fdhclm.html>

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Create a Thriving Business &raquo; Blog Archive &raquo; Carnival of Healing #150 (2008-08-09 15:23:19)  
[...] Alexander Zoltai talks about healthy eating as common sense. [...]

KesPrellelve (2008-08-02 23:26:52)  
Very nice!!

amzolt (2008-08-02 23:59:24)  
Thanks for the encouragement!

Liara Covert (2008-07-09 11:31:11)

The paradigm is shifting. Human beings are waking up to see beyond opinions imposed by other people. Anyone can learn to think, to create logic, and evolve with the times.

Alexander M Zoltai (2008-07-09 18:20:31)

Liara, Yes, I'm glad you point out that views are altering! I suppose my goal with the post was to wake a few folks up rather than give the ones already awake a pat on the back. But... Your comment makes me ponder ways of doing both !

### 1.5.10 Women . . . (2008-07-10 03:43)



[1]

For far too long, women have been irreverenced by men:

When she was still a child her father selected a teacher for her and she studied various branches of knowledge and the arts, achieving remarkable ability in literary pursuits. Such was the degree of her scholarship and attainments that her father would often express his regret, saying, "Would that she had been a boy, for he would have shed illumination upon my household, and would have succeeded me!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 191

Here's a bit of Truth for those who may use Scripture to attempt a suppression of women:

In the Kingdom of God, there is no difference between the men and the women; both are considered alike—only the one who works the hardest surpasses the other. In the time of Christ, women were the great agents in spreading the Kingdom. The disciples would not have been confirmed if it had not been for them—Peter would not have been strengthened. In cultivating a garden, it makes no difference whether the gardener is a man or a woman—but if the woman works hard and takes care of the plants, she will certainly have a better reward than the man who idles.

Compilations, Baha'i Prayers 9, p. 55

Often various traditions hinder the health and well-being of girls and women:

Statement to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Agenda item:  
Women in development

In the view of the Bahá'í International Community, the advancement of civilization now requires the full participation of everyone, including women. For this to happen, girl children as well as boy children must be valued by their families and by society. We share UNICEF's distress at the blatant neglect of girl children, justified in many parts of the world as part of the culture. We concur with the recommendation, set forth in the Progress report on achievements made in the implementation of UNICEF policy on women in development (E/ICEF/1991/L.5), that UNICEF broaden its approach to maternal health to include an attempt to alter factors that affect girl's and women's health before maternity, including harmful traditional attitudes and practices.

Baha'i International Community, 1991 Apr 22, Girl Child

Some may violently disagree with the next quote but this blog does try to focus on spirituality:

As long as the desire, however small, of a man for women is not destroyed, so long is his mind attached, like a sucking calf is to its mother. Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus, with your hand. Cherish the path of peace. Nirvana has been shown by the Buddha.

Buddhist, Dhammapada - Sayings of the Buddha 2 (tr. J. Richards)

And, in closing, a poet revered by the spiritually-minded:

Love and tenderness are qualities of humanity,

Passion and lust are qualities of animality.

Woman is a ray of God, not a mere mistress,

The Creator's self, as it were, not a mere creature!

Mathnavi of Rumi (E.H. Whinfield tr), The Masnavi , Vol 1

1. [http://bp0.blogger.com/\\_d0xDpj3wQFc/R9wM8UhBiOI/AAAAAAAAACF4/GPbziLdmxVE/s1600-h/softpinkstarneb2006-01-d-large\\_web.jpg](http://bp0.blogger.com/_d0xDpj3wQFc/R9wM8UhBiOI/AAAAAAAAACF4/GPbziLdmxVE/s1600-h/softpinkstarneb2006-01-d-large_web.jpg)

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enreal (2008-07-14 18:32:46)

I enjoyed this piece and this site is incredible... I can see your evolution and it is beautiful

amzolt (2008-07-14 18:42:21)

enreal, You are a breath of encouraging spirit! Thank you...

Liudmila (2008-07-10 16:30:54)

I like to read quaters from Holy Books ad I enjoyed reading, but the photo is really something very beautiful.

amzolt (2008-07-10 16:39:46)

Liudmila, That image is from NASA and is a nebula deep in space... I've long considered our deep-space environment as the "Mother" of the Earth.

### 1.5.11 Youth and The Future of Faith (2008-07-11 06:34)



[1]

Deutsche Welle has a recent article, [2]Religion Stronger Than Ever Among Global Youth, that reports on the results of a survey by Germany's Bertelsmann Foundation that discovered, "Young people in developing countries and Islamic states are just as religious as adults... In Morocco, about 99 percent believe in God and life after death. Among Brazilians, Turks and Nigerians, 90 percent are believers and even in Israel, Indonesia and Italy, the rate is 80 percent."

This is heartening news for those who feel religion is the premier guide for living on this earth.

For those who are suspicious of religion's influence on culture and individual behavior, I present my own experience: born to two ministers—mom and dad; surrounded by plain folk trying their best to do what other folk claimed was what God desired. Knowing something was amiss when I got home and my ministerial father would turn cranky and treat my trusting mother like she mattered less than his automobile...

It took most of my 62 years (and many tragic mistakes) to work out the supreme conflict between my father's religion and my mother's faith. May God bless both their departed souls...

There are many movements afoot on our beloved earth trying to bring the Spirit back to the bleeding body of Religion. Many sincere people, meeting in each other's homes or the local school auditorium or the woods—people trying to ignite the spirit that moved the earliest believers of our World's Faiths—actually the One World Faith in God that has had many incarnations, many progressive

Revelations of our Creator's wisdom and guidance.

It's just so sad when mere mortals get in the way of the flame of true faith, subvert it toward ends that serve egos more than souls...

Today's quote is from a man, Head of a World Faith, who in 1926 called for just such a heart-deep, faith-fresh religious morality that could help youth avoid the worst options in a world gone insanely materialistic.

"...the dangers facing the modern youth are becoming increasingly grave, and call for immediate solution. But, as experience clearly shows, the remedy to this truly sad and perplexing situation is not to be found in traditional and ecclesiastical religion. The dogmatism of the church has been discarded once for all. What can control youth and save it from the pitfalls of the crass materialism of the age is the power of a genuine, constructive and living Faith... Religion, as in the past, is still the world's sole hope, but not that form of religion which our ecclesiastical leaders strive vainly to preach. Divorced from true religion, morals lose their effectiveness and cease to guide and control man's individual and social life. But when true religion is combined with true ethics, then moral progress becomes a possibility and not a mere ideal.

"The need of our modern youth is for such a type of ethics founded on pure religious faith. Not until these two are rightly combined and brought into full action can there be any hope for the future of the race."

From a letter written on behalf of Shoghí Effendí to an individual believer, April 17, 1926, Bahá'í Youth, pp. 8-9 (Lights of Guidance, p. 630)

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/youth.jpg>
2. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,3474868,00.html>

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amzolt (2008-07-14 14:22:25)

I agree wholeheartedly, Liara! I still do hope for more than a beginning from folk... I truly believe that individuals can "save" themselves from despair through a personal spirituality but our World needs true, pure Religion, the only way to unify the whole planet. Have you ever watched two sincere souls viciously argue over their personal brands of spirituality?

Liara Covert (2008-07-14 07:34:06)

Human beings do not always equate spirituality with religion. To believe in something is already a beginning.

## 1.5.12 The Promise of World Peace (2008-07-14 04:25)



[1]image credit

I looked through all my news sources for a lead for today's post based on my new "model" for this blog: lead with news story, make my own comments, finish with an appropriate spiritual quote.

None of the stories seemed right; none of the issues seemed worthy of coverage; no part of the world was immune from problems—even the Olympics is plagued with controversy.

So, it came to me to put "global" + "crisis" into Google...

Here are some links from just the first page of results:

[2]Forget oil, the new global crisis is food

[3]Global Financial and Economic Crisis

[4]Global Food Crisis

[5]Global Coral Crisis Is In Full Bloom

[6]Muhammad cartoons 'global crisis'

[7]Biodiversity Crisis | Global Species Loss

[8]Global Water Crisis

Poor old world . . .

I ask myself why . . .

Why is now the time of so much crisis? Is there a deep reason or is it just a fluke? Will we get over all these crises or is the world doomed?

"The Great Peace towards which people of good will throughout the centuries have inclined their hearts, of which seers and poets for countless generations have expressed their vision, and for which from age to age the sacred scriptures of mankind have constantly held the promise, is now at long last within the reach of the nations. For the first time in history it is possible for everyone to view the entire planet, with all its myriad diversified peoples, in one perspective. World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet—in the words of one great thinker, 'the planetization of mankind'.

"Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horrors precipitated by humanity's stubborn clinging to old patterns of behaviour, or is to be embraced now by an act of consultative will, is the choice before all who inhabit the earth. At this critical juncture when the intractable problems confronting nations have been fused into one common concern for the whole world, failure to stem the tide of conflict and disorder would be unconscionably irresponsible....

"Whatever suffering and turmoil the years immediately ahead may hold, however dark the immediate circumstances, the Bahá'í community believes that humanity can confront this supreme trial with confidence in its ultimate outcome. Far from signaling the end of civilization, the convulsive changes towards which humanity is being ever more rapidly impelled will serve to release the 'potentialities inherent in the station of man' and reveal 'the full measure of his destiny on earth, the innate excellence of his reality'.

The Universal House of Justice, October 1985, *The Promise of World Peace*, pp. 2-3



That article from Yes! Magazine also talks about more appropriate methods of dealing with international criminals.

There are even well-developed plans for completely non-violent defense of an entire country:

[3]SELF-RELIANT DEFENSE: Without Bankruptcy or War

[4]Download the .pdf

And, for your "everyday" attempts at nonviolence:

[5]198 Methods of Nonviolent Action

[6]Download the .pdf

Plus, here's a spiritual quote to ponder:

"The darkness of superstitions and imitations came and took its place, binding the world of humanity in the chains and fetters of ignorance. Enmity arose among men, increasing to such an extent that nation strove against nation in hatred and violence. War has been a religious and political human heritage.

"Now it is enough! We must investigate reality. We must put away these superstitions. It is a self-evident truth that all humanity is the creation of God. All are His servants and under His protection. All are recipients of His bestowals. God is kind to all His servants. At most it is this: that some are ignorant; they must be educated in order that they may become intelligent. Some are immature as children; they must be aided and assisted in order that they may become mature. Some are sick and ailing; they must be healed. But the suffering patient must not be tested by false treatment. The child must not be warped and hindered in its development. The ignorant must not be restricted by censure and criticism. We must look for the real, true remedy."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 39

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**you can** [7][Subscribe to this blog...](#)

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/warpeace.jpg>

2. <http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=2688>

3. <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizationsc106.html>

4. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/self-reliantdefensewithoutbankruptcyorwar-english.pdf>

5. <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizations103a.html>

6. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/198\\_methods-1.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/198_methods-1.pdf)

7. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-08-07 20:41:18)

Evita, Amen!

Evita (2008-08-07 19:26:56)

You know what is so sad we could have world peace tomorrow if we wanted to. It just takes one moment to say "no more". But our stubborn pride and ego do not allow it. One by one we are waking up and out of the blindness that holds us captive to such actions as war, I know the day will come where we will look back upon these moments and gasp "how could we ever have treated each other this way?"

BlueTulip (2008-07-25 07:01:32)

Alex - If you haven't already, you might also like to add "Nonviolent Communication: A language of life" by Marshall Rosenberg to your reading list: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall\\_Rosenberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Rosenberg) In my opinion, nonviolent communication is all the nonviolent action anyone in this world needs.

amzolt (2008-07-25 08:04:36)

Welcome, BlueTulip ! Short comment you made, much pondering you induced . . . Thanks for the heads-up on Marshall Rosenberg !!!

jonathanmead (2008-07-16 04:48:09)

Sometimes it's not darkness we fear, but the light we know that shines within us. Great post. =)

amzolt (2008-07-16 04:50:52)

Jonathan, This is a truth that, if truly, deeply believed by people, would free humanity from all it's ills!

Cookiemouse (2008-07-17 11:12:59)

Ruskin also said that light is more terrifying than darkness.

amzolt (2008-07-17 14:34:04)

Cookiemouse,

So glad to see you here. Congrats on the new, fun blog: <http://jenniferandcookiemouse.blogspot.com/> Ruskin, eh? Wikipedia said he was, among other things, a "Sage Writer"! I love learning new things!! [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sage\\_writing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sage_writing)

A. Decker (2008-07-16 23:26:17)

Right on! The quote, that is. I haven't had a chance to check out the links yet.

amzolt (2008-07-16 23:51:57)

The links are Awesome! I feel you're in a position to know what it means to "...look for the real, true remedy."

### 1.5.14 East and West Embrace { tentatively } (2008-07-16 23:58)



NEW YORK, Jul 16 (IPS) - [1]"Despite opposition from some hardline factions in Iran, the government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has responded positively to a proposal by the United States that it open a U.S. Interests Section in Tehran – its first formal diplomatic presence since the 1979 Islamic Revolution."

WASHINGTON (CNN) – [2]"The Bush administration has decided to break with previous policy by sending one of its most senior diplomats to engage Iran's top nuclear official, the White House announced Wednesday."

So...

Will anything of substance happen?

Will a war be averted?

I'm always more positive about world events than the events themselves may seem to warrant. I have an abiding faith in the future of humanity. I feel that the slow climb our human family has made—from the savannas of Africa, to the lush kingdoms of Babylonia, to the riotous global adventuring from the 15th to the 17th Century, to the bleeding and war-torn world we now have—this laborious climb is too important for a few human leaders or a few thousand bombs to stop.

I'll pray for the leaders gathering in Switzerland and I'll keep this quote in mind:

**"A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation—such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving."**

Shoghi Effendí , *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 204

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1. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43210>
2. <http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/07/16/us.iran/>
3. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-07-17 05:46:04)  
A simple quote.! Imagination rules the world.

amzolt (2008-07-17 14:22:58)  
Catherine, Again and again, Thank You !!!

Liara Covert (2008-07-18 03:11:48)  
Some people believe war symbolizes the failure of diplomacy.

amzolt (2008-07-18 03:14:41)  
Astute thinking ! Diplomacy and tact are, to me, love in action—as long as they continually embrace truthfulness...

nonixace (2009-08-20 03:12:51)  
diplomacy and love continue to another result of respect between one and each other.thanks

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-20 03:23:57)  
Thanks for that comment!!!

### 1.5.15 No Peace Without Justice (2008-07-18 00:34)



[1] ROTTERDAM, Jul 15 (IPS) - [2]"Human rights organisations all over the world will celebrate the tenth anniversary Jul. 17 of the adoption of the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC is the first and only permanent international criminal tribunal to prosecute individuals accused of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity."

Interview with human rights promoter Dorota Gierycz: [3]"...I believe that yes, there is a very difficult initial period when there is this kind of tension between justice and peace, but in the long run there can be no peace without justice, and if we just keep pushing things under the rug there will be no room for genuine understanding and consolidation of the society and democracy."

Pushing things under the rug is an age-old activity of humans when they wish to commit a crime or when they feel they just need a break from moral responsibility.

Holding things high in the full light of the sun can be painful. Making the effort to use tact and diplomacy while still pursuing rigorous truth is hard work. It seems mere humans can't regularly accomplish these desirable goals.

Well, I'm here to say that humans can't accomplish peace and justice if what they depend upon is just their human powers.

We have more than animal bodies for a reason. Our bodies (and our minds and hearts subjugated to the body) will always vote for the easy path, even if it leads to war—war between nations, members of a family, neighbors...

So, where's the "instruction book" so many people claim we don't have?

"The Heavenly Books, the Bible, the Qur'án, and the other Holy Writings have been given by God as guides into the paths of Divine virtue, love, justice and peace."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 61

"The fundamental spiritual truth of our age is the oneness of humanity. Universal acceptance of

this principle – with its implications for social and economic justice, universal participation in non-adversarial decision-making, peace and collective security, equality of the sexes, and universal education – will make possible the reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind.”

Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Apr 01, *Sustainable Development and the Human Spirit*

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/justicehouse.jpg>
2. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43189>
3. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=43204>
4. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-07-18 13:02:30)

Liara, I cannot argue...

Brandi Magill (2008-07-18 13:38:21)

When put into words it seems so simple yet here we are. If only there were more people with a mind like yours. Great post Alex, I really enjoy the new format!

amzolt (2008-07-18 15:07:27)

Brandi ! Thanks for the encouragement and don't lose faith in the human spirit, eventually, rising to its destined heights! Hey, you back home yet?

forcedgreen (2008-07-18 15:30:16)

Hi Alex, enjoyed the post, the layout and spirituality! I'll be back!

amzolt (2008-07-18 16:07:14)

Looking forward to your return !!!

A. Decker (2008-07-19 00:58:26)

I like the image thing, too. (surprise, surprise!) What you're doing with the news will actually enable me to take in more of it, 'cause on my own I assiduously avoid news reports, feeling they are too negative as presented by established venues, not to mention sorted due to politics (Another anathema. Sp'tui![that's me spittin' at the mere mention of that subject]). Your interpretations tend to be anything but more of the same. And I love, love, Love the quotes. I guess that's me sayin' I like the format (I mean, if there has to be "news" this is the way to get it;-). As to this piece: I don't think humans can ACCOMPLISH peace; we can only allow it. It is the natural way of life, I think. Our attempts to "accomplish" this, that, and the other are what have hidden this from us. Opening in this direction, perhaps, leads to...intimations, at least, of Divine...order, it seems to be—ahh! The tv is on behind me, making it even harder to focus. I'll be back. But before I go: I just discovered your Hep C posts. Man! My man, would that I had known you

last year! My own 48 wk. ordeal ended in Oct.'07. Most of my blogging from that year is rather tainted with ravages that only one such as yourself could relate to. Anyway, I just had (a little late, I'm afraid) my 6 month blood test, don't have the results yet. Uhhh, no point here—oh yeah! I don't know how long the after-effects last, so I don't even know how different I "should" be at this point. (Being an incorrigible introvert, I joined no support group) I'll be back in touch. Thank you, Alex, for being there.

amzolt (2008-07-19 01:14:35)

" I don't think humans can ACCOMPLISH peace" Ah, so... Wisdom shines!!! Hep C? Whew! Have a friend that just cracked a rib and she asked how I was doing (I'm 2.6 months past TX). Here's what I said: "A broken rib is a noble injury—painful, somewhat scary, possibly humbling—all clean and upright suffering. "Hep C treatment is evil, obnoxious, ugly, and degrading..."My recovery (2.6 months now, out of a purported 6 total) is bouncing along like a crazed hippie on stilts. My strength is continually increasing (replacing muscle mass that was wasted by the drugs), my nervous system is communicating fairly well with my muscles but still makes my body angry with stray surges of meaningless energy. My mind is about 50 % and my emotions are still in the trashcan..."

amzolt (2008-07-18 03:35:53)

Marilyn, How is it you can be in Japan and I can be in America and you can still make me \*blush\* ... ?

Liara Covert (2008-07-18 11:30:39)

This is another way of perceiving and treating every being: Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love. —Lao-Tzu

isabella mori (2008-07-18 02:57:47)

alexander, i really like this format. i also like how you start each post with an image. while i agree that there are numerous "instruction books" available to help us, i also have this comment: you say "humans can't accomplish peace and justice if what they depend upon is just their human powers. we have more than animal bodies for a reason. our bodies (and our minds and hearts subjugated to the body) will always vote for the easy path, even if it leads to war—war between nations, members of a family, neighbors..." perhaps we CAN accomplish peace and justice if we use our human powers as opposed to our human weaknesses. if we use reason, compassion, and patience. perhaps thinking and living in terms of subjugation - a military metaphor - wears us out so much that we only have energy left for the easy path? perhaps the easy path just LOOKS easy? i'm not saying that i have the answers, just proposing some ideas.

Marilyn Higgins (2008-07-18 03:34:15)

Your blog and your incisive writing is a work of art and a wonderful source of education. I'm going to recommend it to many friends and family members. Thanks for showing us that clear Light that is shining within you. Keep on shining! All the best, Marilyn

amzolt (2008-07-18 03:29:11)

Wilma, I thoroughly agree, not showing kindness to a tyrant does not automatically mean showing aggression. Just like refusing a child some goodies when they've misbehaved does not mean you've ceased to love them...

amzolt (2008-07-18 03:06:59)

Isabella, Perchance I could have written more clearly... To me "...reason, compassion, and patience..." Are spiritual powers. Truth be told, I went with vernacular connotations I used the word "human"—most folk tend to equate it with less than spiritual—I feel (and will stress in future posts) that the human aspects Are the spiritual aspects. Thank you for making me reach toward further clarity ! AS far as "subjugation", far too many folk live with their truly spiritual qualities subjugated to their animal instincts... Again, you call me to more clarity: "easy" was used ironically, at least in my mind... One of these days, I'll have completely recovered from the Hep C treatments and then I can feel embarrassed by my lack of clarity . . . ;-)

Liara Covert (2008-07-18 03:07:03)

I agree with Isabella about the new format. Images do effectively 'set the stage.' One view is that the only acceptable response to human behavior is love and compassion. This isn't compatible with the court and other systems set up to judge and punish.

amzolt (2008-07-18 03:12:25)

Liara, My best response to your comment is this quote: "The foundation of the Kingdom of God is laid upon justice, fairness, mercy, sympathy and kindness to every soul. Then strive ye with heart and soul to practice love and kindness to the world of humanity at large, except to those souls who are selfish and insincere. It is not advisable to show kindness to a person who is a tyrant, a traitor or a thief because kindness encourages him to become worse and does not awaken him. The more kindness you show to a liar the more he is apt to lie, for he thinks that you know not, while you do know, but extreme kindness keeps you from revealing your knowledge." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 412

Wilma (2008-07-18 03:17:18)

I too think that if we come from love and leave judgements behind us the world will become connected to God. It is seperateness that is hurting us the most. I am not so sure about your last quote, what I know is that thngs have been translated out of context of their times. Not showign kindness may mean ..... there is nothing said about what we must show in its place.....but I am sure it will not be aggression.... BTW format is great, I was borne in Rotterdam and loved the picture :) Love Wilma

### 1.5.16 Our Ruined Earth (2008-07-19 01:34)



[1]

My focus today is what's wrong in Our Family's Home . . .

From the [2][Environment Section of AlterNet](#):

### **Why Our Food Waste May Be Our Greatest Asset**

Composting is key to reducing waste costs, cutting global warming emissions, and increasing urban food security.

### **Time to Face the Hard Realities of a Global Energy Crisis**

America needs a comprehensive plan to deal with post-peak oil – and that is going to involve some serious long-term thinking.

### **Get Ready for the Post-SUV World!**

SUVs and big pickups are waddling off into the sunset, leaving Americans with no more excuses for the nation's profligate oil use.

### **Global Warming's Twin Evil: Wildfires and Drought**

The 850 fires burning in California alone should be a wake up call that we're unprepared for rapid climate change.

All this and much more on [3][AlterNet's Site](#) . . .

And, absorb this wonderful, educational, and surprising video: [4]["Solving" climate change](#) from David Keith.

What's driven our Family to this Crisis?

What can we actually do?

How much of the Crisis is manageable?

What needs to occur in political circles to make change actually happen?

Why in the world, considering that the environmental problem was already a concern in the 1950's, have we let it get this bad?

Will prayer help?

Will war help? ( That's a trick question. Just seeing if you're paying attention... ;-) )

**What in the World can We DO !?!**

I'd **Love** to see your thoughts and feelings in the comments . . .

Today's quote is from [5][ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: Statement to the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment](#)

and Development (UNCED):

”The principle of the unity of mankind naturally implies the need for world peace and security. The World Commission on Environment and Development observed in its report that world peace and security are central to sustainable development. The Bahá’í International Community agrees that as long as the specter of war continues to dominate international relations, the well-being of the human race and the environment will continue to erode. It is the Bahá’í view that the root cause of all war and injustice is the failure to recognize the fundamental oneness of the human race. Acceptance of the principle of oneness will induce the willingness to uncover and permanently resolve all other causes for conflict. Indeed, it must be the foundation for any serious attempt to find ways of living in harmony with our environment and each other.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1990 Aug 06, *Environment Development*

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments !**

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5. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/1990-aug-06-environment-development.doc>
6. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine (2008-07-19 05:43:52)

With all what is coming our way in this era..perhaps God want’s to sent the human race of all in this up side down of a world ,a warning sign,and a strong message,and for those who are to blind or ignorant to see..well then they must feel it on the end..unfortunately perhaps to late,God created the earth..and he can take it away the same way,people better start to believe and praying now,before it’s to late.!!! I leave,with one thought in mind,before I go to bed... Off all things I’ve lost,I miss my mind the most.!!! Catherine. ——— Forwarded message ——— From: Cecilia Durieux Date: Fri, 18 Jul 2008 09:08:12 -0400 Subject: Watch this clip of Al Gore’s speech Dear Friend, Al Gore just challenged the nation to take bold steps towards solving the climate crisis. Check out his dramatic speech here: <http://wecansolveit.org> Global warming is an urgent, but solvable problem. That’s why I’ve joined the We Campaign, a powerful nonpartisan movement of concerned citizens that was founded by Nobel Prize Laureate and former Vice President Al Gore. Join me and be part of history in the making today at <http://wecansolveit.org>. We’re already more than a million strong – and growing each day. Thank you!

RainforestRobin (2008-07-19 22:28:49)

This is a powerful post...AND I laughed out loud over your ”trick question”. SO, I obviously was NOT asleep! :) :) Boy, the question you raise is ”right on”...I don’t have THE answer, although I have many thoughts and ideas too in depth to write here.....BUT I went on to read Catherine’s comment and went to the Gore link. Am going to look into that some more. I am proud of you for, once again, tackling these ”tough” topics. We need more and more voices like yours. Thank you Alex! Hugs, Robin

anzolt (2008-07-19 23:08:24)

Robin, Avail yourself of the video link in the post. Even though Gore is certainly impassioned, David Keith is super practical and a genius!!

anzolt (2008-07-20 03:20:27)

"Some people believe that the world is actually evolving in a very positive direction." I personally, deeply, \*know\* the world is headed for wonderful positivity! It's also my belief that it will come about by humans working on-the-ground with the crises we face. The crises are purifying the human race. And, the human race must step up to the plate and resolve these issues. It's our God-given task to save our earth, our Home...

Liara Covert (2008-07-20 02:52:44)

Some people believe that the world is actually evolving in a very positive direction. If you take the position that the imbalances cannot perpetuate as they are, then the energy fluctuations can be seen as reorganising themselves in ways every person doesn't necessarily understand at a conscious level. Rather than look at what doesn't seem to be going right, as what seem to evoke discomfort, you can also choose to sense a very different kind of evolution in the world. If you favor the points of reference that exists, the infrastructures, politics, economics and systems you think you know, then you may be preventing yourself from sensing how parts of the world are moving, changing energy vibration and transforming to a new level.

### 1.5.17 Money To Burn (2008-07-20 03:04)



[1]

[2]image credit

CNN: [3]Zimbabwe introduces \$100 billion banknotes

Each bill "...can buy only four oranges. The new note is equal to just one U.S. dollar."

"...the official inflation rate now at 2.2 million percent."

"The new bills are actually bearer checks and have an expiration date of December 31."

**BBC:** [4]Zimbabwe introduces Z \$100bn note

"Zimbabwe's meltdown has left at least 80 % of the population in poverty, facing mass shortages of basic goods."

From a resident: "So Z \$100 billion can't do anything because for me to go home I need Z \$250 billion, so this [note] is worthless."

"Zimbabwe was once one of the richest countries in Africa."

Stunning in its sadness and surrealism . . .

What causes such gross failure?

Why does it seem the haves could care less about the have-nots?

What does it take for people to realize that we're all people?

Ever wonder how long the masses are going to take these sinister lies they're being told?

Of course, making people starve is a very old technique used by oppressors. The oppressors don't even have to live in the same country as the sufferers, especially in our global home.

Makes me want to cry . . .

"The dragon, symbol of heaven, comes to fight the false dragon that symbolized the inflation of the earth principle."

I Ching

"Nations, though exhausted and disillusioned, have seemingly begun to cherish anew the spirit of revenge, of domination, and strife. Peoples, convulsed by economic upheavals, are slowly drifting into two great opposing camps with all their menace of social chaos, class hatreds, and worldwide ruin. Races, alienated more than ever before, are filled with mistrust, humiliation and fear, and seem to prepare themselves for a fresh and fateful encounter. Creeds and religions, caught in this whirlpool of conflict and passion, appear to gaze with impotence and despair at this spectacle of unceasing turmoil."

Shoghí Effendí, *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 67

"Today, the agency on whom has devolved the task of creating this framework and of liberating the promotion of human rights from those who would exploit it is the system of international institutions born out of the tragedies of two ruinous world wars and the experience of worldwide economic breakdown. Significantly, the term 'human rights' has come into general use only since the promulgation of the United Nations Charter in 1945 and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights three years later. In these history-making documents, formal recognition has been given to respect for social justice as a correlative of the establishment of world peace. The fact that the Declaration passed without a dissenting vote in the General Assembly conferred on it from the outset an authority that has grown steadily in the intervening years."

Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Mar 03, *The Prosperity of Humankind*

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments !

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3. <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/africa/07/19/zimbabwe.banknotes/>
4. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7515823.stm>
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Sun Warrior (2008-07-20 18:13:59)

Great blog... I'm going to enjoy exploring it. The spiritual and the natural together. Got you blogrolled on mine. SW

Money Bread (2008-07-21 11:41:10)

[...] MoneyTo Burn [...]

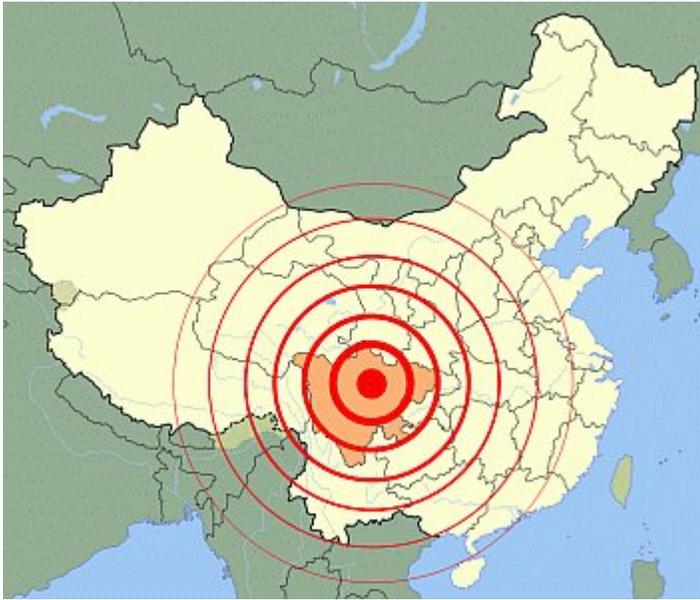
mohamed shaban (2008-07-21 01:27:33)

Yes Zimbabwe was one of the richest countries just from 28 years ago ..at 1980 ..that time one American dollar was equal to one Zimbabwe dollar.. and due to the growing of the inflation from 0.0 percent at 1980 up to it reach now 2.2 million percent .. So we can say that the government with the presedent Mogabi not able to control that sharp increase of inflation . Your blog really so good .. and i will visit it more and more .. have a very nice day with my regards

amzolt (2008-07-21 01:41:21)

Mohamed, Thank you for visiting and leaving your informative and encouraging comment!

### 1.5.18 Can Youth Save Our World ? (2008-07-21 01:08)



[1]  
[2]

image credit

Today I want to honor the youth of the world by introducing a youth from China.

**From OneWorld and Mercy Corps:** [3][The World's Youngest Principal - 17-year-old Zhang Yong](#)

"Before the earthquake, he was a student at one of the schools here in Jin Hua. That changed immediately in the disaster's aftermath: he was asked by displaced families to help create a temporary school. He gathered 15 volunteers, 13-17 years old, to get started."

"Our goal is to keep these kids safe and on a routine, so they don't forget their studies or what life was like before the earthquake.' Zhang Yong said."

"We're proud to work with determined, energetic individuals like Zhang Yong — local leaders who are full of resolve to not only rebuild, but also care for their communities when it's needed most."

What were you doing to help your fellow humans when you were 17?

I was trying to figure out the difference between my minister father and God and *that* challenge made everything else a total confusion.

When did it dawn on you that helping others is one of the most spiritual things you can do?

It took me over 60 years to get the idea from my head to my heart.

Can you imagine adolescents doing things that most folk think are just for adults?

I can because I've known a few.

How do you think youth can be helped best to understand the world?

How do you think adults can be educated to accept the power and creativity of youth?

"A spring wells up at the foot of the mountain:

The image of YOUTH.

Thus the superior man fosters his character

By thoroughness in all that he does.

"A spring succeeds in flowing on and escapes stagnation by filling up all the hollow places in its path. In the same way character is developed by thoroughness that skips nothing but, like water, gradually and steadily fills up all gaps and so flows onward."

I Ching

"The cause of universal education deserves the utmost support, for no nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens. Such an education should promote the consciousness of both the oneness of humanity and the integral connection between humankind and the world of nature. By nurturing a sense of world citizenship, education can prepare the youth of the world for the organic changes in the structure of society which the principle of oneness implies."

Bahá'í International Community, 1992 June 06, *Earth Charter*

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments !**

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2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sichuan\\_earthquake%2C\\_2008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sichuan_earthquake%2C_2008)
3. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/the-worlds-youngest-principal>
4. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/comments/feed/>
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amzolt (2008-07-22 08:49:36)

Tomas, Got you on Xanga for my reply to this post. Must say here, though, that I fully agree with your position!

Amarendra (2008-07-21 04:30:44)

Very powerful questions: How do you think youth can be helped best to understand the world? How do you think adults can be educated to accept the power and creativity of youth? One way is to enable more and more youths to take part in projects that have a direct impact on society - for example, Times Foundation in India has started an initiative to invite people to take out a few hours of their time to teach underprivileged children. Within a fortnight, 55,000 people have signed up! In this group, the most enthusiastic are the youth! I liked the campaign so much that I have started tracking it at a new blog: <http://indiateach.blogspot.com/>. I would link-up with this post as well, since, this echoes similar sentiments!

amzolt (2008-07-21 05:00:50)

Amarendra, Thank you, so much, for recommending the site! <http://indiateach.blogspot.com/>  
(give the search engines another poke...) And, congratulations on your helping support  
<http://timesfoundation.indiatimes.com/articleshow/3204866.cms>

Catherine. (2008-07-21 05:03:30)

All this will not be accomplished during the 100 days,nor the first 1,000 days,nor perhaps during our life on this planet. But let us begin.!!

amzolt (2008-07-21 05:05:34)

Amen to that, Catherine !!!

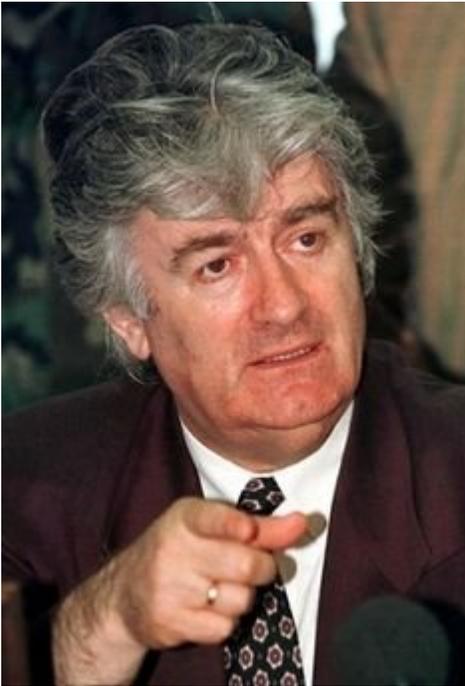
Tomas (2008-07-22 06:39:13)

Zhang Yong's story awakened my memory... we (I and my friends) were concerned with world's problems much more than most do today, when many worry just over own survival. Thus The World's Youngest Principal gave me a good moral. Thank you for the reminder of these precious days when spiritual values inspired us much more than things we have. The aged have lots of knowledge but it burdens them with the comprehension of having no power for the application of theory to practice. The youth have the faith that gifts them everything that is needed for blossom out and nourish. While reading your post,I sensed myself young again. Thank you dear amzolt. The world will be saved not by our libraries, but the faith of the youth. Story of The World's Youngest Principal teaches to listen and so hear the heaven but not personal memories. I greatly enjoy your posts.Thank you once again.

Can Youth Save Our World? &laquo; The Spirit Guide (2008-07-21 22:39:30)

[...] Read the rest of this post @ Can Youth Save Our World? - Our Evolution [...]

### 1.5.19 Punishment and Mercy (2008-07-22 10:01)



[1]

[2][image credit](#)

**From Reuters:** [3] [Suspects on run from Yugoslav war crimes tribunal](#)

”Radovan Karadzic, one of the world’s most wanted men, has been arrested and is facing extradition to the United Nations war crimes tribunal in The Hague on two counts of genocide.”

**From the New Zealand Herald:** [4] [Bosnian Serb war crime suspect Radovan Karadzic arrested](#)

”If Karadzic is extradited, he would be the 44th Serb suspect extradited to the tribunal. The others include former President Slobodan Milosevic, who was ousted in 2000 and died in 2006 while on trial on war crimes charges.”

Whether or not this man committed these crimes, the importance of this story is that there is an international body that can (like a local judicial department) remand individuals to trial. We can only hope the standard of justice is higher than many local and national tribunals . . .

Edmund Burke once said, ”All that is needed for evil to prosper is that good men do nothing.”

Some folks, living on a byway of the pacifist movement, feel we shouldn’t have criminal courts. What they propose we do with inveterate abusers of human rights can vary widely from individual to individual.

Here’s what [5][Wikipedia](#) gives as varieties of pacifism:

”Pacifism covers a spectrum of views ranging from the belief that international disputes can and should be peacefully resolved; to calls for the abolition of the institutions of the military and war; to opposition to any organization of society through governmental force (anarchist or libertarian

pacifism); to rejection of the use of physical violence to obtain political, economic or social goals; to the condemnation of force except in cases where it is absolutely necessary to advance the cause of peace (pacifism); to opposition to violence under any circumstance, including defense of self and others.”

Obviously, some forms of pacifism can tolerate judicial proceedings.

My best analogy for why such institutions are needed is straight from child-rearing.

If a child killed a cat, should the parents just be really extra nice to the kid and refrain from punishing him?

Well, if parents want to protect the cat community, not to mention other humans (there *are* teens who’ve been sent to prison for murder), it may be the highest form of mercy to use caring but strict punishment...

Do we just look the other way if a human is suspected of murdering thousands of our fellow humans or do we put that individual on trial and, if they’re found guilty, punish them for the sake of the Human Community?

”It is perhaps a truism to say that the exercise of unfettered national sovereignty is a major obstacle to the safeguarding of the human rights of all peoples... Despite the establishment of international standards for human rights, many nations cling to the view that respect for those rights should be granted or withheld at the discretion of national governments.

”A second obstacle is the lack of adequate mechanisms to enforce adherence to the provisions of the Conventions. International human rights standards are not legally binding on all governments, and compliance, even by those states that have ratified specific conventions, is voluntary... In addition, international criminal jurisdiction for crimes against humanity and for flagrant violations of internationally recognized human rights should also be invested in a permanent body.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1993, Jun 09, *Obstacles to Progress in Human Rights*

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3. <http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSL2176110020080721>
4. [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/2/story.cfm?c\\_id=2&objectid=10522828](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/2/story.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10522828)
5. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacifism>
6. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/comments/feed/>
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georgewesley (2008-07-22 19:38:26)

This arrest is a significant story for Baha'is, given that the NSA of the US was a founding member of the Washington Working Group for the International Criminal Court (WICC) and the American Coalition for the International Criminal Court (AMICC) and a Baha'i representative serves as co-chair of the Faith & Ethics Network for the ICC. I rally appreciate your commentary of using the analogy of responding to the aggressive behavior of children. Working with children and their parents around such issues is what I do for a living.

amzolt (2008-07-22 20:09:20)

George, So good to see you again! Had no idea about the Baha'i connection to this story but, of course, it makes total sense... Whew! What a challenging profession you have !!!

On the Arrest of Karadzic: Significant to Baha'is | Baha'i Views (2008-07-22 20:25:34)

[...] really like Alexander's commentary Punishment and Mercy on the Radovan Karadzic arrest. As I noted on his blog, this arrest is a significant story for [...]

### 1.5.20 Light In The Darkness (2008-07-23 03:28)



[1]

"The bed-rock of a strategy that can engage the world's population in assuming responsibility for its collective destiny must be the consciousness of the oneness of humankind."

Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Jul 16, *Realization of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*

From The New York Times: [2]Bank Investors Redefine Bad News

"...it has now been a year since the credit crisis erupted, and, so far, the optimists have been proven wrong time and again. Skeptics say it could take years for banks to recover from the worst financial crisis since the Depression. And even when things do improve, the pessimists maintain, banks' profits will be a fraction of what they were before."

From Forbes: [3]Wachovia Loss May Spell End For Bank Rally

"After reporting second-quarter earnings that fell short of expectations, American Express said it does not expect to meet or exceed long-term financial targets until the economy recovers because conditions worsened more rapidly than expected."

So much of the world is overextended.

So many people suffer.

A few get rich as the rest get poorer . . .

I used to work as a telemarketer (Oh, my God, Alex, how horrible !) for one of the major credit card companies. There came a point when they expanded their services into Ireland. The CEO said the Irish appeared to be overly careful in their finances—they weren't carrying any balance on their cards. I quit the company right after I saw a quote from the CEO: "We have every confidence in the Irish market. It may be slow now but we will educate them."

Educate them . . .

Time for class kids! Gather round. There ya go. See, this is a wall socket. Some people say its dangerous to put your finger in here but today we're gonna learn that it's actually fun !!

We all need education, constantly—from the bottom up and from the Top down.

Sometimes I get a little nutsey and think that the separation of Faith and State has brought ruin to both.

"...material civilization is like unto a beautiful body, and spiritual civilization is like unto the spirit of life. If that wondrous spirit of life enters this beautiful body, the body will become a channel for the distribution and development of the perfections of humanity."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 11

Things sure are headed Somewhere . . . In fact, that reminds me of an old saying, "If ya don't know where you're goin', any road will take ya there."

"...it is unrealistic to imagine that the vision of the next stage in the advancement of civilization can be formulated without a searching re-examination of the attitudes and assumptions that currently underlie approaches to social and economic development....We are being shown that, unless the development of society finds a purpose beyond the mere amelioration of material conditions, it will fail of attaining even these goals. That purpose must be sought in spiritual dimensions of life and motivation that transcend a constantly changing economic landscape and an artificially imposed division of human societies into 'developed' and 'developing.' "

Bah'í International Community, 1995 Jul 16, Realization of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

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3. [http://www.forbes.com/home/2008/07/22/briefing-opener-wachovia-markets-equity-cx\\_ss\\_0722markets17.html](http://www.forbes.com/home/2008/07/22/briefing-opener-wachovia-markets-equity-cx_ss_0722markets17.html)
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amzolt (2008-07-23 04:33:02)

Your question made me search this out: "In creation there is no evil; all is good. Certain qualities and natures innate in some men and apparently blameworthy are not so in reality. For example, from the beginning of his life you can see in a nursing child the signs of greed, of anger and of temper. Then, it may be said, good and evil are innate in the reality of man, and this is contrary to the pure goodness of nature and creation. The answer to this is that greed, which is to ask for something more, is a praiseworthy quality provided that it is used suitably. So if a man is greedy to acquire science and knowledge, or to become compassionate, generous and just, it is most praiseworthy. If he exercises his anger and wrath against the bloodthirsty tyrants who are like ferocious beasts, it is very praiseworthy; but if he does not use these qualities in a right way, they are blameworthy." Then it is evident that in creation and nature evil does not exist at all; but when the natural qualities of man are used in an unlawful way, they are blameworthy. So if a rich and generous person gives a sum of money to a poor man for his own necessities, and if the poor man spends that sum of money on unlawful things, that will be blameworthy. It is the same with all the natural qualities of man, which constitute the capital of life; if they be used and displayed in an unlawful way, they become blameworthy. Therefore, it is clear that creation is purely good. Consider that the worst of qualities and most odious of attributes, which is the foundation of all evil, is lying. No worse or more blameworthy quality than this can be imagined to exist; it is the destroyer of all human perfections and the cause of innumerable vices. There is no worse characteristic than this; it is the foundation of all evils. Notwithstanding all this, if a doctor consoles a sick man by saying, "Thank God you are better, and there is hope of your recovery," though these words are contrary to the truth, yet they may become the consolation of the patient and the turning point of the illness. This is not blameworthy. "This question is now clearly elucidated. Salutations!" 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, p. 214

Liara Covert (2008-07-23 04:16:54)

What if "bad" news does not exist? What if only love and light are reality and everything else is superfluous?

Cassandra Parker (2008-10-11 06:40:40)

@Liara Then there were no specialty of "good" news. Actually it's the "bad" news that helps us to identify and justify "good" news. @amzolt Wow!! You have found a really good one. It's very true that there are few rich and all others are poor. A post of mine about credit card shows how the general person becomes more poor by feeding them already rich. Just thought you may like this one: <http://personalfinancesolution.wordpress.com/2008/07/28/credit-card-secret-how-you-drain-your-money-yourself>

amzolt (2008-10-11 06:57:40)

Cassandra, Welcome to the blog! Your post is very appropriate!! I worked for a time at a debt reduction service. It's interesting that the credit card companies have systems to, as you say, drain our money but when our company contacted them about a person who was drowning in debt and they feared they receive nothing, they were willing to work with them and reduce the amount of total interest accrued. Still, the people had to stick to a strict schedule of payments.

Liara Covert (2008-10-12 11:15:11)

Cassandra, thank you for sharing your perspective. Another way to look at qualifications like 'good' and 'bad' is to imagine that many human beings perceive the world in terms of ego goals. Such goals really have nothing to do with our best interests. The ego is not who we are at soul-level. The ego is what compels us to establish taste preferences. If we shape goals based on what we believe to be good or bad for us, then we remain blind to our soul purpose. If you take the view that humans would benefit from detaching from goals as the ego understands them, then you may also believe this requires you to view your goals as meaningless. This may seem extreme, but reorienting how you process thoughts in the mind enables you to reframe opposites such as; near-far, right-wrong, important-unimportant and necessary-unnecessary. Everything you perceive takes on completely new meaning but only when you deliberately choose to dissolve or detach from your understanding of who you were.

### 1.5.21 Women Are Our Hope (2008-07-24 04:19)



[1]

[2]image credit

**From OneWorld.Net:** [3][Focus U.S. Aid Efforts on Women, Say Experts](#)

"Yolanda Richardson, president of the Center for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), told Hill staffers and others that implementing policies that recognize the vital role women play in poor communities is the best way to 'improve the quality and effectiveness of our global development assistance.' "

"CEDPA's Richardson agrees with those calling for a new approach to foreign aid, but is convinced that unless new policies and strategies place a special focus on women, they will fail to address the very basic issue of poverty reduction in developing countries."

[4][In a previous post](#) I highlighted a wonderful project, [5][The Girl Effect](#).

Check out the links above but, in brief, the post and the project have one central premise: if we want to aid the future of our global civilization, the most effective way is to aid young women.

There's really no way around that clear truth. Women are the first educators, possibly beginning in the womb. What can a woman teach her child about how to get along in the world if the woman has multiple barriers to her own way in the world?

Barriers like:

- » not enough to eat
- » no personal security
- » lack of money
- » no opportunity to earn money
- » no input to local decisions

I understand that many men suffer the same oppressive circumstances, yet the toll on our human family and its civilization is much greater when women are held back.

*Imagine:* a man suffers oppression and can't contribute to society.

*Imagine:* a woman suffers oppression, has babies, and has no chance to help them learn the rudiments of more than a squalid existence.

Which scenario hurts all of us more?

Here are three pertinent documents you can download:

[6][Women and Development](#)

[7][The Girl Child](#)

[8][Women and The Peace Process](#)

"Women have equal rights with men upon earth; in religion and society they are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 133

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4. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/05/31/the-girl-effect/>
5. <http://www.girleffect.org/>
6. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/women-and-development.doc>
7. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/girl-child.doc>
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Liara Covert (2008-07-25 00:10:49)

amzolt, it is not your job to seek to control or influence the thinking and behaviour of other human beings. It is not your job to change anyone. You only control your reactions to your own perceived situations. Catherine makes a relevant point in encouraging each person to rediscover his or her own inner power. What other people choose to do is based on their free will and intent.

ravenscawl (2008-07-25 16:15:55)

I agree more should be done, There is a lot of talk for the breaking of certain cycles, mostly in the direction of male influence and attitude towards women, yet little or none in creation of new cycles for women themselves. When building a house one must start with the proper Foundation, if not the walls will FAIL! This is true in society as well, The mother is the not only foundation, but the Builder as well, yet we persist in not leveling, and withholding Her tools! In regards to the previous comments, The personal struggle to "Heal" one's spirit, Most often brings the recognition, that their wounds no matter how personal, are not always exclusively theirs. Understand that the byproduct of your empathy, is not only what has encouraged you to reach out, but encouraged other commentators to reach out, to you. Thus a true example of how you and they have effected a positive change for all! Kem Shahol

amzolt (2008-07-25 16:34:52)

Kem, Much to ponder in your comment . . .

Liara Covert (2008-07-25 02:49:36)

You echo what I am saying. Some people think positively and take some action but feel what they do is never enough. Its useful to realize that every thought, word and gesture is affecting the bigger picture even if you are not attuned to energy at levels where you sense immediate positive changes. You can also be content and believe whatever gesture or thoughts you have are sufficient at this time.

amzolt (2008-07-24 06:10:23)

Liara, Can people who are suffering, from birth on, because of oppressors, just think their way out of the suffering?

Catherine. (2008-07-24 06:13:28)

A brief short comment..I thank God,it's never to late to become what He intended us to be!!

amzolt (2008-07-24 06:16:42)

Catherine, Thank you, Catherine. You have a way of taking the discussion to a higher level . . .

amzolt (2008-07-25 02:44:01)

Liara, I am a firm believer in keeping my mind and heart at the highest spiritual vibrational level I can but I also am a firm believer that we need to \*help\* as many other people as we can—with Action not just thought and feeling...

Liara Covert (2008-07-24 05:37:48)

Whatever words you think, write and utter, are creating the world in which you live. They influence your perception. If you choose words with negative slants, then this generates and reinforces things like lack,

negativity, pain and suffering. However, if you only choose to think, speak and write about the flip side, then your life will differ.

Liara Covert (2008-07-24 09:23:31)

amzolt, my answer to your question is yes. Consider Viktor Frankle, an American survivor of the Holocaust. He wrote a book called, "Man's Search for Meaning" in which he pointed out that no matter what anyone did to him, they could not control his thinking. No matter what his circumstances, he could decide within himself how he wanted to think and feel. You go against yourself when you judge or blame anything. If you believe you are suffering, in your mind, you mistakenly believe that you deserve punishment. When you are impeccable with your word, as suggested by Toltecs like Don Miguel Ruiz, the whole concept of sin or suffering changes from a focus on religion to a focus on beliefs about self-protection or self-abuse. If you love yourself, you will express your love in all interactions with others, regardless of what they do. Use your energy in the direction of truth and love for yourself. This helps clear out emotional poison that exists within you.

amzolt (2008-07-24 18:23:43)

Liara, So, if what you say is true, how do we help all the suffering people who don't seem to have the strength of character to accomplish this mental magic?

Catherine. (2008-07-24 18:29:21)

One other thought,that I want to add to this.. The most important trait that must be cultivated to walk The Path of power,is the trait of self discipline.How can you expect to marshal Universal Energy if you cannot control your own?

amzolt (2008-07-25 01:10:28)

Liara, So, if I understand you correctly, we just let all the people who our suffering in our global family continue to suffer, not doing anything to ameliorate it?

Liara Covert (2008-07-25 02:37:46)

amzolt, you do not permit anyone to suffer but yourself. The nature of your thoughts and actions influences the energy grid of the planet. Although you may not see this, you can feel how your attitude and mood affect the attitude and moods of people immediately around you. Some will feel uncomfortable and others will be uplifted. If you view everyone and everything as interconnected, then you begin to grasp that any positive thoughts you generate or behaviours you initiate positively affect the big picture. A practical example is that if you choose to sponsor a foster child in a foreign country, that gesture will not feed, clothe and educate all children in poverty. if you donate time or effort to a charity of choice, again, that in itself will not alleviate core problems. However your gesture and sense of hope can inspire a child and his or her family which, in turn, will inspire and motivate people you have never met to think and act more positively. Its all about raising awareness of your own energy and inner power to make a positive difference. If you choose to love and accept everything about yourself, if you do your best in whatever you do, then these things reverberate positive energy throughout the planet, even if you do not see this.

amzolt (2008-07-24 18:37:28)

Brilliant response, Catherine !

## 1.5.22 Where's The Party ? (2008-07-25 07:50)



[1]

Today I'll look at the mechanics of the American presidential election but also elections, in general, from the global perspective.

**From OneWorld.Net:** [2][Amnesty Int'l Focuses on Americans' Voting Rights](#)

"Under **Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, everyone has the right to participate in government and open elections..."

"Amnesty and other groups taking part in the voter registration drive fear that millions of Americans may not be able to cast their ballots in the presidential polls if certain shortcomings in **the current electoral system** are not addressed before the presidential polls in November."

**From The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:**

*Article 21.*

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

**From About.com-US Government Info:** [3][The Electoral College System](#)

"When you vote for a presidential candidate you are really voting to instruct the electors from your state to cast their votes for the same candidate."

"Each elector gets one vote."

"While the state electors are 'pledged' to vote for the candidate of the party that chose them, nothing

in the Constitution requires them to do so.”

”Critics of the Electoral College system, of which there are more than a few, point out that the system allows the possibility of a candidate actually losing the nationwide popular vote, but being elected president by the electoral vote. Can that happen? Yes, and it has.”

Hmmm... Government of, by, and for the *People*? The U.S. population is a bit over 301 million people; the Electoral College system has 538 people . . .

It could be argued that the United States election process is the best possible system. It could also be argued that the moon is made of green cheese.

My Faith counsels us to ”...obey the government under which [we] live...”, it also counsels that people should ”under no circumstances suffer their inner religious beliefs and convictions to be violated and transgressed by any authority whatever.”

Tough call, eh? No matter what I think about the government and its procedures, I should obey it, yet never abandon my inner convictions.

It may sound totally ridiculous yet, in my opinion, it’s based on the principle that not resisting the wrong will make it stand out all the more. If we argue and contend, we muddy the issues. If the issues are muddy, how can we clearly decide what will actually work. If we obey a wrong decision we can aid a process that will make it utterly, clearly wrong. Then, clear corrections can happen.

Some may say, ”Who *me* suffer, just to aid some distant, just decision?”

Well... What if the distant, just decision aids your children or grandchildren?

Unbelievably, that’s a tough call for some folk . . .

”...we are concerned at the lack of leadership over a wide spectrum of human affairs. At national, regional, and international levels, within communities and in international organizations, in governments and in non-governmental bodies, the world needs credible and sustained leadership. It needs leadership that is proactive, not simply reactive, that is inspired, not simply functional, that looks to the longer term and future generations for whom the present is held in trust. It needs leaders made strong by vision, sustained by ethics, and revealed by political courage that looks beyond the next election.’

”This cannot be leadership confined within domestic walls. It must reach beyond country, race, religion, culture, language, life-style. It must embrace a wider human constituency, be infused with a sense of caring for others, a sense of responsibility to the global neighborhood.”

*Report of the Commission on Global Governance, Our Global Neighborhood. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1995.) p.353.*

Bahá’í International Community, 1995 Oct, *Turning Point For All Nations*

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9/11 (2008-07-26 17:23:45)

Love is the answer, but while you're waiting for the answer, sex raises some pretty interesting questions. Woody Allen Woody Allen

amzolt (2008-07-26 17:38:48)

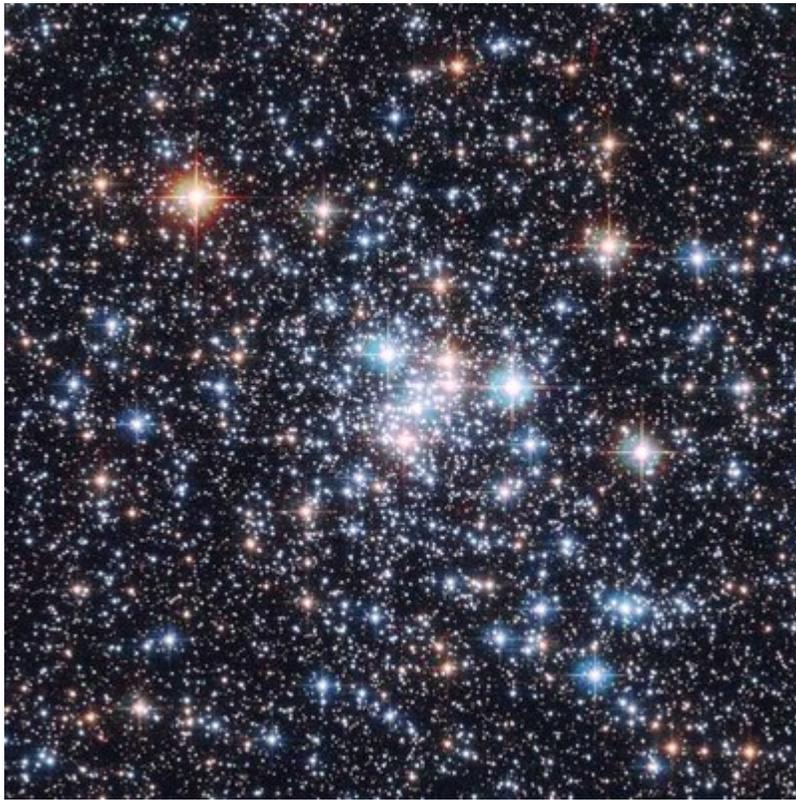
We all need a laugh once in a while, thanks!

### **1.5.23 Wordless Post (2008-07-26 02:08)**

I had a major shock today and can't get my brain wrapped around the blog...

Tomorrow truly is another day, eh?

Here's a picture to fall into . . .



[1]

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amzolt (2008-08-02 18:13:59)

Sophia, Oh, Yes !!! I recently bought a large pair of binoculars (technically, 25X100). Though they certainly won't show what that picture shows, any pair of binoculars will give your sight a \*stunning\* boost!!!

Sophia (2008-08-03 05:44:42)

I took some binoculars on a camping trip last year. In the dark, even without the binoculars the sky is stunning with stars scattered everywhere. But with the binoculars, the sky was studded completely with stars, as if God had shaken a great big salt shaker across the night sky.

amzolt (2008-08-03 05:46:36)

Woo-Hoo!!!

Sophia (2008-08-01 16:35:00)

It's like looking into the face of God.

enreal (2008-07-28 16:17:55)

I have had many days like this... this image does help in making sense out of chaos... there is no sense

amzolt (2008-07-28 16:20:36)

enreal, Thanks for brightening my day with a bit of metaphysical humor !!!

Doris (2008-07-26 02:25:22)

Beautiful image. It does help you understand the hugeness of our universe.

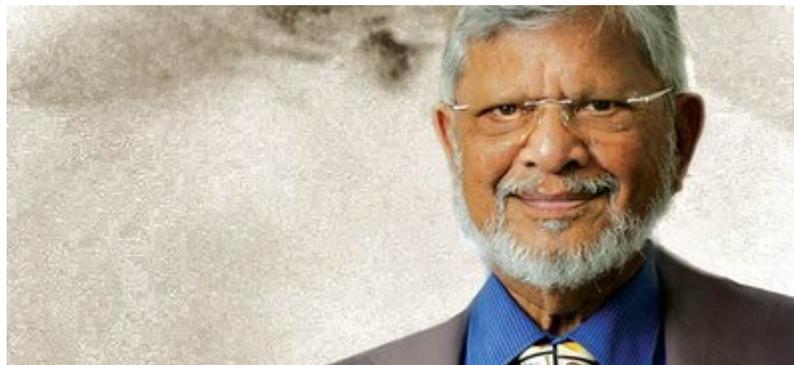
amzolt (2008-07-26 02:32:02)

Welcome! Did you fall \*out\* of the picture? I added Leaky Cauldron to my RSS Reader... Alex

Catherine. (2008-07-26 04:29:11)

Don't take life so seriously, you'll never get out of it again.!!

### 1.5.24 Spirit of the Age (2008-07-27 02:21)



[1]

[2]image credit

That's Arun Gandhi in the image, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. He'll be at the [3]Festival of Spirituality and Peace in Edinburgh, Scotland from August 3-24.

I'm all for spirituality and I'm all for peace. You may be, too. Yet, I bet you've known people who, if you brought up those subjects, would argue with you till the cows came home.

These two ideas—key elements to human unity—cause, at times, violent arguments.

Two things I feel make this happen are the relationship between unity and peace and the relationship between religion and spirituality.

Here's a short compilation exploring [4]the relationship between unity and peace.

The relationship between religion and spirituality is possibly the most volatile topic on the planet !

I started a discussion in an online forum about religion/spirituality that ran from June 15 to July 24. Even though it's a public forum, I edited out all names and handles except mine—Alex and amzolt. I left mine because I don't mind being identified and I was the "moderator" of the discussion. I deleted the other names and emails to give them relative privacy... Check it out: [5][Religion ?vs? Spirituality](#)

"The mass of the people are occupied with self and worldly desire, are immersed in the ocean of the nether world and are captives of the world of nature, save those souls who have been freed from the chains and fetters of the material world and, like unto swift-flying birds, are soaring in this unbounded realm. They are awake and vigilant, they shun the obscurity of the world of nature, their highest wish centereth on the eradication from among men of the struggle for existence, the shining forth of the spirituality and the love of the realm on high, the exercise of utmost kindness among peoples, the realization of an intimate and close connection between religions and the practice of the ideal of self-sacrifice."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 281

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2. <http://www.list.co.uk/article/10282-spirit-of-the-age/>

3. <http://www.festivalofspirituality.org.uk/>

4. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/a-short-compilation-exploring-the-relationship-between-unity-and-peace.doc>

5. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/religion-and-spirituality2.doc>

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A Different Prayer - August 2008 | I TAKE OFF THE MASK! (2008-08-15 08:23:00)

[...] M Zoltai presents Spirit of the Age posted at Our Evolution, saying, "Researched by Alexander M [...]"

Liana Covert (2008-07-29 02:33:28)

amzolt, you choose electrifying topics that rejuvenate the soul. The Gandhi stories are wonderful teachers themselves. Each person offers wisdom and we can find our own untapped wisdom inside ourselves with a bit of prompting and self-reflection.

amzolt (2008-07-27 15:34:30)

Catherine, That one I will ponder deeply !

ravenscawl (2008-07-27 16:12:07)

Having watched the thread that you spoke of, I must say that I found it quite enjoyable, and will say that you handled it quite well.

amzolt (2008-07-27 16:40:05)

That was an adventure, even for a risk-taker like me! Thanks for the encouraging comment! I was especially worried when one contributor discredited my comments because I was a Baha'i. I must have done something right, though, because it ended up they shared their own feeling on spirituality....

Catherine. (2008-07-27 05:07:34)

A man thinks in his heart,so is he. The purpose of life is a life of purpose, Imagination should be used,not to escape reality,but to create it. You are a masterpiece of a creation,of a writer as well as a poet..Alex!

amzolt (2008-07-27 06:18:03)

Catherine, Whew!! Such a complement !! Now I have to live up to it ;-)

Archie (2008-07-27 04:10:14)

Why edit out all names except yours? Seems like a bit of good old American pride is getting in the way of truth....

amzolt (2008-07-27 04:32:08)

Archie, I'm sorry I didn't make my intentions clearer. I left my name because I don't mind being identified and I was the "moderator" of the forum. I deleted all others because they want their relative privacy, not because I'm prideful... Even though it is a public forum, my publishing it would spread names and email addresses far too widely for the relative privacy they deserve...

Catherine. (2008-07-27 15:23:51)

Most people rarely think.True thinking is instantaneous.All deliberation and analysis are based upon the constricted ego of Social conditioning.!!

## 1.5.25 Sharing in a Community (2008-07-28 04:10)



[1] Blogging about communication today. Most of my regular visitors are bloggers but the message I hope to convey goes far beyond blogging . . .

**From The Inquisitr** (that's exactly how it's spelled): [2][The Changing Blogosphere and Blogging 2.0](#) "It's easy to be sentimental about 'the good old days' of blogging, and I could wax lyrical about the community spirit that has seemingly been lost as blogging has grown up. Without being able to quote empirical evidence, take it as a given that the collective sense of community once shared by all bloggers is no longer."

**From RIZZN:** [3][I'm at the Edge of a Eureka Moment](#) "Darren Rowse [of ProBlogger] says that the blogosphere just doesn't get along with each other anymore. He obviously hasn't read a political blog in a while. It's mostly just for-profit tech bloggers that hate each other, and only a couple of them participate in that foolishness."

**From ProBlogger:** [4][Has Blogging Lost Its Relational Focus?](#) "The blogosphere is a different place now in many ways. For starters there are a lot more blogs. There is almost a bigger focus upon blogging as a business tool and the idea of making money online in general."

**From ReadWriteWeb:** [5][Mixed Messages in The Blogging Landscape](#) "While ultimately professional blogging is reliant on social media, if it becomes too reliant on the 'social' part then it implodes. We've seen a lot of the symptoms over the past year: burnt out bloggers, 'bitchmemes' (when lots of bloggers complain loudly about something usually inconsequential), hints of corruption as bloggers write about things they've invested in or have an interest in, stirring up controversy as a business tactic. We've even seen a kind of mafia mentality emerge - vendettas, ring-kissing,

sychophants surrounding power bloggers, etc.”

That last writer brought out the materialistic side of blogging but further on they positively glowed about ”personal” blogs.

Actually, I’ve seen personal blogs that have that ”mafia mentality”.

It all boils down to *communication* and the heart and spirit of the communicator.

But, what does ”communication” really mean?

**From the [6]Online Etymology Dictionary: ”to impart, to share, to make common”**

So whether you’re a CEO, a line worker, a blogger (professional or personal), a door-to-door salesperson, a mother, a friend, or a just-plain-folk, no matter who you are, if you open your mouth or put pen to paper or harness electrons with your computer, communication is ultimately *doomed* if you don’t come from a place of sharing, imparting, making common—contributing to your *commun-ity*

”Human nature is fundamentally spiritual. Communities are unlikely, therefore, to prove prosperous and sustainable unless they take into account the spiritual dimension of human reality and seek to foster a culture in which the moral, ethical, emotional and intellectual development of the individual are of primary concern. It is in such a milieu that the individual is likely to become a constructively engaged, service-oriented citizen, working for the material and spiritual well-being of the community, and that a common vision and a shared sense of purpose can be effectively developed.

”It follows that the material aspects of community development—environmental, economic and social policies; production, distribution, communication and transportation systems; and political, legal and scientific processes—must be driven by spiritual principles and priorities. Today, however, the substance and direction of community development are largely determined by material considerations.

”Our challenge, therefore, is to redesign and develop our communities around those universal principles—including love, honesty, moderation, humility, hospitality, justice and unity—which promote social cohesion, and without which no community, no matter how economically prosperous, intellectually endowed or technologically advanced, can long endure.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1996 Jun 07, Sustainable Communities in an Integrating World

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6. <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=communication&searchmode=none>
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Liara Covert (2008-07-29 02:31:26)

All students are teachers and all teachers are also students. To remind yourself of the circle is illuminating.

amzolt (2008-07-28 19:27:49)

David, Thanks for a short but deep comment !

David (2008-07-28 18:21:21)

A work of love is known only by its fruits. -SK

Catherine. (2008-07-28 20:44:13)

Only the true master knows that he will always be a student. Only a master realizes there is never a ending to learning and will remain a student through the end.

amzolt (2008-07-30 06:46:24)

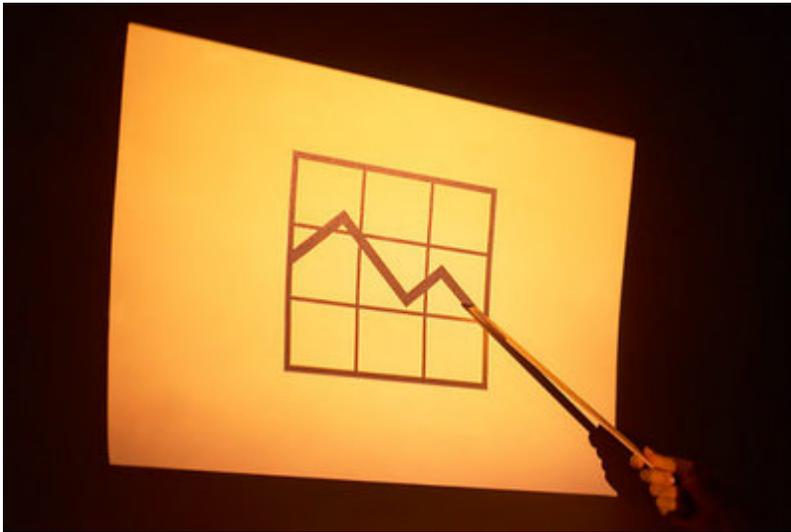
Isabella (aka moritherapy), So Cool !!! I'm a little ways into your blogathon posts... Been taking breaks from my own work to grab your perspectives. Hey, all you other

visitors, check out the result of a very creative psychotherapist producing a blog post every half hour for 24 hours straight ! <http://www.moritherapy.org/article/blogathon-and-were-off/>

moritherapy (2008-07-30 04:47:21)

i just came back from a bloggers meetup. there were 30+ people. everyone knows someone, and every new person is welcome. we're all a little weird, all in our own ways. we have political bloggers, personal bloggers, people like me, and one of the most well known make-money-online people in our group, and we all just have fun together, and support each other. i am very grateful. this is community.

## 1.5.26 Money and Value (2008-07-29 00:52)



[1]  
Money doesn't always equal value.

*These news items are about the United States but what's happening there is impacting the global economy . . .*

**From The New York Times:** [2]Worried Banks Sharply Reduce Business Loans "Banks struggling to recover from multibillion-dollar losses on real estate are curtailing loans to American businesses, depriving even healthy companies of money for expansion and hiring."

**From the Economist:** [3]Inflation or deflation? "The markets have become incredibly volatile as investors vacillate between these outcomes."

**From the BBC:** [4]Record deficit for next president "The next US president is expected to face a record federal budget deficit of almost half a trillion dollars."

Economics used to seem as opaque as metaphysics to me. Then, as I hit the middle of middle-age, it became apparent I was studying the economics that businesses use, that nations use, that politicians manipulate.

The economics that has squandered vast quantities of non-renewable resources.

The economics that keeps certain people away from creativity, away from a decent livelihood.

The economics that spawns wars and utterly brutal treatment of innocent civilians !

I don't want to start ranting so here are some spiritual quotes to ponder:

"The repudiation of national right and power to make war represents the first step toward mutual wealth and sound economy. Short of a world economy mankind will not achieve the fruits of civilization."

Bahá'í International Community, 1947 Feb, *A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights*

”Widespread uncertainty about the condition of the economy indicates a deep disorder in the management of the material affairs of the planet, a condition which can only exacerbate the sense of frustration and futility affecting the political realm.”

The Universal House of Justice, *A Wider Horizon*, Selected Letters 1983-1992, p. 102

”...participants in the informal sector of the economy, women in particular, must be involved in reconceptualizing economics altogether, both theory and practice. If women have a unique approach to economic activity, it would most likely be apparent in the largely unstructured informal sector of the economy. For example, preliminary findings in an on-going study of women industrial sub-contractors in Malaysia, show that the business objectives of the majority of women sub-contractors are defined not so much in monetary terms as in terms of values.”

Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Aug 26, *Women in the Informal Sector in Malaysia*

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Video Optimize (2008-08-01 08:18:19)

Deeply enlightening post! I'm glad i found this site. I mean "Our Evolution" Yes! in your blog poat it said "...participants in the informal sector of the economy, women in particular, must be involved in reconceptualizing economics altogether, both theory and practice. If women have a unique approach to economic activity,..." This made me think of something that I really really enjoyed and I titled "Reflections". Recently posted a few days ago... Here's just a snip it. "That is the payment I demand. Not many can afford it. I don't mean your enjoyment, I don't mean your emotion—emotions be damned!—I mean your understanding and the fact that your enjoyment was of the same nature as mine, that it came from the same source: from your intelligence, from the..." to read the quote -<http://videooptimize.com/109/reflections/> VO a.k.a Video Optimize

amzolt (2008-08-01 11:09:54)

VO, Thanks for your comment! Welcome to the blog, too. I checked out your site and subscribed in my RSS Reader. Getting ready to incorporate video... Ayn Rand ! Remarkable woman!! Her books kept me going in a very dark period of my life.

Evita (2008-07-30 20:14:05)

Hi Alex - well I am back from vacation and starting to catch up on my reading! I agree greatly that money does not always = value. The first thing that popped into my mind when i read this was the high end world designers. You can pay \$1000 for a designer shirt or \$20 from a local retailer and what? You still have a shirt and in no way the one for \$1000 is going to outlast the one for \$20 - so in terms of value that seems a really easy example for me. Some people in our world have become obsessed with designer names and spend tonnes of money and do they get more value - I don't think so. Now if we think of the 101 ways that money could be put to better use...

Catherine. (2008-07-29 14:43:18)

Most poeple think they want more money than they do, and they settle for a lot less then they could get.

amzolt (2008-07-29 16:17:52)

Catherine, This comment reminds me of oriental writings !!

amzolt (2008-07-30 20:19:09)

Evita, Very practical approach to the problem! Welcome back!!!

Alexys Fairfield (2008-07-29 20:12:36)

Hi Alex, Money is a device that devalues us and depletes us of life's real values. I like your new layout. Great post.

amzolt (2008-07-29 20:14:17)

Dear redhead, What an extremely prescient quote !!! Yoo-Hoo... To my other visitors: Go to this woman's blog! <http://www.aweekinthelifeofaredhead.com/>

amzolt (2008-07-29 20:18:36)

Thanks for the comment, Alexys. This new layout is my personal saving grace in the blogosphere—I have a reason to scan the news, I'm able to sharpen my commentator skills, and I love doing the research to find spiritual quotes to tie it all together...

Liana Covert (2008-07-29 02:30:11)

Value is personal,subjective, measurable or immeasurable. Some people do not even associate money with value.

amzolt (2008-07-29 20:19:57)

And, dear visitors, go here: <http://soulmeetsworld.com/> and here <http://blog.dreambuilders.com.au/>

Catherine, the redhead (2008-07-29 20:01:14)

Abraham Lincoln said, "Corporations have been enthroned .... An era of corruption in high places will follow and the money power will endeavor to prolong its reign by working on the prejudices of the people... until wealth is aggregated in a few hands ... and the Republic is destroyed." Catherine, the redhead blogger

## 1.5.27 A Little Help Can Go A Long Way (2008-07-30 05:58)



[1]

Not much of my own comment in this particular post. I'll let the news sources and websites inform you about this Wonderful concept. As always, though, there will be a spiritual quote at the end...

**From OneWorld.Net:** [2][Microloans Pay Off for Planet, Investors](#)

"Mohammed Yunus, an economics professor from Bangladesh, is considered the father of microfinance. In 1983, Yunus founded the Grameen Bank to make small loans to impoverished entrepreneurs. Grameen Bank now has over 7 million borrowers. Yunus and the Bank received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006."

**From Wikipedia:** [3][Microcredit](#) "Microcredit is the extension of very small loans (microloans) to the unemployed, to poor entrepreneurs and to others living in poverty who are not considered bankable....Microcredit is a part of microfinance, which is the provision of a wider range of financial services to the very poor."

**From Business Week:** [4][Micro Loans, Solid Returns](#) "With about \$200 of his own money and a \$1,500 loan, Vahid Hujdur rented space in the old section of Sarajevo and started repairing, then reselling discarded industrial sewing machines. Eight years and several loans later, Hujdur now has 10 employees building, installing, and fixing industrial machinery."

**From the KIVA website:** [5][We Let You Loan to the Working Poor](#) "Kiva is the world's first person-to-person micro-lending website, empowering individuals to lend directly to unique entrepreneurs in the developing world. The people you see on Kiva's site are real individuals in need of funding - not marketing material. When you browse entrepreneurs' profiles on the site, choose someone to lend to, and then make a loan, you are helping a real person make great strides towards economic independence and improve life for themselves, their family, and their community. Throughout the course of the loan (usually 6-12 months), you can receive email journal updates and track repayments. Then, when you get your loan money back, you can relend to someone else in need."

"The increasing disparity between the rich and the poor is a major destabilizing influence in the world. It produces or exacerbates regional and national conflicts, environmental degradation, crime and violence, and the increasing use of illicit drugs. These consequences of extreme poverty affect

all individuals and nations. Increasingly we are becoming aware that we are all members of a single human family. In a family the suffering of any member is felt by all, and until that suffering is alleviated, no member of the family can be fully happy or at ease. Few are able to look at starvation and extreme poverty without feeling a sense of failure....

"A new economic order can be founded only on an unshakable conviction of the oneness of mankind. Discussions aimed at solving problems related to extreme poverty based on the premise that we are one human family rapidly expand beyond the current vocabulary of economics. They demand a wider context, one which anticipates the emergence of a global system of relationships resting on the principles of equity and justice."

Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Feb 12, *Human Rights And Extreme Poverty*

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Calise Sellers (2008-08-08 07:23:03)

I think micro-loans are such a wonderful idea! I saw a documentary about them a few months ago and went "Yes! That's the way to do it." To help others produce something on their own to make their own better way in the world, not by giving them \$20 and saying have a nice life, but really helping them to rise above the state they were born into. Plus I think it's so much more empowering to the individual to be able to pay the loan back and help others to do the same as they were able to do. Thank you for letting others know about this way they can help. I love all the posts I've read here so far. Oh, and if you'd like to check it out, I really think you'd like my husband's podcast at [lightofar.com](http://lightofar.com) (I even did episode 7 :D) because he talks about a lot of the things I've seen you discuss here. Thanks Again, Calise

amzolt (2008-08-08 14:14:31)

Calise, Thank you for your informative and encouraging comment! I've added your husband's podcast site to my RSS Reader...

## 1.5.28 How Do You Feed A Whole World ? (2008-07-31 01:44)



[1]

Quite often, the global drama strikes me as a group of children fighting over who gets to go first. Actually, I've been feeling a bit adolescent lately so it's not much of a stretch to see the world's leaders as misbehaving children.

**From the International Herald Tribune:** [\[2\]Negotiators acknowledge World Trade Organization process needs to change](#)

**From the New York Times:** [\[3\]After 7 Years, Talks Collapse on World Trade](#)

**From the New York Times/World Business:** [\[4\]China's Shift on Food Was Key to Trade Impasse](#)

**From Reuters:** [\[5\]EU points at U.S. for WTO collapse](#)

**From The WIP:** [\[6\]How to Solve the Food Crisis: Cut trade barriers and start a Green Revolution in Africa, says Jeffrey Sachs](#)

“The only silver lining in this (crisis) is – I even hate the idea of using that – is that it has made more people aware of the things that can be done, like the green revolution. I am not a believer in waiting for crises to get things done. I think it's an absolutely ridiculous part of our character, but when we do have the crisis, at least it's true that there is more discussion about agriculture the last months than there was in eight years!”

Hundreds of people, seemingly knowledgeable in their field, sit down over a seven-year period

and can't come to an agreement; even though people are starving, and banks are tottering, and simple, sincere people (the world over) are losing hope . . .

What's missing?

One thing that needs to be adjusted in the equation is to strike out the terms referring to Third World. Far as I can figure out, we have one world.

Next, terms need to be incorporated so the job of production becomes integrated globally—not the "us"/"them" situation we have. This will free enormous creative resources for solving our other crises.

"Economic development strategies employed by the United Nations, the World Bank and a number of governments during the last fifty years, however sincerely conceived and executed, have fallen far short of aspirations. In much of the world, the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots" has widened and is accelerating with the persistent disparity in income levels. Social problems have not subsided. In fact, crime and disease are not just on the rise; they are also becoming endemic and more difficult to combat.

"These failures can be traced to a number of factors. They include a misplaced focus on large-scale projects and bureaucratic over-centralization, unjust terms of international trade, a pervasive corruption that has been allowed to flourish throughout the system, the exclusion of women from the decision-making processes at all levels, a general inability to ensure that resources reach the poor, and the diversion of development resources into military hardware.

"A dispassionate examination of these factors betrays a common systematic and fundamental flaw in the current paradigm for economic development: material needs are often addressed without taking into account the spiritual factors and their motivating power....

"Because of the spiritually damaging nature of dependency, schemes which focus solely on re-distributing material wealth are doomed to failure in the long run. Distribution of wealth must be approached in an efficient and equitable manner. In fact, it must be intimately integrated with the process of wealth creation."

Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Oct, Turning Point For All Nations

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amzolt (2008-08-02 18:07:26)

Glad you're so tuned in!! Thanks for the encouragement!!!

RainforestRobin (2008-07-31 18:50:26)

Loved your thoughts when you said this comment: "One thing that needs to be adjusted in the equation is to strike out the terms referring to Third World. Far as I can figure out, we have one world." I love how you've expressed that. I also really like your thinking on doing away with the "US/THEM" mindset that is prevalent the world over. Sure we have differences but we are so much more like each other than unlike each other. I try to apply this to my day to day relationships.

amzolt (2008-07-31 18:52:38)

Robin, Sweet, heavenly comment . . .

Liara Covert (2008-07-31 12:41:34)

Rather than focus on and judge what you perceive is not being done in the world, why not move to focus on blessings and positive efforts. The direction of your energy builds on certain frequencies. Vibrations can go different ways.

amzolt (2008-07-31 14:52:30)

"Rather than focus on and judge what you perceive is not being done in the world..." Dear Liara, Not paying attention to what's not being done (that should be done) is like sweeping dirt under the carpet. The floor may look a lot nicer but the dirt is still there... Plus, many people are not aware of the full extent of how what isn't being done hurts all of us. Part of my blog's purpose is to educate. Finally, there are many, many people who rally positive action when exposed to improper situations—fact is, they are the very ones who do most of the positive spiritual work in our world.

Ravenscawl (2008-08-01 18:01:12)

alex "One thing that needs to be adjusted in the equation is to strike out the terms referring to Third World. Far as I can figure out, we have one world. Next, terms need to be incorporated so the job of production becomes integrated globally—not the "us"/"them" situation we have. This will free enormous creative resources for solving our other crises." I have used this analogy for years, applying to race and poverty and the creator. Well Done!

## 1.6 August

### 1.6.1 Involuntary Wandering (2008-08-01 01:25)



[1]

[2]image credit

Homeless. Most often starving. Raising children in squalid conditions. These are our global family's refugees.

**From Refugees International:** [3]Stateless People "More than 11 million people around the world are stateless....The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* asserts 'Everyone has the right to a nationality', but stateless individuals generally do not benefit from the protection and assistance of governments, the United Nations, or aid agencies."

By no means were refugees necessarily poor or uneducated before their forced migration.

**From OneWorld.Net:** [4]Searching for Identity in an Ethiopian Refugee Camp "While thankful to be safely outside of Eritrea, Emmanuel explains that in addition to the general problems of refugee camp life such as insufficient food rations and health concerns like malaria, it is not easy to get out of the camp to carry out normal activities such as using the internet. First, a person must obtain a day pass, only 25 of which are issued every day. A bus to Shirraro, the nearest town, needs to be arranged and one must be able to cover the cost of bus fare and internet fees, which start at 15 Birr (US \$ 1.56). He would like to continue his studies. 'I have read the same physics textbook several times, but I would really like to study meteorology.' "

I searched Google images for quite awhile to find that picture of the mother and child. It was one of the absolutely saddest searches I've ever made...

I happen to be a United States citizen with a small veteran's pension: not rich or particularly

comfortable. I've also served time living on the streets, mostly due to a severe lack of self esteem. Yet, none of the suffering I've gone through comes anywhere near these peoples' plight !

Bringing this post to an amazing end is a bit of the story of a remarkable refugee, Bahá'u'lláh. He lived in 19th Century Persia and was banished to Iraq, Turkey, and what is now Israel. This excerpt was written by His son:

"He upraised this standard of the oneness of humanity in prison. When subjected to banishment by two kings, while a refugee from enemies of all nations and during the days of His long imprisonment He wrote to the kings and rulers of the world in words of wonderful eloquence, arraigning them severely and summoning them to the divine standard of unity and justice. He exhorted them to peace and international agreement, making it incumbent upon them to establish a board of international arbitration—that from all nations and governments of the world there should be delegates selected for a congress of nations which should constitute a universal arbitral court of justice to settle international disputes. He wrote to Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, Napoleon III of France and others, inviting them to world unity and peace. Through a heavenly power He was enabled to promulgate these ideals in the Orient. Kings could not withstand Him. They endeavored to extinguish His light but served only to increase its intensity and illumination. While in prison He stood against the Shah of Persia and Sultan of Turkey and promulgated His teachings until He firmly established the banner of truth and the oneness of humankind. I was a prisoner with Him for forty years until the Young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress overthrew the despotism of Abdu'l-Hamid, dethroned him and proclaimed liberty. This committee set me free from tyranny and oppression; otherwise, I should have been in prison until the days of my life were ended."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 203

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2. [http://baghdadtreasure.blogspot.com/2007\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://baghdadtreasure.blogspot.com/2007_11_01_archive.html)
3. <http://www.refugeesinternational.org/content/issue/detail/4835>
4. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/searching-identity-ethiopian-refugee-camp>
5. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/comments/feed/>
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dixie (2008-08-06 13:42:22)

This is a wonderful, eye-opening blog. I have much to learn; thank you for helping me realize there's more.

anzolt (2008-08-06 15:40:01)

dixie, There is more ! As much as we're willing to look for!!!

A. Decker (2008-08-02 16:18:55)

The quote shows progress is possible, yet still, 11 million... I'm reminded of something I saw in the comments to your previous post. There's only one world here, no reason for anyone to be "displaced." And by "reason," of course I'm discounting all the excuses (politics, military—well, fear really, it comes down to, no?) which contain no real reason. By the way, I really like the look—colors, presentation, etc.—of the new blog. I've had some complaints about the color scheme over at my place lately. Perhaps I will study yours some more, in my effort to reach a solution. Thanks, Alex.

amzolt (2008-08-02 16:56:34)

Alex, "no reason for anyone to be "displaced." To me the point is not that people should be comfortable anywhere their force to go but that they are forced to go there.

amzolt (2008-08-02 18:09:49)

Thank you for that illuminating comment, Catherine.

Catherine. (2008-08-01 16:41:23)

powerfull writing Alex.! Judge not by appearances. The Warrior's vitality engenders to those around him,a sense of hope and excitement,whilst this daring moves foster in them an insperation and a respect which quickly makes of his word law.!

## 1.6.2 "Hope Springs Eternal..." (2008-08-03 02:38)



[1]

[2]image credit

Here are the first ten links I found [9:22 pm edt, 2Aug08] using the word "hope" in Google's News Search:

[3][HOPE FOR A CURE](#)

[4][Leading article: Enjoy the Olympics, and hope](#)

[5][Vice-president hope fades for Hillary Clinton](#)

- [6][One Million Homes Lost and Counting: How to End the Foreclosure ...](#)
- [7][Pat Nevin: Hope is in the air before the pressure really kicks in ...](#)
- [8][Jobless Rate Hits a High, Dims Hope For Recovery](#)
- [9][New Hope For Answers In Anthrax Case](#)
- [10][Petition offers hope for schools](#)
- [11][Zimbabwe has to figure out its future – the West can only hope it ...](#)
- [12][McCain tells Urban League that Obama talks about hope, but isn't ...](#)

All of them are about very Earthly hopes.

I don't expect today's news to carry items about Spiritual Hopes (unless they're buried under all the hopes of our materialistic cultures).

I'm now a Baha'i but was raised a Christian (I honor all Faiths...) and in their scripture is this Hope: *Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.* Matthew 6:10

This, to me, says that heavenly things should happen here; that, on planet earth, our wills should be directed by spiritual concerns.

By the way, to those who cringe at their will being oriented toward spirituality because it sounds like their earthly life is unimportant and their dearly loved material relationships should stop *[like I used to think]*, my experience says:

Material concerns will never satisfy or bring profit if they have no spiritual core. Spirit drives the body, gives sight, allows dreams to soar...

I decided to include a poem from [13][Poet Seers—Poem of The Day](#). For those disinclined to read poetry, please try this one. I've found that most good poetry needs more than one reading to have its full flavor develop; like a relationship. . .

### **The Instinct of Hope**

Is there another world for this frail dust  
 To warm with life and be itself again?  
 Something about me daily speaks there must,  
 And why should instinct nourish hopes in vain?  
 'Tis nature's prophesy that such will be,  
 And everything seems struggling to explain  
 The close sealed volume of its mystery.  
 Time wandering onward keeps its usual pace  
 As seeming anxious of eternity,  
 To meet that calm and find a resting place.  
 E'en the small violet feels a future power  
 And waits each year renewing blooms to bring,  
 And surely man is no inferior flower  
 To die unworthy of a second spring?

John Clare

**One final spiritual quote:**

"My hope is that through the zeal and ardour of the pure of heart, the darkness of hatred and difference will be entirely abolished, and the light of love and unity shall shine; this world shall become a new world; things material shall become the mirror of the divine; human hearts shall meet and embrace each other; the whole world become as a man's native country and the different races be counted as one race."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 38

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2. [http://www.cs.princeton.edu/~rywang/berkeley/magic3/paris/singles/eternal\\_spring.html](http://www.cs.princeton.edu/~rywang/berkeley/magic3/paris/singles/eternal_spring.html)
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11. <http://www.sundayherald.com/oped/opinion/display.var.2416159.0.0.php>
12. <http://blogs.usatoday.com/onpolitics/2008/08/mccain-tells-ur.html>
13. <http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/2008/08/02/the-instinct-of-hope/>
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Tejvan Pettinger (2008-08-09 07:40:00)

Thanks for link to Poem of the Day and offering blog of hope best, Tejvan

amzolt (2008-08-09 08:42:41)

Tejvan, Thank you for the encouraging comment ! I very much appreciate your site !!  
<http://www.shortpoems.org/poem/>

ravenscawl (2008-08-05 23:36:39)

Alex It is unfortunate that I did not read this before doing the same search today. My search for hope in the news, Reduced me to tears.

anzolt (2008-08-06 00:53:47)

Tears are the current currency of caring...

Olympic games updates &raquo; Blog Archive &raquo; &#8220;Hope Springs Eternal&#8230;&#8221;  
(2008-08-03 16:58:54)

[...] Original post by Our Evolution [...]

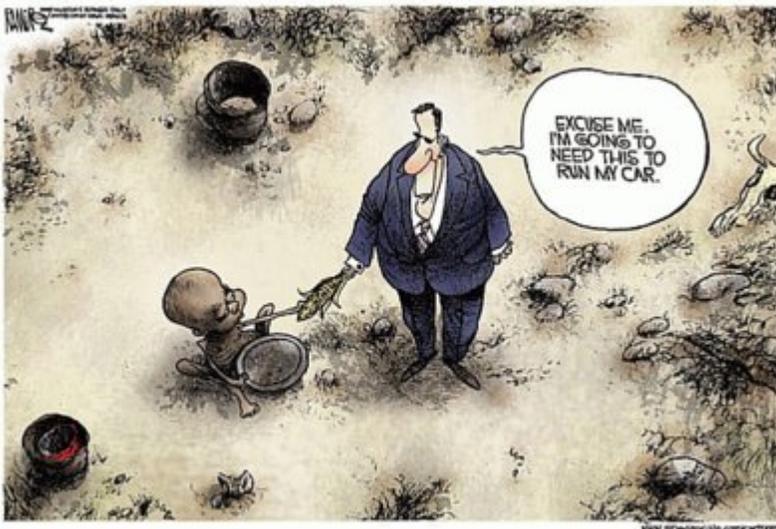
Catherine. (2008-08-03 05:04:51)

Two possibilities exist. Either we are alone in the Universe,or we are not.Both are equally terrifying. Take time to think, it is the source of power. Take time to be friendly,it is the road to happiness Take time to work, it is the pice of success. Take time to pray, it is the greatest power on earth. Take time to love and be loved, it is the way of God!!!

anzolt (2008-08-03 05:32:09)

Thanks for that, Catherine !

### 1.6.3 How Hungry Are \*You\* ? (2008-08-03 20:15)



[1]

[2]image credit

Cartoons can be brutal in their portrayals yet nowhere near as brutal as the facts.

Who's starving?

Who's well-fed and determined to stay that way, whatever the price?

Who deserves to starve?

Who's working to stop the inequities?

**From Reuters:** [3]Biofuels major driver of food price rise: World Bank "Large increases in biofuels production in the United States and Europe are the main reason behind the steep rise in global food prices, a top World Bank economist said in research published on Monday."

**From OneWorld.Net:** [4]Trade Negotiations Cannot Solve Food Crisis Created by WTO and World Bank "Trade negotiators are using the current food crisis as a Trojan Horse at the WTO negotiations to push an agribusiness agenda on farmers and rural communities around the world," stated Food & Water Watch Executive Director Wenonah Hauter. "Agriculture should be removed from WTO negotiations until international leaders fully examine the impact on developing countries' ability to feed themselves."

Hmmm...

The World Bank states one of the major problems then persists in striving toward a non-solution.

Why are people so subjugated they can't raise their own food? Why do the multinationals work so hard to deny human rights?

Let's see . . . Couldn't be massive greed, could it?

It took me most of 40 years to get the idea that we are One from my head to my heart. During that time, I committed actions that benefited me and ignored my brothers and sisters in our global family.

My head said I deserved what I could grab. I'd suffered and needed those material things to comfort me . . .

Now my heart aches with bleeding feelings that stun my sensibilities. The world's in the clutches of the temporally powerful. Temporal because the Spirit of humanity will survive and the materialistic "rulers" will turn to dust and be forgotten.

This post and its implications are so grief-ridden I'm reduced to a state of utter hope—hope that my grandchild's children will see better days.

What's your estimate of when things will turn from greed to compassion?

"Good God! Is it possible that, seeing one of his fellow-creatures starving, destitute of everything, a man can rest and live comfortably in his luxurious mansion? He who meets another in the greatest misery, can he enjoy his fortune? That is why, in the Religion of God, it is prescribed and established that wealthy men each year give over a certain part of their fortune for the maintenance of the poor and unfortunate. That is the foundation of the Religion of God and is binding upon all.

"And as man in this way is not forced nor obliged by the government, but is by the natural tendency of his good heart voluntarily and radiantly showing benevolence toward the poor, such a deed is much praised, approved and pleasing.

"Such is the meaning of the good works in the Divine Books and Tablets."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 276

"Unfortunately, the arbiters of human affairs have, instead of embracing the concept of the oneness of mankind and promoting the increase of concord among different peoples, tended to deify the State, to subordinate the rest of mankind to one nation, race or class, to attempt to suppress all discussion and interchange of ideas, or callously to abandon starving millions to the operations of a market system that all too clearly is aggravating the plight of the majority of mankind, while enabling small sections to live in an unprecedented condition of affluence."

Bahá'í International Community, 1989 Feb 09, *Right to Development*

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4. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/wto-cannot-solve-food-crisis-states-report>
5. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/comments/feed/>
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anzolt (2008-08-07 20:43:29)

Evita, Prescient and Just statements. Thank you for your contribution !

Evita (2008-08-07 19:21:34)

Wow Alex that is a great cartoon - so quick to portray what is happening in our world. The past is now Alex just a figment of your imagination, it is the present moment of now that holds all the power, hence no need to look back as there is so much that can be done now. I also love what Brandi and Catherine said about being the change and I also want to throw in the famous line in here: "Think globally, act locally" So many people offer excuses and say "Oh but what can I do about those starving kids over there"....when unfortunately that is such an erroneous statement when there is so much one can do in one's everyday life that makes a huge difference in the end on a large scale.

anzolt (2008-08-05 21:30:37)

Tomas, Very true!!!

Tomas (2008-08-05 21:20:16)

Cartoons can be brutal in their portrayals yet nowhere near as brutal as the facts. you are right. Our handworks laugh down our dreams.

anzolt (2008-08-04 18:53:04)

Brandi, Thanks for the response! Gotten over your two vacations yet?

amzolt (2008-08-04 16:06:52)

Catherine, Thanks for being brave !

Brandi Magill (2008-08-04 18:18:34)

It's funny just how truthful those comics can really be. I agree, Catherine said it beautifully. We must be the change we wish to see!

Catherine. (2008-08-04 15:34:10)

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending. The deepest principle of human nature is the caring to be appreciated !

#### 1.6.4 "Bring thyself to account ere thou art summoned to a reckoning..." (2008-08-04 23:07)



[1]

Time for an accounting. I've been writing nearly everyday on this blog since March—since I was nearing the end of eleven months of taking five highly abusive medical drugs to rid my liver of a deadly virus—jury's still out on whether it worked. . .

**From the New York Times:** [2][Uncertainties About the Role of Doubt in Religion](#) "Religious faith was once the air everyone, even the doubter, breathed. Today, religious faith, in its many forms, stands as but one possibility alongside a range of nonreligious outlooks that the honest believer cannot simply dismiss as deluded or depraved.

"Religious thinkers, of course, have long argued that uncertainty and faith are not the polar opposites often supposed; that indifference, and not doubt, for example, is the greater adversary of faith; that absolute certitude about God often reflects a dangerous arrogance."

I've been trying to live up to my Faith for almost twenty years now—struggling against my grasping ego—contending with the oh, so easy rationalizations to just be "human"; imperfections flowering into weeds of uncertainty.

This blog is part of my personal covenant with God—hopeful action to stave off the demons of doubt.

I value the feedback I receive from my visitors, especially the indicators of which posts are the most viewed (see the far right sidebar). I struggle to interpret what's going on in the world in terms of my Faith and post my thoughts and feelings here. What people choose to read is a "message" to me—a wake-up call—about how my private efforts are connected to other members of our human family . . .

So...

Thought I'd take the current most-viewed-posts and put them together (for my meditation and, hopefully, your edification) in these files:

[3][Word File](#) ——— [4][PDF File](#)

For an undetermined reason the Word file didn't hold the images.

If you're able, download the PDF...

"Examine the wondrous behaviour of the Prophets, and recall the defamations and denials uttered by the children of negation and falsehood, perchance you may cause the bird of the human heart to wing its flight away from the abodes of heedlessness and doubt unto the nest of faith and certainty, and drink deep from the pure waters of ancient wisdom, and partake of the fruit of the tree of divine knowledge. Such is the share of the pure in heart of the bread that hath descended from the realms of eternity and holiness."

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 5

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Brandi Magill (2008-08-06 12:27:10)

I've said it before, you are an inspiration to many. Thank you for being so candid about your struggles. More importantly, thank you for sharing it all with us. Keep moving those mountains Alex! Talk to you soon Brandi

amzolt (2008-08-06 15:43:23)

Brandi, Right now I'm in the foothills of those mountains, again, shoving boulders around...

amzolt (2008-08-05 16:37:06)

Catherine, this is strong advice from a strong woman!

amzolt (2008-08-05 16:59:15)

Cookiemouse, So very true!!!

Catherine. (2008-08-05 14:12:28)

Thank you for sharing this Alex. This is the sea of life we're on, with all it's ups and downs. The strong ones will survive the trip, the weaker ones will drown. Each time you think you are alone—No help, nothing to guide you—take time to listen to the voice that's deep down and inside you, with help from Faith that's strong. The Devil is God misunderstood by ignorant !!

Cookiemouse (2008-08-05 14:55:25)

We just need to be ourselves, to be authentic and open, and to cultivate joy in our minds. We are children of the living earth.

### 1.6.5 The Divorce of Peace and Justice (2008-08-06 17:04)



[1]

It's so easy to miss the critically important issues when focusing on materialistic concerns.

**From the Christian Science Monitor:** [2][Peace before justice in Darfur](#) "The UN must suspend an indictment of Sudan's leader if it will bring a peace settlement."

**From the Chicago Tribune:** [3][Peace vs. justice in Sudan](#) "...all the chest-thumping about justice being the enemy of peace rings hollow in light of the sad truth, which is that the on-again, off-again peace process—currently off—hasn't gotten anywhere."

**From the Ottawa Citizen:** [4]Justice vs. peace "The ICC...is caught in a collision course between peace and justice in four African countries where it is working on cases."

So...

I'll stop trying to keep you from hurting me if you just say you'll stop hurting me...

Or...

We know how much pain and suffering you've caused and we fear you greatly. We fear you so much we're willing to not try to stop you if you'll just sit down and talk.

Hmmm...

See that poisonous snake ready to bite you again? Just forget about that and talk some sense into it !

If my loving mother hadn't, in all justice, slapped my hand away from that stove, I wouldn't have a hand that peacefully avoids dangerous heat.

Why not weigh in on this discussion? I'll admit it's not necessarily an easily solved issue and my analogies may be rather weak but, really, what do you think?

"Until the actions of humankind promote justice above the satisfaction of greed and readjusts the world's economies accordingly, the gap between the rich and the poor will continue to widen, and the dream of sustainable economic growth, peace, and prosperity must remain elusive."  
Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Feb 12, *Human Rights and Extreme Poverty*

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amzolt (2008-08-07 20:45:19)  
jan, Thanks for posting your understanding...

jan4insight (2008-08-07 20:42:25)  
No, it's not an easily solved issue ... but I still firmly believe that, in the long run, there is no peace without justice. Maybe in the short run, we can get the snake to stop biting us long enough to sit down and give us some peace... for a while. But sooner or later, the snakebites will start to fester and the whole violent cycle starts again. Maybe we all need peace, justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation - in the short and the long run.

Catherine. (2008-08-07 16:03:47)  
Forgiveness is a funny thing.It warms the heart,and cools the sting!

amzolt (2008-08-07 16:27:13)  
Catherine, Wonderful comment! Refreshing !!!

### 1.6.6 What A Laugh ! (2008-08-07 23:47)



[1] This blog tries to be quite serious. It's aim is to address the crises assailing our world by using news clips, commentary, and appropriate spiritual quotes.

This means I spend most of my time looking for news that can be illuminated with higher thought—issues brought up to the level of Principle—raising consciousness far above the mire and muck of current materialistic concerns.

Some days my search for appropriate news clips brings me only unrelieved sorrow, depression, and heartbreak.

Today was one of those days, so I turned to my favorite comic relief, Jon Stewart. If you watch him you might have a few belly laughs while also seeing the absurdity of the competing parties in our sorry world drama.

[2][For a good time, click here...](#)

Since this blog is my global home, I chose the following spiritual quote:

"My home is the home of peace. My home is the home of joy and delight. My home is the home of laughter and exultation. Whosoever enters through the portals of this home, must go out with gladsome heart. This is the home of light; whosoever enters here must become illumined...."  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, from a Tablet, published in *Star of the West*, vol. 9, no. 3, (28 April 1918), p. 40

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Robin Easton (2008-08-09 03:03:51)

I am so glad you gave yourself this emotional break. I think that is crucial not only for the type of posting you are doing but for life in general. I too am due for a lighthearted post on my own site and hope to make my next one so. I also know that humor, warmth, laughter, is not only essential at the best of times but even more essential when things are tough, intense and heavy energetically. I have seen people dying of cancer, on very edge of life, and watched them find warm humor and laughter with only weeks left to live. I don't go a day without laughing. I often laugh and cry at the same time. I love that freedom of spontaneous expression. Fortunately I am blessed to be around people who are the same. They feel and see things deeply and hence laughter is such beautiful medicine. Thank you for this reminder Alex. Hugs, Robin

amzolt (2008-08-09 03:07:31)

You are a constant inspiration, Robin !!!

amzolt (2008-08-08 14:12:04)

"Faith is the bird that sings when the dawn is still dark." Thank you, Catherine ! Such a sweetly spiritual comment!!

Catherine. (2008-08-08 06:23:48)

The secret key to all power is to in all ways walks differently from the ways of the world. Faith is the bird that sings when the dawn is still dark. We grow from from the inside out.!

## 1.6.7 Language That Deceives (2008-08-09 01:02)



[1]

No particular news focus today except the language it uses. I scanned Google News at 11:50 p.m. GMT. Bold/Underlines are the language in question.

Unsubstantiated statements given as if they're quotes:

**From the Daily Times of Pakistan:** [2]Musharraf's impeachment dominates PA session "PML-Q's Amir Sultan Cheema **said** the president had the right to defend himself against the impeachment motion. **He praised** Nawaz Sharif as a humble man, but **added that** Nawaz seemed to be under the influence of Asif Zardari."

Unsubstantiated statements given as if they're quotes/facts:

**From the Telegraph of the United Kingdom:** [3]John Edwards admits to lying about affair "**He stated** he had not been in love with Ms Hunter, an **obscure** film-maker"

Words commonly used to make unsubstantiated statements sound true while not referencing sources:

From the Associated Press: [4]Security tightens more as Olympics get under way "On Thursday, a videotape **purportedly** made by the Turkistan Islamic Party, a militant group seeking independence for Xinjiang, was released with threats of attacks during the Olympics. The group is **believed to be** based across the border in Pakistan, where security experts say core members have received training from al-Qaida."

An example of the right way to attribute statements:

**From Agence France-Presse:** [5]Hundreds attend anti-coup rally in Mauritania "Abdahalli's daughter said Friday she was concerned about her father's safety and security.

"I am worried about my father's health and safety given that he has not been freed," Amal Mint Cheikh Abdallahi told AFP from her family home."

I'm not trying to say these stories are completely devoid of truth. I'm pointing out that, even in

a story with a lot of research behind it, there can be subtle (or not so subtle) traps for an unwary reader. Politics has taken this twisted art to unbelievably unrefined heights !

Today's spiritual quote, concerning newspapers and written in the 19 Century, is completely valid for the swift transmission of news on the Internet:

"The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing."

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 39

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

*Let's have a conversation !*

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3. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/2526427/John-Edwards-admits-to-lying-about-affair.html>
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5. <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5iViIqJ4K0ZPaLrit7zpLFOEX4hPg>
6. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-08-09 15:24:21)

My thought about this.. Loneliness is the great result of closing the shutters of your heart and seeing yourself as separate and independent from all creation.A drastic case of mistaken identity!

## 1.6.8 The Crisis of Faith (2008-08-09 18:37)



[1] Things seem so gruesomely glum—so downright dour—so freakishly forbidding . . . Yet, there **is** Potent Hope. If you can accept it . . .

**From the Washington Post:** [2]Credit Crisis Triggers Unprecedented U.S. Response

**From China View:** [3]Former UN chief expresses concern over global food, fuel crisis in Ghana

**From the New York Times:** [4]1,500 Reported Killed in Georgia Battle

**From the Boston Globe:** [5]Early retirement plans can be short-circuited by a crisis of one kind or another

**From the Irish Times:** [6]Testimonies of atomic terror: lest we forget

**From Nehanda Radio:** [7]Thousands face starvation as food crisis deepens in rural Zimbabwe

Pretty bad, eh? Probably gonna get worse...

I'm not being morose or sullen; not even pessimistic. I'm making a strong point.

What can extricate our Family from the multitude of crises assailing it?

Where is hope?

It sure isn't in the things that have been tried for many years—the failed strategies, the materialistic grand-schemes, the corporate "solutions", the political fantasies.

Something related to God, then?

*"Oh, my, there he goes again. Poor Alex is flying in his nirvana of spirituality."*

Valid point. Just look at all the fine people, deeply spiritual, who've been slaughtered by the present system of managing human affairs.

Still, is dying for a cause proof that the cause isn't valid? Is the apparent power of the politicians, corporations, and greedy-onslaughts-abounding any proof that a spiritual solution is not

the best way to face such a sorry Mess?

Try this quote on for size:

”It behoveth everyone to traverse this brief span of life with sincerity and fairness. Should one fail to attain unto the recognition of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, let him at least conduct himself with reason and justice. Erelong these outward trappings, these visible treasures, these earthly vanities, these arrayed armies, these adorned vestures, these proud and overweening souls, all shall pass into the confines of the grave, as though into that box. In the eyes of those possessed of insight, all this conflict, contention and vainglory hath ever been, and will ever be, like unto the play and pastimes of children. Take heed, and be not of them that see and yet deny.”  
Bahá’u’lláh, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, 3.17

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7. <http://www.nehandaradio.com/zimbabwe/welfare/thousandsfacestarvation090808.html>
8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-08-19 16:19:47)

D’Ellis, Thanks for the encouraging comment. One wish I have for this blog is to start conversation on the issues in the comments—look forward to your thoughts being expressed here. Welcome!

D’Ellis R. McCammon (2008-08-19 03:14:54)

A friend of ours told me of this site, and he was right that you’ve a well honed quill to go with the mind’s faiths. I’ll be back often to absorb.

Catherine. (2008-08-10 14:16:00)

Intuition is your higher-self waiting manifestation.!

Brandi Magill (2008-08-09 22:00:35)

The headlines often make one ask, was this Gods plan?



The July meeting in Geneva between Iran and six major world powers on Iran's nuclear programme ended with no progress."

**From OneWorld.Net:** [\[5\]16-Year-Old's Video Wins Peace Contest {Videos Included}](#) "California high school student Erik Choquette's three-minute film calling on the United States to take a lead role in eliminating the world's 27,000 nuclear weapons was recently awarded first place in a national video contest on nuclear disarmament."

A tragic historical remembrance, a renewed saber-rattling by world leaders, and a cutting-edge video by a 16-year-old . . .

One of the most outstanding characteristics of our modern world is the vast range of action and desire—from the most debased to the most noble.

Finding one's bearings in this tempestuous drama is a major undertaking—fraught with clamoring voices, swirling with contending payoffs, ripping at the heart-strings of any caring person.

Can we find any enduring promise of world peace? Is it impractical to search for such a promise? Is it in ancient texts or modern essays? Do you care?

Today's spiritual quote is followed by links to the full document from which it came—a healing balm for the weary traveler on the Path toward Peace...

"Banning nuclear weapons, prohibiting the use of poison gases, or outlawing germ warfare will not remove the root causes of war. However important such practical measures obviously are as elements of the peace process, they are in themselves too superficial to exert enduring influence. Peoples are ingenious enough to invent yet other forms of warfare, and to use food, raw materials, finance, industrial power, ideology, and terrorism to subvert one another in an endless quest for supremacy and dominion. Nor can the present massive dislocation in the affairs of humanity be resolved through the settlement of specific conflicts or disagreements among nations. A genuine universal framework must be adopted.

"Certainly, there is no lack of recognition by national leaders of the world-wide character of the problem, which is self-evident in the mounting issues that confront them daily....There is, however, a paralysis of will; and it is this that must be carefully examined and resolutely dealt with. This paralysis is rooted, as we have stated, in a deep-seated conviction of the inevitable quarrelsome-ness of mankind, which has led to the reluctance to entertain the possibility of subordinating national self-interest to the requirements of world order, and in an unwillingness to face courageously the far-reaching implications of establishing a united world authority. It is also traceable to the incapacity of largely ignorant and subjugated masses to articulate their desire for a new order in which they can live in peace, harmony and prosperity with all humanity.

"Disunity is a danger that the nations and peoples of the earth can no longer endure; the consequences are too terrible to contemplate, too obvious to require any demonstration. 'The well-being of mankind,' Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, 'its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.' In observing that 'mankind is groaning, is dying to be led to unity, and to terminate its age-long martyrdom', Shoghi Effendi further

commented that: 'Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of citystate, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life.' "

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, *The Promise of World Peace*

[6][The Promise of World Peace Word.doc](#)

[7][The Promise of World Peace PDF](#)

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Shannon Wilkinson (2008-08-13 07:23:13)

In saying that, it was nuclear weapons. But Net definitely impressed me. I liked the world's of some important scenes.

amzolt (2008-08-12 20:10:19)

Kem's comment refers to our both writing about the same topic !

amzolt (2008-08-12 20:10:46)

Thank you, Catherine.

amzolt (2008-08-12 20:11:00)

Alexys, Thanks for the encouraging comment, dear heart!

Catherine. (2008-08-12 05:02:33)

Discipline always precedes dominion.

Alexys Fairfield (2008-08-12 19:46:15)

Hi Alex, This is a good place to catch up on the world. :D

Mathew James (2008-08-12 03:54:04)

Great post, it was very informative. I think its a must read. <http://www.customwrittenpapers.com/>

ravenscawl (2008-08-11 21:46:13)

"synchronicity" Indeed! kem

### 1.6.10 The Search For Truth (2008-08-12 19:23)



[1]

I search for news that I can comment on while raising the issues to the level of Principle—reaching the truth by climbing out of the mud...

Most media and almost all politics are miring swamps.

**From the Bahá'í World News Service:** [2]Iranian media attacks on Baha'is and Nobel Prize Winner Shirin Ebadi seek to stir "irrational fears and prejudices"

**From The Huffington Post:** [3]The Media's Problem Of "False Balance" Showing Itself In Electoral Map Analyses

**From the Lancaster Eagle Gazette:** [4]Candidates taking low road: Dirty politics is never helpful

**From the Tampa Tribune:** [5]Truth, Please

Often, I find refuge from the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" in fiction. [6]I am a poet and many would claim that poetry is fiction, along with myth and tradition . . . Contemplate these quotes:

"Fiction reveals truth that reality obscures."  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Fiction is the truth inside the lie."  
Stephen King

My favorite author, [7][C. J. Cherryh](#), spins beautiful tales, taking media, politics, poetry, fiction, and myth to realms that reveal truth more clearly than most any media or political source available.

Consider these quotes from this multiple award-winning author:

"It is perfectly okay to write garbage—as long as you edit brilliantly."

"Deal with the Devil if the Devil has a constituency - and don't complain about the heat."

"Trade isn't about goods. Trade is about information. Goods sit in the warehouse until information moves them."

"We're in the hands of lunatics."

"Of financiers. Far worse"

"The interests of all humans are interlocked...and politics is no more than a temporal expression of social mathematics."

"Ignorance killed the cat, sir. Curiosity was framed."

Want to join a community that honors and discusses this author's work? [8][Travel to the Realm of Shon'jir !](#)

Today's Spiritual Quote:

"Oh! why will man, the disobedient child of God, who should be an example of the power of the spiritual law, turn his face away from the Divine Teaching and put all his effort into destruction and war?"

"My hope is that in this enlightened century the Divine Light of love will shed its radiance over the whole world, seeking out the responsive heart's intelligence of every human being; that the light of the Sun of Truth will lead politicians to shake off all the claims of prejudice and superstition..."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 150

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Ella Moss (2008-08-13 02:37:47)

Dear Alex, I took a look at your book. I am blown away. You are a great astrologer! Believe me, I am not saying it lightly. I am a pretty good astrologer also (people used come to my school from all over the world - just on the word of mouth), and I rarely see good astrologers, although I've seen many. Rarely people have such a good grasp of energies at work. I also checked your religion's website, and I liked the idea, even though I am against any religion. So you are on my honor roll now. Besides my Carnival of Walking with god (personal spiritual journeys), I am also planning to have an astrology webzine. I've been talking to a few astrologers now. By Mid-October, I'd like to collect astrologers' musings on upcoming elections. Let me know if you want to contribute. Well, I'm so glad you came across my blog!

amzolt (2008-08-12 20:15:58)

Thanks for that penetrating comment! Also, for the insight on writers...

Evita (2008-08-13 13:18:55)

Fantastic post Alex...the search for truth versus the fiction of today's times. It is baffling what is made up and portrayed by the media today and how many people fall under this illusion. The truth indeed shall set us free...thank you for YOUR contribution in that.

amzolt (2008-08-13 03:42:17)

Thank you for your humbling comments on my book . . . I'm hoping to ready some writing for the carnival-time will tell... Concerning religion I want to leave you two quotes to ponder (from my Faith's Scripture). "Inasmuch as human interpretations and blind imitations differ widely, religious strife and disagreement have arisen among mankind, the light of true religion has been extinguished and the unity of the world of humanity destroyed. The prophets of God voiced the spirit of unity and agreement. They have been the founders of divine reality. Therefore if the nations of the world forsake imitations and investigate the reality underlying the revealed Word of God they will agree and become reconciled. For reality is one and not multiple." ('Abdu'l-Bahá, Baha'i World Faith, p. 226) "His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh has said that 'if religion and faith are the causes of enmity and sedition it is far better to be non-religions; that lack of such religion is better than religion; for we desire religion to be the cause of amity and fellowship. If enmity and hatred exist, irreligion is preferable.' " (Compilations, Baha'i Scriptures, p. 349) Alex

mseman (2008-08-12 20:07:29)

I was actually reading an article about the 'religious youth' today and how they hoped there would be enough to swing voters toward McCain; the comments were filled with statements like, "any real christian wouldn't vote for Obama because he is pro abortion" (obviously this was a foxnews.com article); the fact of the matter is that he's gotta be pro-choice to appeal to both the people who would never abort, and the people whom may be in the unfortunate position that they need one. It's the increasingly common 'what I think is what everyone should think' mentality that really takes a toll on our social ecosystem. Great post though, I especially like the quotes from C. J. Cherryh, it's great how the guys almost at the top will tell

you how hard they've worked, but the guys at the top will tell you how easy it is for anybody to do.

amzolt (2008-08-13 13:22:36)

Evita, Thanks, so much, for your encouraging comment !!!

### 1.6.11 Poetry Is Dead ? (2008-08-14 21:22)



[1]

Poetry will never die. It's a deep expression of the heart of humanity. As mentioned in a previous post, I'm a poet. Not long ago, I decided to [2]give my poetry away. Not because it doesn't sell well but because it's a gift I want others to profit from.

**From The National in Abu Dhabi:** [3]Hunger that can be fed by poetry "Poetry," wrote Robert Frost, "is what's lost in translation."

**From The Economist:** [4]Adversity in verse "A mix of New York's young and liberal have assembled to witness a poetry slam....This year's championship, the biggest to date, boasted 76 teams sent from across the United States as well as one from Paris."

Today's post features one of my most favored poets, Anna. But I'm well aware that most folks don't have much of a taste for poetry. With that in mind (and remembering that poetry is the music of words) I urge those of you who think you don't like or understand poetry to enjoy an absolutely inspiring video lesson in [5]how to feel the meaning of life.

My meeting Anna was mysterious, like many things in our electronic culture. I thought a short interview with her was an important introduction to showcasing a few of her poems.

*Your poems often remind me of the Persian poets, especially [6]Rumi. Are your poems to be taken at face-value or as spiritual metaphor?*

There are times they may be taken at face-value; but a majority of them do have a spiritual metaphor/slant to them.

*Why did you take up video podcasting your poetry?*

I took up video podcasting of my poetry because I believe there are times that a person needs to hear the poem from the poet/poetess themselves. Also, I enjoy hearing and seeing others, too.

*What poets have inspired you?*

Bukowski (at times), e.e. cummings, Anne Sexton, Anne Carson and a Mr. Jackson from Canada, as well as a few others.

*How and why did you start writing poetry?*

I started writing poetry at the age of thirteen. I was reading a magazine and found the poetry section and felt led to try it. I found out I did have the ability to write poems and just kept up from there.

I started off in free-verse. In the beginning it was an outlet for me. I grew up artistic though and would sketch. That is prior to writing.

*Any personal life-details you care to share?*

Well, I am twenty-something publisher/writer who loves to watch the television show House. I mainly write free-verse. I love salty foods and I love Newman's Sweet Dark Chocolate.

I'm not opposed to doing abstract paintings and just allowing my Spirit to take the brush where it may.

Hope you watched that video! If you did (or, didn't but already have a feel for poetry) I'm sure you'll find Anna's poems an inspiration.

**fingertips paint**

first i sketch eyes

drawing that aura within  
no imperfections do i see unable  
dusky  
now breath and beauty drunk  
tasting fingertips paint  
dripping pale fuses and salt skin  
nakedness  
{what's your thoughts }  
brewing this night unleashed  
bred is passion  
i fall i fall there's no easy way  
delighting in an elixir  
firefly lights pop those eyes  
dewy smiles  
pulsating swaying hearts beating  
tranquil  
dying to sloughing off new skin  
approached new life bred rhythm  
of its own birth a fleshed out soul  
mid-night ecstasy

### **meat dripping from a cooler somewhere**

a huge slab of prime rib  
neatly sliced &  
placed in white paper  
twined tightly

yet, drip  
drip  
drip

blood soaking through  
covered in ice  
a cooler full  
of hidden meaning

murmurs  
can you hear  
just frigid dreams  
& promises

wanting a love  
being entwined in  
butcher's wrapping

a muted soul

you've oiled & seasoned  
over years  
she's coming undone

## Satiated

Heart-beat flutters shutters murmurs...  
involuntary twinges of love –  
Heart-beat stalled; Yours that mine would make utterance  
to slice open...spill upon Your feet...  
Without sacrifice at the expense of Yours  
Where will this match this flame this spark lead me ?  
As far as grace chase for myself the least of these ?  
Is it enough now that I'm overcome ?  
Or can You squeeze more death-looming from I; from the internal to external ?  
It cost me when I refuse to listen that I'm Your beloved...  
I find my hunger then satiated by a silhouette and I grasp for You –  
With a return of my own brokenness...  
Once again yes once again I find You overcome;

Tell, tell...dear child  
Come tell Me more that remains on your heart  
I draw you close  
I have been reaching for you  
As you have been reaching for Me  
Your tears...they are not lost  
Your ache...it is not untouched...not ignored  
Pour out...  
I want healing to come as a salve  
Not just something that keeps getting re-bandaged

[7]Anna Speaking Some of Her Poetry

## Today's Spiritual Quotes:

"What is music? It is a combination of harmonious sounds. What is poetry? It is a symmetrical collection of words. Therefore, they are pleasing through harmony and rhythm. Poetry is much more effective and complete than prose. It stirs more deeply, for it is of a finer composition."  
'Abdu'l-Bahá words to Mrs. Mary L. Lucas, as quoted in *A Brief Account of My Visit to Acca* (Chicago: Bahá'í Publishing Society, 1905), pp. 11-14

"As a Persian Poet has written: – 'The Celestial Universe is so formed that the under world reflects the upper world.' That is to say whatever exists in heaven is reflected in this phenomenal world. Now, praise be to God, this meeting of ours is a reflection of the heavenly concourse; it is as though we had taken a mirror and had gazed into it. This reflection from the heavenly concourse we know as love."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, p. 46

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Catherine. (2008-08-18 14:29:22)

I would say..poetry is a great gift.! You're poetry is beautifully written,with messages of true meaning..and poetry will never die,for those who love it,and understand the meaning of the words behind it..so here is my say about a poet... To a poet, silence is a acceptable response,even a flattering one.!

amzolt (2008-08-18 18:50:30)

You have rocked me to my soul, Catherine! This statement of yours: "To a poet, silence is an acceptable response, even a flattering one!" is a poem itself !! Thank you, so much !!!

### 1.6.12 Games That Can Kill Us . . . (2008-08-15 22:06)



[1]

So many dangerously childish actions in the world political drama. For sheer silliness (which could blossom into rank trauma) the American Presidential campaign is a sad example.

**From AlterNet:** [2][Top 10 Idiocies of the General Election ... So Far](#)

**From the Los Angeles Times:** [3][John McCain, Barack Obama spar over 'celebrity'](#)

**From CNN:** [4][McCain, Obama ad wars heat up](#)

So, with all this dangerous silliness, why has the American public not used its Constitutional power to elect sane and sober leaders?

Attachment to materialistic living and not caring too much what happens?

Not being sufficiently educated about the issues?

In a state of cultural shock?

Well, even if every malady of the American electorate were healed, their vote would still not guarantee that their political wishes came true. Ever heard of the [5][Electoral College](#)? This institution separates the popular vote from the election results. Plus, it has happened that the voice of the people was overridden by the electoral process . . .

Still, even if the people had their say, who are the people? Are they exemplary citizens, educated and compassionate?

I'm afraid I'm veering off into a rant so I'll close this discussion {still hoping for your comments! } with today's spiritual quotes:

"How incalculable have been the negative results of ill-directed criticism: in the catastrophic divergences it has created in religion, in the equally contentious factions it has spawned in political systems, which have dignified conflict by institutionalizing such concepts as the "loyal opposition" which attach to one or another of the various categories of political opinion —conservative, liberal, progressive, reactionary, and so forth."

The Universal House of Justice, 1988 Dec 29, *Individual Rights and Freedoms*, p. 9

"The aggressiveness and competitiveness which animate a dominantly capitalist culture; the partisanship inherent in a fervidly democratic system; the suspicion of public-policy institutions and the skepticism towards established authority ingrained in the political attitude of the people and which trace their origins to the genesis of American society; the cynical disregard of the moderating principles and rules of civilized human relationships resulting from an excessive liberalism and its immoral consequences—such unsavory characteristics inform entrenched habits of American life..."

The Universal House of Justice, 1994 May 19, *response to US NSA*

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susan (2008-08-20 04:09:15)

To make every vote in every state politically relevant and equal in presidential elections, support the National Popular Vote bill. The National Popular Vote bill would guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and DC). The bill would take effect only when enacted by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes (270 of 538). When the bill comes into effect, all the electoral votes from those states would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and DC). The National Popular Vote bill has been approved by 21 legislative chambers (one house in CO, AR, ME, NC, and WA, and two houses in MD, IL, HI, CA, MA, NJ, RI, and VT). It has been enacted into law in Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, and Maryland. These states have 50 (19 %) of the 270 electoral votes needed to bring this legislation into effect. see <http://www.NationalPopularVote.com>

amzolt (2008-08-20 04:41:42)

Susan, Thank you, so much for the heads-up on this legislation !! What are your thoughts on whether it will be carried into law?

amzolt (2008-08-16 17:20:37)

Barney, "Alex, if my life has any distinction, it would be only in service to the Cause and to humanity." My point exactly... Thanks for the heads up on the book !!

Catherine. (2008-08-16 15:59:42)

This writing comes right to the point Alex.. Sad but I agree,with it very much in deed.. I like to say this.. You must not argue too often with the enemy,or you will teach him all your tricks of war.! You will either step forward in growth or you will step into saftey.

amzolt (2008-08-16 16:18:13)

Awesome! Your statement about not arguing with the enemy reminded me of Sun Tzu ( pinyin: Sūn Z ĭ ) ("Master Sun") is an honorific title bestowed upon Sūn W ŭ (c. 544—496 BC), the author of The Art of War, an immensely influential ancient Chinese book on military strategy. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun\\_Tzu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Tzu)

Barney (2008-08-16 16:57:30)

The current political processes of most (perhaps all) countries are based on the assumption that people are inherently conflictual. I don't think that reform is possible - precisely because reform would be based on the same assumption. What we need is a quiet revolution that takes us towards mutualism and the idea that cooperation is an essential part of human life. One might say that we should think in terms of a covenantal relationship with each other. A covenant emphasizes responsibilities as well as rights and cannot

be overturned in the way a contract can be overturned. If society were based on a social covenant rather than a social contract, we might find it easier (although still painful) to eradicate the corruption that infects current political systems.

amzolt (2008-08-16 17:07:40)

Barney, I'm humbled by a comment from such a distinguished person as you! Fascinating Idea: Covenants . . .

Barney (2008-08-16 17:17:38)

Alex, if my life has any distinction, it would be only in service to the Cause and to humanity. All I can do is to keep striving. All any of us can do is to keep striving. The idea of covenantal social/political relationships is not, of course, original! John Locke envisioned the relationship of the polity with the people as a covenantal one and this idea has recently been restated by the UK's Chief Rabbi at a speech he gave at the Lambeth Conference (the 10-yearly conference of Anglican bishops). I should also recommend an excellent book by Michael Karlberg, "Beyond the Culture of Contest". The book's subtitle is "From Adversarialism to Mutualism in an Age of Interdependence". It's published by George Ronald. It really addresses the questions you've raised from a foundation of excellent Baha'i scholarship.

### 1.6.13 The Losers of Every Battle . . . (2008-08-17 00:00)



[1]

[2]image credit

**This post was written about the Georgian conflict but the message applies to the Gaza conflict as well...**

[3] > Use this link to see all our posts about Gaza <

Wars are fought for many reasons but they can't protect the civilians in the cross-fire. The Georgian conflict is purely political—adult children fighting over land and prestige.

**From the International Crisis Group:** [4][Human Cost of Georgian Conflict](#) "The number of civilian casualties has yet to be independently established. Moscow claims 2,000 people were killed. US-based Human Rights Watch has said this cannot be independently verified."

**From the Los Angeles Times:** [5][Georgian refugees' plight is grim](#) "The Georgia-Russia conflict is estimated to have displaced as many as 100,000 people, many of whom are yet to receive any aid."

**From the Kansas City Star:** [6][Amid the chaos in Georgia, Missouri doctor perseveres](#) "Trish Blair, the founder and president of the nonprofit ACTS International, has been helping the people of Georgia since 1992.

"The refugees will need medical care, she said in an e-mail.

"With a decision that has simultaneously horrified her friends and made them proud, the former trauma surgeon chose to stay."

If you believe in a Life after this one on Earth, you must wonder how the people killed in war are received by those who passed on in comfortable, serene surroundings.

Some believe that death is birth into the Next Life—graduation from this school that tests and develops our virtues.

To those left behind, children with no mother, mothers with no children, the anguish is not easily abated by thoughts of the reward their dead have received—their escape from this[7] "[mortal coil](#)" . . .

"Ye observe how the world is divided against itself, how many a land is red with blood and its very dust is caked with human gore. The fires of conflict have blazed so high that never in early times, not in the Middle Ages, not in recent centuries hath there ever been such a hideous war, a war that is even as millstones, taking for grain the skulls of men. Nay, even worse, for flourishing countries have been reduced to rubble, cities have been levelled with the ground, and many a once prosperous village hath been turned into ruin. Fathers have lost their sons, and sons their fathers. Mothers have wept away their hearts over dead children. Children have been orphaned, women left to wander, vagrants without a home. From every aspect, humankind hath sunken low. Loud are the piercing cries of fatherless children; loud the mothers' anguished voices, reaching to the skies.

"And the breeding-ground of all these tragedies is prejudice: prejudice of race and nation, of religion, of political opinion; and the root cause of prejudice is blind imitation of the past – imitation in religion, in racial attitudes, in national bias, in politics. So long as this aping of the past persisteth, just so long will the foundations of the social order be blown to the four winds, just so long will humanity be continually exposed to direst peril."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 247

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2. [http://www.thewe.cc/weplanet/news/americas/us/us\\_veteran\\_mother\\_against\\_the\\_war.htm](http://www.thewe.cc/weplanet/news/americas/us/us_veteran_mother_against_the_war.htm)
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4. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5628>
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6. <http://www.kansascity.com/105/story/747567.html>
7. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mortal\\_coil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mortal_coil)
8. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
9. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-08-19 16:04:12)

Liara, Oh, yes! Very penetrative comment!!

isabella mori (2008-08-19 17:57:48)

i don't think i've ever seen a post on your blog that wasn't insightful and thought provoking. adult children, indeed. alex, i've sent an award your way, here: <http://www.moritherapy.org/article/just-brilliant/>

amzolt (2008-08-19 20:54:01)

Isabella, Whew! So glad I check my spam regularly, your comment was in there! I appreciate the award Isabella but... Well, I just don't have seven blogs I could nominate + my current design would not permit the award image, plus I'm still facing massive challenges in my recovery from all those meds for hep c, plus if there's any "brilliance" on my blog it's in the closing spiritual quotes.

ravenscawl (2008-08-19 14:45:43)

What of wars born of greed ,and resource expansion?.. These are not wars founded in diplomatic dispute and most often begin without provocation.. With respect the refusals and failures to compromise through diplomacy are indeed quite often egocentric, and usually only apply to ending a war.

Liara Covert (2008-08-19 11:39:44)

War symbolizes a refusal to compromise. It is a failure of diplomacy which will only work if ego steps out of the way.

amzolt (2008-08-18 22:06:55)

"Wisdom might be found in excepting this as truth, as it is what now provides some us with the power to speak against it." Oh, yes!!!

abonny (2008-08-17 22:34:11)

Of course the war in Georgia is political. All wars are political, because politics is about power and war is a tool to give others power. The person, or persons, who actually started the war are often not those that are obvious. Many conflicts are "engineered" by outsiders in order to produce a shift in the value of a currency, the balance of power in an entirely different region, or just to weaken an enemy in another field, or strengthen the hand of a friend. Sometimes, they are started just to direct attention away from some unrelated incident that is political, financial, fraudulent, embarrassing, or whatever. Many acts in a war

may be heroic, or devilish, or compassionate, but the war itself ... nah! It's just some bastard manipulating ordinary people for his/her own ends.

ravenscawl (2008-08-18 13:01:52)

Having been ,pawned, across board by those who play these games! I will never cease to see my past contributions, in the faces those now "Foddered" in any battle. In that I would share this previous post "Nevermore" as it speaks to my (albeit somewhat superstitious) belief as to the fate those faces. At least those that I contributed.... Nais Tuke (Thank You) Kem Shahol [http://ravenscawl.wordpress.com/2008/05/14/nevermore-warning-graphic /](http://ravenscawl.wordpress.com/2008/05/14/nevermore-warning-graphic/)

amzolt (2008-08-17 22:56:21)

abonny, Thanks for a penetrative comment!

Catherine. (2008-08-18 14:41:08)

War and Peace? If one person gains,the whole world gains with himand if one falls,the whole world falls to that extent. All philosohhy is based upon the premises that we think,but it is equally possible that we are being thought. It is..belief and believing the truths is within ourself.!

ravenscawl (2008-08-18 21:56:45)

Whether through gain of freedom, the loss of a loved one, or even the loss of ones self, The article, the pictures, the comments and commentators, have all brought into evidence the shapings of ,our feelings, our passions, our beliefs, and indeed our truths. Provided as such by the ,gains, of an absolutely currupt power.... Wisdom might be found in excepting this as truth, as it is what now provides some us with the power to speak against it.

ravenscawl (2008-08-18 17:28:20)

Catherine There are many ,Tuths, for each carries their own... What of those who gain from creating the fall of others... does the world indeed benefit? Does their belief now become ,the, truth? kem

amzolt (2008-08-18 18:15:41)

Kem, Very glad you shared this! The pawn image is astute and penetrative !! All you other readers: Kem's link ( [http://ravenscawl.wordpress.com/2008/05/14/nevermore-warning-graphic /](http://ravenscawl.wordpress.com/2008/05/14/nevermore-warning-graphic/) ) is something you should explore if all this war and killing has made you morally numb . . .

amzolt (2008-08-18 18:20:18)

Again, a reasoned and helpful comment... Thanks, Catherine!

Catherine. (2008-08-18 18:52:52)

Power tends to corrupt,and absolute power corrupts absoluteley.. Patience is the way of wisdom,one either believes in truths, or the cruelest lies are often told in silence.

amzolt (2008-08-18 18:58:15)

Catherine, You're right, we must not except gruesome power with silence.

## 1.6.14 The Potency of Creative Women (2008-08-18 12:56)



[1]

In spite of all the persecution they've suffered, women continue to have an inherent resilience that's of great importance to our sad, sick world.

Film is one of the most powerful creative arts. In this arena, we can see the same pattern of persecution followed by a rebounding strength:

**From Wikipedia:** [2][Women's cinema](#) "Alice Guy-Blaché made the very first feature film *La fête aux choux* in 1896."

**From Traction:** [3][2007 Celluloid Ceiling Report](#) "Women accounted for 6 % of directors in 2007, a decline of one percentage point since 2006. This figure is almost half the percentage of women directors working in 2000 when women accounted for 11 % of all directors."

**From Women In The Director's Chair:** [4][Film & Entertainment Industry Facts](#) "There are 39 film festivals solely dedicated to showing the work of women directors throughout the world."

I want to introduce you to two short films made by young women—resilient, potent, strong women.

As a man, I've learned to realize the critical importance of women, not just in film but in all walks of life, from being the first educators of children to being the leaders of a new culture of fairness and justice.

So, without further ado, Indymedia Presents, in cooperation with OurMedia and ReelGrrls, [5][Two Films: one serious, one shocking.](#)

"The progress of humanity depends on men and women working together; therefore, both must be equally developed. Women, given equal opportunities for education, have already proven to be the equals of men in intellectual and creative capacity. Men must encourage and facilitate the full devel-

opment of women, as women must support men in their development towards this new condition of society.”

Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Mar 15, *Women and the Peace Process*

[6] Here's the full document, written to the 37th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

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**[7] Let's have a conversation !**

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3. <http://magazine.women-in-film.com/Home/POV/StatisticalResearch/Reports/tabid/96/ArticleID/110/CBModuleId/728/Default.aspx>
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Lira Covert (2008-08-19 22:16:30)

amzolt, it is prudent to follow the view of Gandhi who said; "choose to become the changes you wish to see." It is not a matter of convincing other people to change. Rather, it is an issue of choosing to change your perception from the inside out, resiting comparing and judging and raising awareness to where you sense and act based on soul love.

Evita (2008-08-20 01:34:45)

I completely agree with Lira on this one - the line from Gandhi has been, is and I know will be a guiding beacon for many to come. I know I reflect upon it often, especially when I look around and don't like what I see, I just think, it all starts with one person. I may not be able to change the world, but I can change myself.

amzolt (2008-08-20 01:46:28)

Lira & Evita, I have changed myself, over many years, to become a positive catalyst for increased awareness— a bellwether for social responsibility.

amzolt (2008-08-19 16:06:28)

Jeff, Actually, I don't watch Oprah. In spite of her support for strong women, she still strikes me as too "mainstream"...

anzolt (2008-08-19 16:06:39)

Liara, How shall we implement these wise directives?

anzolt (2008-08-19 16:33:36)

John, Thanks for the heads up on that documentary! And, thanks for the encouraging me in my quest!!

Jeff (2008-08-19 01:51:19)

Sounds like you enjoy watching Oprah...

John D (2008-08-19 05:49:30)

Alex - Thanks for this excellent post. You put me in mind of a wonderful documentary - I believe it's called Women Who Made the Movies. I saw this on PBS several years ago. It's about the early days of cinema through the post war years and points out that the art of making dramatic films was pioneered by women. In the very early days, movies were regarded as a hobby, not a serious industry. So men left the field to women, who proceeded to generate dozens of inventive and interesting movies. As commercial possibilities became more evident, men came into the field and took it over, gradually pushing women out. The documentary profiles 8 or 10 women directors who had a major influence on development of the new medium. Chronologically, I believe, the last profile covers Ida Lupino, who was both a star and a director. Your piece brings out some of the latest data, and it's really shocking how the role of women seems to have been steadily declining in this industry - which is so important in shaping perceptions of women. John

Liara Covert (2008-08-19 11:38:18)

Cooperation, equality and compassion direct us toward love. If everyone chose to love everything about everyone, regardless of gender, the differences would not be noticed.

anzolt (2008-08-18 20:01:01)

Dear Robin, Just your presence on my blog is a blessing (btw, I'm a man who prides himself on never giving hollow praise...). Thanks for mentioning the "conversation"! Many of my efforts go to creating relationships with people online so, if they visit the blog, they'll feel at home and encouraged to comment. I've read a number of articles on the fear people have about commenting . . . Catherine and Kem are jewels! Women? Certainly not trite to say that no man can create life without a woman (even on the purely medical level...). But, women \*have\* created life without a man...

RainforestRobin (2008-08-18 19:32:58)

Boy, Alex, you have some potent posts here. I've been reading old posts and some of the comments by Catherine, Kem and you and a few others. Fascinating. Some great discussion you're getting here. I really enjoyed this comment of yours: "As a man, I've learned to realize the critical importance of women, not just in film but in all walks of life, from being the first educators of children to being the leaders of a new culture of fairness and justice." What I find interesting is that many of the men I know, good men, are telling me the same thing...well, variations of it. Some are saying that they are just starting to realize (in midlife) that they badly need the input of women's thoughts, ideas, feelings, etc. Some have told me they feel there has been an imbalance which has not only horribly repressed woman but in the process of repressing women has repressed aspects of men. It goes back to Kem and Catherine's comments on war and gain, etc. Gain achieved at the cost of others maybe isn't true gain. It may appear like gain but may not be. I guess it's a matter of defining "gain". As well as making a distinction between gain that is greed/instant gratification and gain that may be real growth and healing of the soul. Thank you Alex. Hugs, Robin

### 1.6.15 Exploitation Is Rape (2008-08-19 20:20)



[1]

People, traditionally suppressed in their complaint about exploitation, are rising up !

**From CommonDreams.Org:** [2][Chevron Lobbyist: ‘We Can’t Let Little Countries Screw Around With Big Companies’](#) ”Chevron Hires Lobbyists To Squeeze Ecuador in Toxic-Dumping Case”

**From OneWorld.Net:** [3][Activists Applaud India Coke Plant Closure](#) ”Coca-Cola has shut down its bottling plant in Sinhachawar, India following a vigorous community-led campaign that protested the factory’s illegal occupation of land and exposed its ”shocking” levels of pollution, reports a local corporate abuse watchdog.”

First men, then corporations run by men. First women, then mother earth...

What supports us as a human family has been and is being raped. People with no discernable heart are walking on our hearts with filthy, greedy boots.

The little ”boy”, who used to dote on his ”mother” and was her pride and joy, has reached ”adulthood” and is threatening to sever relations with his best support.

Thank God all this is relatively temporary: people are rising up and saying no, mother earth is showing us some tough love, corporations that used to be free of opposition are facing tough times.

I feel today’s quote will add perspective to the issue:

”A candid acknowledgement that prejudice, war and exploitation have been the expression of immature stages in a vast historical process and that the human race is today experiencing the unavoidable tumult which marks its collective coming of age is not a reason for despair but a prerequisite to undertaking the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world. That such an enterprise is possible, that the necessary constructive forces do exist, that unifying social structures can be erected, is the theme we urge you to examine.”

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, [4][The Promise of World Peace](#), p. 1

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

[5] *Let's have a conversation !*

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3. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/081808-activists-applaud-coca-cola-plant-closure-india#1>
4. <http://info.bahai.org/article-1-7-2-1.html>
5. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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Catherine (2008-08-21 05:20:03)

I read you're Evolution today, about rape... No matter which kind of rape it is in reference to...thought perhaps that when time allows you to check out, what a lot of people aren't aware of at this present time, but maybe a few have heard of it. What has been happening in the Congo, Africa... There have been women and children who have been raped and killed through the years to the present, as young as four years old and as old as in their eighties. More have been killed there then in the entire war of Iraq, and no one has done anything about such sad happenings, very disturbing and even more heart breaking, watched 20/20 Sunday eve. and was totally horrified to see all this on T.V. It started up and brought the past flashing right in front of my eyes, about what I never wanted to think or talk of ever in my life. Everyone knows that in any kind of war women get raped, oh yes, but for me it was a flash back from the second WW, having had to witness as a child my own Mother having been raped!! Also all books had to be burnt, for such I state there are worse crimes than burning books, one of them is not reading them! Including also that one ought to never look down on anybody, unless one is helping them up!

amzolt (2008-08-21 05:21:37)

Catherine, You humble me with your candid expression of personal horror during WWII...

Marc (2008-08-19 20:33:18)

Your outlook on it much more optimistic than mine. I pray these are growing pains and not warning signs. At the very least, I notice wealth being slowly transferred to more liberal thinking people who are re-appropriating it. But the current level of poverty on the planet is still mind-numbing.

amzolt (2008-08-19 20:41:28)

Marc, Thanks for a perceptive comment! My optimism is based on the process of restoring fairness and equity taking a long time. You could call it faith in our future. There will be much more pain and suffering before things are set right. Still, it's the faith and optimism of Today that makes Tomorrow glow!

## 1.6.16 Beauty and Love (2008-08-21 02:57)



[1]

I scanned the news for this post, as I do every day. There was nothing there but bodies, fame, and sex...

Not too surprising in our current culture.

What is Beauty?

Never an easy answer to that question . . .

There's an intriguing and compelling poem on PoetSeers by Khalil Gibran called [2]Beauty. He says {and I do hope you'll read the whole poem }:

"...beauty is not a need but an ecstasy.

It is not a mouth thirsting nor an empty hand stretched forth,

But rather a heart enflamed and a soul enchanted.

It is not the image you would see nor the song you would hear,

But rather an image you see though you close your eyes and a song you hear though you shut your ears."

What is Love?

To answer this would take all the seas turned to ink and all the land turned to parchment . . .

But, still, we can approach an elevated answer.

I'm going to quote from a Work called [3]The Seven Valleys by Bahá'u'lláh, but I want to preface that with reference to a much older work that has some relation to *The Seven Valleys*.

In the 12th century, Persian poet Farid ud-Din Attar wrote a work called, [4]Conference of the Birds ( or, Bird Parliament ). Birds have been, from ages past, a symbol of Spirituality. In Attar's work the birds must traverse seven valleys to attend the conference. Bahá'u'lláh made use of this ancient Persian theme when He wrote His *Seven Valleys*, but He extended and deepened the theme.

Some of His words on Love:

" Now is the traveler unaware of himself, and of aught besides himself. He seeth neither ignorance nor knowledge, neither doubt nor certitude; he knoweth not the morn of guidance from the night of error. He fleeth both from unbelief and faith, and deadly poison is a balm to him. Wherefore Aár saith:

For the infidel, error—for the faithful, faith;  
For Aár's heart, an atom of Thy pain.

The steed of this Valley is pain; and if there be no pain this journey will never end. In this station the lover hath no thought save the Beloved, and seeketh no refuge save the Friend. At every moment he offereth a hundred lives in the path of the Loved One, at every step he throweth a thousand heads at the feet of the Beloved."

"Wherefore must the veils of the satanic self be burned away at the fire of love, that the spirit may be purified and cleansed and thus may know the station of the Lord of the Worlds.

Kindle the fire of love and burn away all things,  
Then set thy foot into the land of the lovers."

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[5]Let's have a conversation !

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Carlie Horton (2008-08-28 13:51:54)  
Keep up the great work!!

RainforestRobin (2008-08-26 15:43:53)

Oh my gawd, I just read this: "...beauty is not a need but an ecstasy. It is not a mouth thirsting nor an empty hand stretched forth, But rather a heart enflamed and a soul enchanted. It is not the image you would see nor the song you would hear, But rather an image you see though you close your eyes and a song you hear though you shut your ears." AND THEN THIS: "...Kindle the fire of love and burn away all things, Then set thy foot into the land of the lovers." It brought tears to my eyes as I read a truth I know and live. Although I have to say that "Pain" was the vehicle that drove me to this joyous place. But I was blessed in that "Mother Nature" rode beside me all the way. She nurtured, restored and healed. And when Pain had taken me where I needed to go, and it's flame burned out, it left me with a gift of wisdom and told Mother Nature that she could now have me to herself.

amzolt (2008-08-26 15:49:12)

See Robin! I wanted you to read what Gibran and Baha'u'llah said 'cause you are so in the Groove!!

Robin Easton (2008-08-25 21:47:42)

"What is Beauty?" I chose to answer this question uninfluenced by the rest of the post and comments beyond your question. I found that it allowed me to look inside and express myself more fully without influence. Then I will go back and read the rest of the post and comments. I hope you don't mind. If someone asked me what is beauty, I would have to say that for ME beauty is "being" in love, being in a constant state of Love, living in a state of Love inside one's being and in relationship to all existence. Love that radiates inside and outside and all around one. A love so great that one is so passionately in love with Life that they are moved my ecstatics tears every day.....even with all of life's struggles and horrors....they are still "in Love" Okay now I will sign out and read the rest of your post. Thank you for such a precious question my good friend.

Catherine. (2008-08-22 14:34:04)

To believe in the things you can see and touch is no belief at all, to believe in the unseen is both a triumph and a blessing.

amzolt (2008-08-22 16:32:17)

Thank you, Catherine! This is true wisdom!!

Tomas (2008-08-23 11:09:24)

Thank you. The petals of the rose touched my heart. The petals became the artists themselves : they shaped the rose between my palms - the petals became my palms. Who is that rose? What is love? Love is not our rose, and your beautiful post too isn't love - Not mine or yours words, but our communication gives birth to Love and it's Love that expands our posts via comments

amzolt (2008-08-23 16:00:37)

Very important distinction, Tomas: "Not mine or yours words, but our communication gives birth to Love..."  
Commune-ication . . .

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-26 12:10:36)

obaid, What I see in your words is that "less is eyes" is about beauty. We should not use eyes to judge beauty. We should use our hearts to know beauty so that this beauty of the heart can teach us love...

obaid URahman (2009-02-26 06:54:44)

i have somthing about beauty and love but i cant translate it to english any way i will try my best it says love is the result of beauty and buty is a term of phylosoph where the less is eyes and the more wide is heart and the result is love

### 1.6.17 Mother Earth Is Crying (2008-08-22 19:21)



[1]

What will it take for the leaders, political and corporate, to stop killing the very environment they use to make their profits?

**From IC Publications, News from Africa:** [2][West Africa's coastline redrawn by climate change: experts](#)

**From the Canberra Times:** [3][Adjusting for climate change a shared task](#)

**From Agence France-Presse:** [4]['Clock ticking' on global warming: UN climate chief](#)

One barrier to resolving this crisis is the highly fractured nature of our world community. There are, taking an opinionated survey, a few leaders of countries, some members of legislative bodies, a larger group of leaders and lobbyists for corporations, a number of representatives to global institutions, many leaders of religious communities, a few very rich people, and *The Rest of Us* . . .

Most of those groups are at-odds with each other.

Most people are struggling to just get along—making ends meet—dealing with depressive tendencies . . .

Many of our fellow family members in the world community are being treated like expendable non-entities!

Here are some personal responses, from [5][Orion Magazine](#), to this crisis:

Storm's Coming

Six Authors Respond to Climate Change

Recently Orion asked six authors to describe what the changing climate is doing to them personally—how it is affecting their hearts and souls. Here's what they had to say:

[6][A Quartet](#) by Gretel Ehrlich

[7][Anticipating Our Future](#) by Jared Duval

[8][Seeing Paradise](#) by Jay Griffiths

[9][The Source of Hope](#) by Peter Sawtell

[10][The Inner Climate](#) by Pico Iyer

[11][The Moral Climate](#) by Carl Safina

The solution is not easy. The resolution of disunity is The major challenge facing humanity.

Today's Spiritual Quote:

"Our efforts now and in the future to safeguard our common habitat and to promote the well-being and development of all peoples must be characterized by a unified approach within an effective universal framework. The unity we envision is more than an academic matter of geography, climatology or oceanography. It is based on the concept of the fundamental unity of mankind living as one world community, in which the problems of economic relations and the use of natural resources must be addressed from a global perspective with due regard for the wide diversity of climates and cultures. The universal framework proposed by Bahá'u'lláh over one hundred years ago calls for universally agreed-upon and enforceable laws, the equitable sharing of resources, fundamental adjustments to present institutional and economic relations, and world-wide changes in the values, behavior, and consumption patterns of individuals and communities."

Bahá'í International Community, 1990 Aug 06, Environment Development

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[12][Let's have a conversation !](#)

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amzolt (2008-08-25 21:45:51)

Robin, Yes!!! Group action... Yet, that takes a unity of group thought and feeling... Your action of being a caring and impassioned blogger can help bring more unity of thought and feeling!!!

garygoldstein (2008-08-25 13:00:53)

As what is happening now on our Mother Earth, still politicians and other people thinking about how to make money without thinking its effects on our environment. In the end, we are the sufferers of their consequences.

Evita (2008-08-25 13:49:20)

On topic, I had just had the chance to watch a fantastic new documentary movie this weekend called THE GARBAGE WARRIOR - it is an inspiring and heroic tale of one man who tries to build fully sustainable housing out of the garbage we produce. It is truly moving what the mind and will of one human being can do. However then we see the other side of it as you also elude to in your post...the leaders, the politics which do nothing but stand in the way of progressive minds who want to and can make a change. Indeed Mother Earth is crying and too few hear her cries...

amzolt (2008-08-25 14:35:54)

I, too, have seen that video! Wonderful man!! There are, as you intimate, many solutions available and many people willing to implement them. The one thing lacking is the Will To Action on the part of the

leaders and the people with the money to spread solutions over the face of the globe. Rather like watching your house going up in flames while you have a hose in your hands and the fire chief saying he won't do anything to help you.

amzolt (2008-08-25 14:40:04)

Gary, You are right and it is very sad to be in these circumstances... I do see a light at the end of the tunnel but it is very far away.....

Catherine. (2008-08-23 14:22:45)

Give up the idea of what life should be, and celebrate what life is.

amzolt (2008-08-23 16:02:23)

Catherine, you remind me of an old support-group saying: "Don't should on me!" Celebration is Divine!!

Robin Easton (2008-08-25 21:35:58)

One thing I decided some time ago when I would read about environmental horrors and stats, etc. and felt so down from it.....was to make a commitment to support, back and help those groups that I believed could visibly bring about some positive change in our environment. It helped me to feel that I was putting out good as opposed to drowning in the overwhelming horror of it all. I think we can make a huge difference if each of us gets involved in even one organization where we can see that our petition signing, donation, or other support brings about results in stopping...hmmm....say arctic drilling, pollution, wolf slaughter or so forth. It's amazing how much difference it makes if each of us pick something we believe in and get behind it in whatever capacity we can. The internet has made this much more possible through petitions that thousands sign and end up stopping destructive acts. And yes the problem is much bigger than one organization, but there are a LOT of people and only a few get involved. I know it can be overwhelming when our lives are so full and the stress and demands are high and we often feel like we are just surviving, but I still know that collective voice and action can bring about positive change...through pressure from "the people".

1.6.18 Oh, It's Just A Conflict . . . (2008-08-24 04:06)



[1]

It's been happening for centuries—soldiers pick a fight with other soldiers and civilians are displaced and killed.

**From the Associated Press:** [\[2\]Russia rolls into Georgia, rolls back the clock](#)

**From CNN:** [\[3\]Georgia-Russia conflict brings back Cold War memories](#)

**From the Irish Times:** [\[4\]Relief for Georgia as Russian forces begin withdrawal](#)

”Relief? Oh, but it's just a conflict.”

Well... No, it's war! The brave crusaders can use all the disguising words they want. When guns shoot and bombs explode and innocent people are made to suffer, it's war.

That image up there is very old yet it tells the story as well as our modern media. Troops fight (feeling like an angel is guiding them) and innocents suffer . . .

What brought me to write this post, as I did my daily scan of news sources, was an audio-enhanced slide show on EurasiaNet.Org. It's a story photographed and spoken by Rena Effendi. It shows the dislocation and disruption of the innocents in this "conflict" that the underside of the carpet knows is war . . .

This is a unique and compelling story !  
[5]GEORGIA - Audio/Pictorial Report

Today's Quote:

"For thousands of years the human race has been at war. It is enough. Now let mankind, for a time at least, consort in amity and peace. Enmity and hatred have ruled. Let the world, for a period, exercise love. For thousands of years the nations have denied each other, considering each other as infidel and inferior. It is sufficient. We must now realize that we are the servants of one God, that we turn to one beneficent Father, live under one divine law, seek one reality and have one desire. Thus may we live in the utmost friendship and love, and in return the favors and bounties of God shall surround us; the world of humanity will be reformed; mankind, enjoy a new life; eternal light will illumine, and heavenly moralities become manifest."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 6

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amzolt (2008-08-25 22:30:57)

Robin, You're more than welcome to share that eloquently in my humble blog! Thank you, dear heart!! Hey, all you other readers! Go see Robin's blog!!! <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/>

Robin Easton (2008-08-25 22:16:52)

When I see the horror in the world I use it as my impetus to make dang sure I am at peace and in love with Robin. Then from there I make sure I have resolved any conflict with family, friends, others....as much as they are open to. (which can often take great courage because we all can fear rejection at some point in our lives - so it means being humble and brave of heart). This also means loving freely without strings. I accept whatever level they are able to reciprocate...if at all. And I love them for where they are at...and recognize each person's soul journey as unique. I try to model love, even when someone is unable to actively return it (it doesn't matter because I am already "in love"). It doesn't matter if they are even "nasty" back, because I found that modeling love, really "being" in love changes lives. It allows peace to enter and calm to take hold. It creates an environment conducive to positive change. Others no longer have conflict returned by me. That does not mean that I won't set healthy boundaries if I need to. I will and do. But I really believe that peace and love start with me...with each of us. The horror in the world is also my impetus to give daily thanks for what I have....that I am safe, loved, fed, clothed, housed, and have infinite opportunities in

my life. I am truly blessed and must give active thanks. I am grateful for so much. The horror in the world made me one day look at my life picture myself on my deathbed with nothing left to lose....and I thought, "Okay, I dying now; what would I change? Who would I have tried harder to reconcile with, who would I love, accept, heal, what petty ridiculous crap can I let go of, who can I reach out to, comfort, forgive, and so forth." Then I set about in the span of one year contacting those people and making my peace, offering support, telling them the things in my heart that I'd not dared to tell them, letting them know they were loved, letting them know I was sorry, letting them know they were absolutely forgiven. I made my peace and continue to do so everyday so that I move into a world of "being in love". Thank you Alex for letting me express this here.

Liara Covert (2008-08-24 09:49:14)

Ultimely, many human beings are at war (so to speak) with themselves. Until they remember what it feels like to love themselves unconditionally, they will find it hard to express compassion to all other creatures under any circumstances. To dwell on conflict also makes a statement about views on truce, compromise, love and inner beliefs.

amzolt (2008-08-24 16:33:38)

Liara, I am aware, through many of your comments, that you hold the concept of higher self awareness and personal moral responsibility very highly. This is praiseworthy! Where does compassion for the suffering masses intersect your philosophy?

Liara Covert (2008-08-24 22:38:02)

It is possible to be compassionate for human beings without permitting yourself to get focused on helplessness and negativity. As you realize each action you take has the potential to make a positive difference on some level, then you can rest calm and assured that you do the best you can. If you have spare money or choose to devote time to volunteer to help people help themselves, then these are some ways you can make a difference. If however, you allow emotions to control you, or, you permit events outside of yourself to control how you feel, then you would lose perspective.

amzolt (2008-08-24 23:06:14)

Liara, Thank you for that expatiation on your previous comment!

Wilma (2008-08-25 04:19:34)

I love Liara's comments as I too do focus on gaining peacefulness within myself first and then with the neighbours and hopefully that will spread out into the world.

Marc (2008-08-25 13:58:18)

I agree with Liara also, but also find it hard to deal with all the suffering and madness happening across the globe.

amzolt (2008-08-25 14:30:54)

Wilma & Marc, You two have expressed the poles of a globe of concern. Being at peace with our selves and helping resolve the suffering of our world. I feel they work in tandem, an oscillation of energy between the two. If we never feel their suffering, we will do nothing to alleviate it. If we never get to Center and inner peace, we will be caught up in the suffering and be hampered by that. I'm starting to feel these concerns may be the most important on the globe!!

Catherine. (2008-08-25 14:54:52)

Our deepest human need is the need to overcome our separateness, to leave the prison of our aloneness.

amzolt (2008-08-25 15:01:37)

Catherine, Ever so well said !!!

### 1.6.19 Can Youth Guide Us ? (2008-08-25 21:32)



[1]

Our politicians and corporate leaders are guiding us to the brink of total despair. What can youth teach us about faith and hope?

**From the Record Searchlight** (Redding, California): [2][Local event raises cash for charities by raising the spirit of the '60s](#)

**From Agence France-Presse:** [3][Baghdadis revel in first big football final in years](#) "We've had only misery but we need to be happy. This is the first time that I forget everything. Can you distinguish a Shiite from a Sunni? No, they are all Iraqis," said Mohammed Kazem, an 18-year-old deliveryman.

**From OneWorld.Net:** [4][A Megaphone for Kenya's Street Kids](#) "Kenyan youth living and working in the streets are finding new ways to raise awareness about the issues that matter to them using online blogs and photography."

Well, since most of the adults in the world are either part of the cause of the world's crises or totally beat down by the crises' oppression, it appears youth are the preeminent solution.

That's not to say adults can't help but I feel strongly that most of that help should be in the form of assisting the youth of the world in gaining confidence in the enormous potential they have for turning our poor, sick globe around—creating the faithful and hopeful impetus for positive change .

...

Today's quote is addressed to Bahá'í youth but its message is a clear call for any youth to grab the reins and charge into the future:

"Indeed, let them welcome with confidence the challenges awaiting them. Imbued with this excellence and a corresponding humility, with tenacity and a loving servitude, today's youth must move towards the front ranks of the professions, trades, arts and crafts which are necessary to the further progress of humankind—this to ensure that the spirit of the Cause will cast its illumination on all these important areas of human endeavor. Moreover, while aiming at mastering the unifying concepts and swiftly advancing technologies of this era of communications, they can, indeed they must also guarantee the transmittal to the future of those skills which will preserve the marvelous, indispensable achievements of the past. The transformation which is to occur in the functioning of society will certainly depend to a great extent on the effectiveness of the preparations the youth make for the world they will inherit."

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 May 08, *Baha'i Youth of the World*

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amzolt (2008-08-27 14:46:14)

Brandi, Yes! This ol' adult world is cynical and depressed. Youth still have the vibrancy and pure spirit we adults must rediscover. Adults often feel it's impossible to feel positive about the world and youth are a living example of positivity's positive existence.

Catherine. (2008-08-26 05:19:08)

Worry is supeme weakness and is a vampire of life. Worry causes man to cling desperately to his model of the world even if that model does not serve him. By clinging he drains the life out of himself and his entire existence. I have never made but one prayer to God a very short one: Oh Lord make my enemies ridiculous and God granted it!

amzolt (2008-08-26 13:43:45)

Catherine, You've brought deep wisdom and laughter! Wonderful combination!!!

Brandi Magill (2008-08-27 14:22:52)

I do believe we should look to children for wisdom. They possess innocents which we as adults have long forgotten. Great post Alex!

### 1.6.20 Naked In Eden (2008-08-26 23:02)



[1]

Robin Easton: Author . Speaker . Environmentalist . Musician . Adventurer

Today I honor women by honoring a woman—that’s how it starts: honor the ones you know and it spreads—a sea of acceptance and support.

I published the major portion of this post back in April but I’ll lead with a few fresh news items:

**From Cleveland Indy Media Center:** [2][Towards Women’s Liberation](#)

**From the Rebel Yell:** [3][Self respect is crucial for women’s equality](#)

**From the American Thinker:** [4][They Hanged Her for Teaching Love](#)

I’ve done, as a man, many things “only” women do: cry, have deep concerns, love flowers, hug trees, and leave my ego behind to relate to children...

Robin Easton, as a woman, does many things “only” men do . . .

[5][Here’s the link to her blog.](#)

Check out her Immense Spirit !!!

"Ere long the days shall come when the men addressing the women, shall say: 'Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye! Verily ye are worthy of every gift. Verily ye deserve to adorn your heads with the crown of everlasting glory, because in sciences and arts, in virtues and perfections ye shall become equal to man, and as regards tenderness of heart and the abundance of mercy and sympathy ye are superior'."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 182

[6][Explore the Issue of Equality](#)

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

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amzolt (2008-08-28 18:55:07)

Robin, Your the Lady of the Wilds and your presence is enlightening this blog!!!

RainforestRobin (2008-08-28 17:09:40)

WOW!!! I just read this comment of Catherine's and it blew my mind. It's BEAUTIFUL and SOOOOO true. The punch line is the kicker. It made me wonder if women forget their true worth because over the centuries they've been repressed and not acknowledged, so in a sense they forget their own worth. Although women compliment other women at times...maybe there is something to be said for the fact that on an energetic level (in terms of balance) they also need that acknowledgement from men. I'm not saying that men don't give compliments, although I've had several male friends tell me it is very hard, if not impossible, for them to do. I'm also not saying that woman throughout history and today aren't self motivated, independent, powerful, completely capable and so forth. Many are. I'm just wondering if more men were doing what Alex is doing here that women would more readily rise up out of the mindset of "forgetting their true worth". I don't know...the thought just rose when reading Catherine's poem. Thank you Catherine for SUCH a lovely peice and for your kind kind words. I've enjoyed your lovely soul here. It's a gift to me and Alex and his other readers. And Alex thank you for being a man on the planet that sees and cares deeply and isn't afraid to express it.

Catherine (2008-08-28 15:56:34)

Robin is a terrific writer,and I truly appreciate her input and comment as well,about me,and thank her for

that,how kind of her.! Here is what I would like to reply to the both of you. Women have strengths that amaze men. They bear hardships and carry burdens, but they hold happiness,love and joy. They smile when they want to scream. They sing when they want to cry.They fight for what they believe in.They stand up for injustice. They don't take no for a answer,when they believe there is a better solution.They go without,so their family can have. They're heart breaks when a friend dies. They love unconditionally. Women come in all shapes,sizes and colors. They have compassion,and ideas. However,if there is one flaw in women..it is that they forget their true worth!!!

amzolt (2008-08-27 14:42:04)

Evita, Yes! We are all "perfect and amazing beings" yet I feel there's a factor of development or externalization that makes certain beings' vibrations more penetrating, eh?

rainforestrobin (2008-08-27 23:31:17)

Oh my word. You've no idea what this means to me. I had a rough day and just came here and saw this. Haven't been able to be at my desk much today. There is really is something about having someone else see you. Even if you see yourself and you're really happy and in love with life...to have someone out of the blue say (either with words or actions). "I see you and honor who you are." That always moves me to tears and makes me just LOVE the human spirit in us that wants to connect and let other know we see them. I find that terribly endearing and precious, an enduring quality of the human soul. I am very very honored as well as touched by all the comments here. There truly are some wonderful people who comment here, Alex. Of course I always love your comments Alex and your little notes, and I've loved Catherine's beautiful comments, quotes and insights here. And then I've connected with dear Evita who hops around the internet leaving love everywhere she goes, such a gentle wise soul. Like you Alex. No wonder she is here also. Thank you Alex and friends so much for making this day very special. I feel a bit like you all planned a surprise birthday party for me....(laughing) and it's not even my birthday. Love to you all, Robin

amzolt (2008-08-28 03:32:04)

Robin, You, dear heart, deserve all the promotion possible. Your Message is timeless and critically needed Today!

Evita (2008-08-27 14:37:30)

I don't think you could have picked a better woman to honor. I recently "met" (via sites) Robin too and although we are all perfect and amazing beings, she is just one of those who and whose energy and presence really stands out!

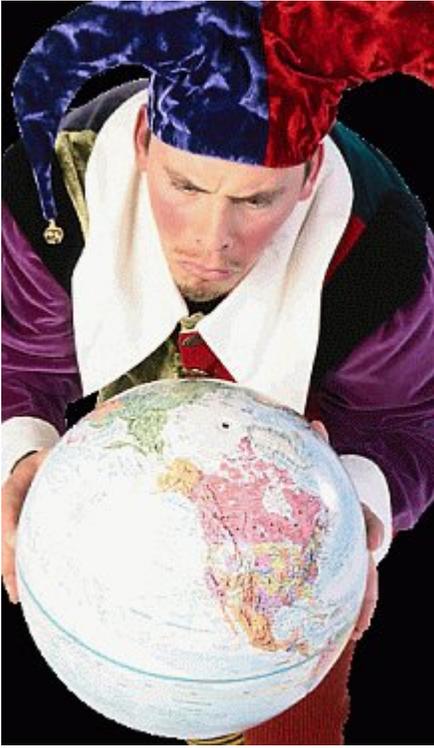
Catherine. (2008-08-27 05:58:43)

Life has taught us that love does not consist in gazing at each other,but in looking together in the same direction.

amzolt (2008-08-27 06:08:16)

Catherine, That is the only way humanity can gain its stability!

## 1.6.21 What's Wrong With Us ? (2008-08-27 22:18)



[1] So many problems in our Human Family... So hard to see the way out... So hard to even see why...

Could it be *Our* fault?

"How long will humanity persist in its waywardness? How long will injustice continue? How long is chaos and confusion to reign amongst men? How long will discord agitate the face of society?... The winds of despair are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divideth and afflicteth the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appeareth to be lamentably defective."

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 216

**From the Guardian, UK:** [2][US and Russian warships line up in dispute over Georgia](#)

**From Agence France-Presse:** [3][Indian police told to shoot religious rioters](#)

**From the New York Times:** [4][Dalai Lama, Citing Exhaustion, Cancels Trips](#)

**From the Christian Science Monitor:** [5][North Korea threatens to renew nuclear program](#)

I write this blog with the clear intention of helping humanity. We all work hard to secure a little peace in this world. But finding understanding about why so many crises are happening or what to do about them is, for some, far too hard . . .

So, to make it a bit easier, I offer these articles:

- [6][Eradicating Genocide](#)
- [7][The Eradication of Violence against Women and Girls](#)
- [8][Full Employment and Decent Work](#)
- [9][A New Framework for Global Prosperity](#)
- [10][The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality](#)
- [11][Eradicating Poverty: Moving Forward as One](#)
- [12][The Impact of Racism on Women](#)

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[13][Let's have a conversation !](#)

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2. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/aug/27/georgia.russia1>
3. [http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hSbD02iL6hW3YwZ0Qa9\\_mWZvvv\\_g](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hSbD02iL6hW3YwZ0Qa9_mWZvvv_g)
4. [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/28/world/asia/28tibet.html?\\_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/28/world/asia/28tibet.html?_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin)
5. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0827/p99s01-duts.html>
6. <http://www.enoughproject.org/node/2>
7. <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/08-0313.htm>
8. <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/07-0211.htm>
9. <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/06-0101.htm>
10. <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/04-0301.htm>
11. <http://www.bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/08-0214.htm>
12. <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/01-0108.htm>
13. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
14. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-08-29 15:01:22)

In pursuit of consciousness there is a struggle with reason which culminates in a rational impasse. In this defining moment you must either back down or break through!

amzolt (2008-08-29 15:24:41)

Brilliant, Catherine !!!

Kim (2008-08-28 17:32:48)

Great Blog! I like the way you think and write! I have subscribed and look forward to your posts. Namaste kim

## 1.6.22 Why Do Religions Fight Each Other ? (2008-08-29 16:34)



[1]

Uh... Isn't religion about peace and love? Why would people of different religions fight? Could it be their "religion" is an imitation; dogma without substance?

**From Dong-A Ilbo:** [2][No Religious Harmony, No National Unity](#)

**From Commentary Magazine:** [3][How to Manage Savagery](#)

**From Forum 18:** [4][RUSSIA: Religious dispute fuels state oppression of Kabardino-Balkaria Muslims](#)

**From the Kurdish Globe:** [5][The interfaith dialogue in Kurdistan](#)

My personal belief is we were created to love, fashioned for compassion.

When we dip our spiritual wings in the muck of materialism, we find it hard to fly. If we do that often enough, we start believing we weren't made to fly, we cannot soar, and we must fight to maintain our little plot of dirt...

If there is truly one God and if God's Messengers speak the same language, we must, somehow, breach the walls of exclusivism, reach out to fellow folk on the spiritual path, and embrace the diversity that lives within Unity.

[6][Here's a short video about Compassion.](#)

"The ignorant must be taught, the sick healed, the sleepers awakened. The child must not be oppressed or censured because it is undeveloped; it must be patiently trained. The sick must not be neglected because they are ailing; nay, rather, we must have compassion upon them and bring them healing. Briefly; the old conditions of animosity, bigotry and hatred between the religious systems must be dispelled and the new conditions of love, agreement and spiritual brotherhood be established among them."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 239

”The challenge facing the religious leaders of mankind is this: to contemplate, with hearts filled with the spirit of compassion and a desire for truth, the plight of humanity, and to ask themselves whether they cannot, in humility before their Almighty Creator, submerge their theological differences in a great spirit of mutual forbearance that will enable them to work together for the advancement of human understanding and peace.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1989 Mar 02, *Promoting Religious Tolerance*

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1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/fighting\\_religions.gif](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/fighting_religions.gif)
2. <http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2008082888948>
3. <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/how-to-manage-savagery-12507>
4. [http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article\\_id=1178](http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1178)
5. <http://www.kurdishglobe.net/displayArticle.jsp?id=C396D0F6639D7A2EC785E621C9FA49CC>
6. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYMnKRv4TH0>
7. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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amzolt (2008-09-05 15:42:34)  
kem, Do email me the link...

ravenscawl (2008-09-05 15:39:13)

Alex This from one of my earlier post in response to a well known evangelical who had claimed a personal, and exclusive covenant with the all mighty, claiming in his righteousness, that he alone understood, that America had been called to, battle in a holy war in the name of Jesus the Christ! ”It’s often been said “That the devils greatest trick was to convince man that he didn’t exist”. Then, truly, “INTERPRETATION IS the devils most CRUEL trick of all” I will email you the link you may include it if you wish kem

amzolt (2008-09-04 22:49:42)

Robin, My best response to such a glorious statement by you, speaking about Religion and Love, is a short compilation from my Faith’s Writings. The essence of all the quotes is, “...if religious belief proves to be the cause of discord and dissension, its absence would be preferable.” “It is evident that no vital results are now forthcoming from the customs, institutions and standpoints of the past. In view of this, shall blind imitations of ancestral forms and theological interpretations continue to guide and control the religious life and spiritual development of humanity today?” (Abdu’l-Baha, Baha’i World Faith - Abdu’l-Baha Section, p. 225) “Gradually these heavenly teachings and foundations of reality have been beclouded by human interpretations and dogmatic imitations of ancestral beliefs. The essential realities which the prophets labored so hard to establish in human hearts and minds while undergoing ordeals and suffering tortures of persecution,

have now well nigh vanished. Some of these heavenly messengers have been killed, some imprisoned; all of them despised and rejected while proclaiming the reality of divinity. Soon after their departure from this world, the essential truth of their teachings was lost sight of and dogmatic imitations adhered to.” (Abdu’l-Baha, Baha’i World Faith - Abdu’l-Baha Section, p. 225) “True religion is the source of love and agreement amongst men, the cause of the development of praiseworthy qualities; but the people are holding to the counterfeit and imitation, negligent of the reality which unifies; so they are bereft and deprived of the radiance of religion.” (Abdu’l-Baha, Baha’i World Faith - Abdu’l-Baha Section, p. 238) “So long as man persists in his adherence to ancestral forms and imitation of obsolete ceremonials, denying higher revelations of the divine light in the world, strife and contention will destroy the purpose of religion and make love and fellowship impossible.” (Abdu’l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 339) “...if religious belief proves to be the cause of discord and dissension, its absence would be preferable, for religion was intended to be the divine remedy and panacea for the ailments of humanity, the healing balm for the wounds of mankind. If its misapprehension and defilement have brought about warfare and bloodshed instead of remedy and cure, the world would be better under irreligious conditions.” (H.M. Balyuzi, Abdu’l-Baha - The Centre of the Covenant, p. 293)

Robin Easton (2008-09-04 15:30:09)

Hi dear Alex! Well, I can see that once again I’ve missed out on some good discussion here. Unfortunately work has kept me away, but it is so good to read these posts. I enjoyed them and all your commentators thoughts and insights as well. They are a GREAT bunch. Wise and full of insight. I’ve never followed an organized religion because I found them too limiting for how I feel inside, which is limitless. I tend to forget that this type of conflict goes on until I stop and think of the “Holy Wars” and other religious conflicts. I think people often live in fear and unless that fear is recognized and faced, it can manifest in all kinds of ways. Like you said, the bird that believes he can no longer fly (has lost the skies) and clings fiercely to his bit of turf for fear of losing that as well. For fear of having nothing, being completely empty. In the rainforest, far away from humans and their world, I learned that I feared my own emptiness and had never taken time to know it, to be completely comfortable with it. I had not yet realized that in my very emptiness I would hear the voice of all existence. I grew up in a culture that fills its every waking moment with things, and media, and doing, and running, and buying, and talking, and keeping busy, always keeping the mind busy. When I finally let go and fell into this vast empty space I made deep and abiding peace with myself and all of Life. I no longer run. I want to “see”, feel and experience Life. Like the birds you mention, as a species we’ve become bogged down with our things and keeping busy, and have forgotten how to soar. We were born to fly. As to why there are religious conflicts, I could give many of the answers above and various other thoughts, but as I was reading this another question went through my mind. What can I do to ease the way, to lessen the fear, to offer no resistance in the face of one fearfully hanging onto their religion or truth, like a lifeline? (It may be their lifeline until they are able to see that they are safe. They are loved.) Since I experience no need to defend any of my truths it is easy for me to let others have their beliefs as well. I also love to look at the things I can do to bring about positive change, things I can do everyday with all the people I come in contact with. I can love by sharing a kind smile, a hug, a reaching out, a gentling touch, a compassionate look, an act of kindness. I have found these things permeate where words cannot reach. What simpler way to change the world than to just love people, no matter what they believe. Love seeps in and rearranges thoughts and feelings in ways people almost have no control over.

amzolt (2008-09-05 16:49:31)

Folks, Kem has sent me a link to a post he did on his blog wanting me to vet it. I think it’s very perceptive! <http://ravenscawl.wordpress.com/2008/05/04/deed-to-heaven/> Here’s a snippet: “For the language of

“THE CREATOR” can not be written by man, For it is truly carved in stone, INDEED, upon the very rock of which we now stand!!! PUNCTUATED by a single blade of grass or mountain top, versed in the forest, the desert and oceans, noted by birdsong or the flutter of butterfly wings. ”TRANSLATED for INTERPRETATION in the beauty of a single TREE!!! ”Or maybe, this is just my own interpretation.”

ravenscawl (2008-09-02 06:14:29)

alex ”Thanks for the link! Brightened my day!!!” As you have brightened many of mine, Your quite welcome!

amzolt (2008-08-31 15:43:31)

Evita, ”Formal religion” is capable of ”unifying spirituality”. The shame is that most of the organized religions have sunk into formalistic dogma, forgetting the unifying spirituality of their Founder...

ravenscawl (2008-09-02 05:39:04)

<http://www.humankindness.org/godletter.html>

amzolt (2008-09-02 06:07:41)

ravenscawl, Thanks for the link! Brightened my day!!!

Evita (2008-08-31 15:34:45)

Ah yes Alex - this is the question of the century indeed! I think it is one of the biggest reasons why I turned away in the past few years from formal religion to unifying spirituality. We are all one, we are all in this together and as Danette said the whole idea of a ”Holy War” is just absurd. I just don’t understand why people are still today, having seen and seeing all that has and is happening on the planet so intent on phrases such as ”my religion believes in this or that” building the walls between us higher and higher as if ”my” religion is somehow better or knows more than yours. So to end off on a positive note, I love the fact that I am seeing more and more people lose the illusory veils of religion and accept the common bond that holds us all together.

MysticSaint (2008-08-31 07:03:38)

Greetings of peace. Thank you for the lovely post.

amzolt (2008-08-31 14:05:24)

MysticSaint, Well, thank you for the wish of peace and the encouraging comment on the post!!

caiter (2008-08-31 04:07:40)

that video was really sweet. do you know anything about the competition it was entered in?

amzolt (2008-08-31 04:50:20)

caiter, Here’s the blurb from the site I found it on <http://www.doubletake.tv/> ”With a stroke of the pen, a stranger transforms the afternoon for another man in this emotionally stirring film by Alonso Alvarez Barreda. The winner of the short film online competition at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival, Story of a Sign has since become a regular feature of Mexico’s national television programming.”

amzolt (2008-08-30 19:32:46)

Danette, Holy Wars... Been going on for eons... They’re a blight on our humanity! But... I feel God

wants us to learn even if the lessons are sometimes harsh. Plus, He gives us Free Will, which brings up a spiritual oxymoronic consideration: According to the major spiritual traditions, we are only capable of free will because God permits it. Some see that as contradictory and the ones who do and sever themselves from God are Dead Souls—another oxymoron, since souls are eternal... Wow! Your comment made me dive deep, didn't it? ;-)

Danette (2008-08-30 17:11:49)

I have never understood how religions can have "Holy Wars". Is that not an oxymoron? I was under the impression that religious people were supposed to be tolerant. And yet that does not seem to be happening in our world. Correct me if I am wrong, but have not the Jews and Muslims been at war for so long we have forgotten. All in the name of religion. I don't get it.

amzolt (2008-08-30 05:39:17)

You are truly inspiring, Catherine !!!

amzolt (2008-08-29 18:38:04)

David, Thank you for the encouraging comment! Also, for your evaluation of the problems with most religions...

Catherine. (2008-08-30 05:19:27)

Wonderful post Alex, as always, you put good questions out there, and come right to the point which I admire in all of your writings, no matter what the topic might be, although religion as well as politics are a topic that different folks might see in a different perspective, I can only speak for myself in stating a simple but honest comment. Nothing is as frustrating as arguing with someone who knows what he is talking about. Therefore I like to say very simple phrase. There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is though everything is a miracle.

seeker2008 (2008-08-29 17:47:01)

Hello Alex, Great post!!!! I truly feel that the reason religions fight because religion focuses on a culture approach to the absolute. The culture defines itself by its beliefs and of course to everyone their identity is sacrosanct religion has become an institution I feel membership dues building funds, social activities etc. Uniting the seeker with his creator isn't the primary goal. And of course that goal has to be done on an individual basis. However religion is also a tool, the same windmill that can bring one up to the sky to the company of stars can smash on further into the mire and mud of terrestrial existence, just my two cents ;-)

Angelica (2009-01-14 06:40:27)

Hi, I am a highschool student in Brent International School and I am writing a research paper based on why people of different religions fight. and I really need help. If you have anything please tell me. Angelica Oh and please cite it. :)

amzolt (2009-01-14 10:50:26)

Angelica, I see you're in Manila. I spent some quality time there in 1968 for rest and relaxation from my tour of duty in Viet Nam. Our electronic connection has brought me fond memories! As far as help with your research, I would recommend, first, a paper I posted to my blog just yesterday – [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/letter\\_april2002\\_english.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/letter_april2002_english.pdf) You may also want to consider the two letters to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights at this location:

<http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/lettersun.doc> And, a fine document about why there should be no religious intolerance is the document *One Common Faith*. I have a series of blog posts that explore it here: <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/one-common-faith/> I hope these references help you with your paper!

### 1.6.23 Values for All of Us (2008-08-31 15:23)



[1]

Tomorrow is *Labor Day* in the United States—a federal holiday that began as an honoring of workers and has become a summer-ending Party . . .

**From MarketWatch:** [2][Labor Day 2008: Building a New American Dream for America's Workers](#)

**From the SunSentinel:** [3][Labor Day in Florida: Working class dreams are dying](#)

**From khsltv.com (California):** [4][Violent Crime Spikes in Chico Over the Labor Day Weekend](#)

Holidays just aren't what they used to be. Even if some folks celebrate Labor Day as honoring America's workers, it's usually honoring them as the most cherished workers, worthy of regard above any other workers. Some are, I'm sure. Yet, what about the *World's* workers—those paid so little they work as slaves, those who work at staying alive—whose work is dodging bombs and guns. . .

Putting Americans, the workers or the massive parties, on a pedestal is counter-productive for America's future—it's globally dissonant—causes strife and contention from other nations.

This globe will never solve its problems as long as nations keep playing their trump cards against each other. A favorite American saying is, "United we Stand, Divided we Fall".

Should a united America stand so tall she encourages a divided world?

*Today's Spiritual Quote:*

”We assert that the emerging global order, and the processes of globalization that define it, must be founded on the principle of the oneness of humankind. This principle, accepted and affirmed as a common understanding, provides the practical basis for the organization of relationships between all states and nations. The increasingly apparent interconnectedness of development, security and human rights on a global scale confirms that peace and prosperity are indivisible – that no sustainable benefit can be conferred on a nation or community if the welfare of the nations as a whole is ignored or neglected. The principle of the oneness of humankind does not seek to undermine national autonomy or suppress the cultural and intellectual diversity of the peoples and nations of the world. Rather, it seeks to broaden the basis of the existing foundations of society by calling for a wider loyalty, a greater aspiration than any that has animated the human race. Indeed, it provides the moral impetus needed to remold the institutions of governance in a manner consistent with the needs of an ever-changing world.”

Bahá’í International Community, *The Search for Values in an Age of Transition*, p.3

Read the complete document:

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2. <http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/labor-day-2008-building-new/story.aspx?guid=1E60C022-437A-467D-85AF-66EA9EE6A801&dist=hppr>
3. <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/opinion/columnists/sfl-sgcol31sbaug31,0,6128581.column>
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8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-09-04 22:18:07)

Robin, Imitating wisdom is the death of perceptiveness...

Robin Easton (2008-09-04 15:36:39)

I LOVE Catherine’s quote. That is one I live my life by. Ultimately we must experience Life to know it. Liberated thinking there Catherine!!! A woman after my own heart. :)

Catherine. (2008-09-01 04:49:25)

Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise men of old. Seek what they sought.

amzolt (2008-09-01 05:38:41)

Catherine, Very Good!!! We all must use our own judgement in the search for truth—sure, take counsel from the wise but make your own decisions.

Heather (2008-09-02 02:45:08)

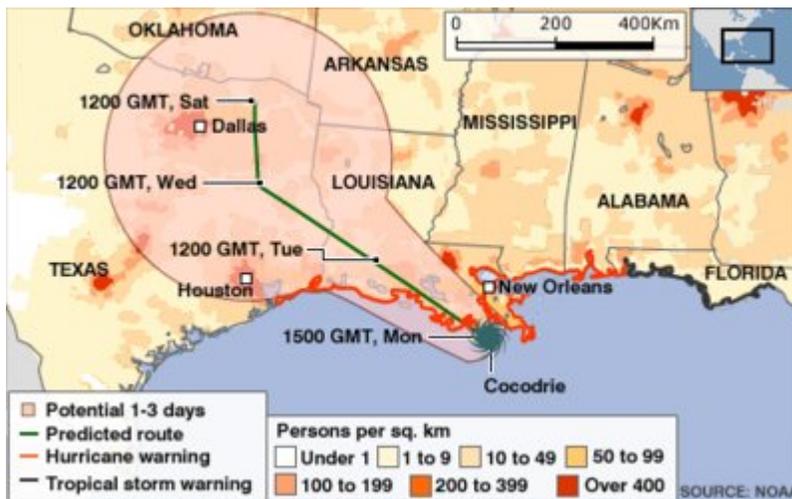
Hey – thanks for your recent comments. I read through your site the other day and was really impressed with what you have to say. I appreciated some of the things you said about women. :) As for school – I, too, have been in and out of college. I suspect it's because I kept choosing to pursue things that were "practical" and "mature," whereas I'm finally going after something about which I'm passionate. So... fingers crossed. ;)

amzolt (2008-09-02 03:03:53)

Heather, Passion wins the Day! Thank you for your encouraging comments and be sure, I will keep track of your site.

## 1.7 September

### 1.7.1 Gustav and the Titanic (2008-09-02 04:11)



[1]

Gustav appears to have lost some strength yet may still cause much suffering and damage. Is there an optimistic attitude available when disaster strikes?

**From the BBC:** [2][Hurricane Gustav losing strength](#) "In New Orleans, the city's levees are holding surging floodwaters, although sea levels could still rise further."

**From the Wall Street Journal:** [3][Early Signs Show Gulf's Energy Facilities Held Up](#) "Turbulent weather prevented a damage assessment Monday, and industry

officials cautioned that in previous hurricanes, initial optimism soured when operators began to test equipment.”

**From Agence France-Presse:** [4]US keeps eye on two new storms after Gustav strike ”The United States kept a close eye Monday on another hurricane and a new tropical storm that emerged in the Atlantic...”

So Gustav may not kill ”too” many. Further storms may or may not kill. Other natural disasters will appear; possibly worse if the climatologists are right.

If you’ve been through disaster, you may have acquired great fear of them.

If you’ve lost a dear one to a disaster, you may remain completely unconsolable.

Is there any condition of heart or attitude of mind that can meet the terror of natural disaster, ride the waves of pain and suffering, yet remain serene?

*Today’s Spiritual Quote:*

23 April 1912

”Within the last few days a terrible event has happened in the world, an event saddening to every heart and grieving every spirit. I refer to the Titanic disaster, in which many of our fellow human beings were drowned, a number of beautiful souls passed beyond this earthly life. Although such an event is indeed regrettable, we must realize that everything which happens is due to some wisdom and that nothing happens without a reason. Therein is a mystery; but whatever the reason and mystery, it was a very sad occurrence, one which brought tears to many eyes and distress to many souls...when I consider this calamity in another aspect, I am consoled by the realization that the worlds of God are infinite; that though they were deprived of this existence, they have other opportunities in the life beyond...Foregoing the pleasures and comforts of the earthly, they now partake of a joy and happiness far more abiding and real...it is our duty to remember these departed souls in our prayers and supplications that they may draw nearer and nearer to the Source itself....These are the only considerations which can comfort and console those whom they have left behind.

”Furthermore, these events have deeper reasons....These events happen in order that man’s faith may be increased and strengthened...”

”Let no one imagine that these words imply that man should not be thorough and careful in his undertakings. God has endowed man with intelligence so that he may safeguard and protect himself. Therefore, he must provide and surround himself with all that scientific skill can produce. He must be deliberate, thoughtful and thorough in his purposes, build the best ship and provide the most experienced captain; yet, withal, let him rely upon God and consider God as the one Keeper. If God protects, nothing can imperil man’s safety; and if it be not His will to safeguard, no amount of preparation and precaution will avail.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 48

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

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1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/gustav\\_storm\\_track.gif](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/gustav_storm_track.gif)
2. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/7593055.stm>
3. [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122029139076287643.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122029139076287643.html?mod=googlenews_wsj)
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5. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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Liara Covert (2008-09-04 23:55:58)

Amzolt, you may be interested in a perspective offered by Neale Donald Walsch in his book, *Happier than God*. He responds to a comment in a letter about personal creation. A person is sickened by the idea that 'incorrect thinking' may be scapegoated as the cause for tragedies such as rape, starvation, abuse and other crises. In a nutshell, Walsch believes personal creation (and the Energy of Attraction so integral to it) "are most effective when used for the purpose for which it was intended." When people choose to think this force to be ineffective, disappointing and disheartening, they are not using 'attraction' for the purposes it was intended. Walsch also explores how life works on different levels of energy. If you choose to create a happy, joyous, peaceful life for everyone whosae lives you touch, this does not mean that each person will choose to receive energy in the way you intend it. You have no control over how other people choose to react or not to energy, or how they decide to view themselves and their circumstances. You are only in control of you, whether you choose to make certain observations and set them out into the world. People will interpret them as they will.

amzolt (2008-09-05 00:11:29)

Liara, Absolutely! I work to inform people about current crises affecting our human family. Yet, I go a step further and supply spiritual quotations to raise their perception of these crises, hoping they'll use the spiritual advice to rise above negative attitudes and approach these pressing crises with affirmative spiritual feelings and loving attractiveness...

Catherine. (2008-09-03 02:54:16)

To reverse the effect of these storms may cause a positive flurry of energy on our own equally intense in its ferocity. You see.. When Gustave brings destruction,those secrets bring creation. When Gustave brings death,those secrets bring life. When Gustave brings anxiety,those secrets bring inner peace.

Liara Covert (2008-09-03 08:49:50)

Each choice you make focuses energy in a particular direction. If you take the position that individual energy contributes to collective consciousness, and thoughts about events impact what happens to groups of people, then this raises a few questions; why choose to focus on any subject that is not for the greater

good? DO you sense how you create your reality and contribute to collective reality?

amzolt (2008-09-03 14:24:59)

Thank you, Catherine!!!

amzolt (2008-09-03 14:27:06)

Liara, "DO you sense how you create your reality and contribute to collective reality?" Yes... "why choose to focus on any subject that is not for the greater good?" I feel this post is for the greater good...

amzolt (2008-09-03 14:50:50)

Henry, Thanks for your supportive comment. Love that Cummings quote!

Liara Covert (2008-09-03 22:21:38)

Amzolt, I highly-value your blog and feel compelled to clarify my previous comment. I see why you believe all your posts are written with the intention of influencing "the greater good." To be more specific, what I really desire to ask is how would you differentiate between "denial of reality" and choosing not to channel energy speaking about topics that evoke discomfort or fear. Some people believe evoking discomfort is the only way to draw attention to the root cause of such feelings. Other people believe that discussing difficult topics just adds fuel to a fire they would prefer to extinguish.

amzolt (2008-09-03 22:40:58)

Liara, I'm very glad were having a discussion. I wish more folk took the opportunity to use the comments this way! "...how would you differentiate between 'denial of reality' and choosing not to channel energy speaking about topics that evoke discomfort or fear." To me denial of reality is ignoring topics that have the potential to harm you or others. In today's world, so interlocking and connected, the abounding crises are all topics that need have no denial aiding their perpetuation. "Some people believe evoking discomfort is the only way to draw attention to the root cause of such feelings." I try, very hard to not evoke discomfort and, if the topic is inherently discomfort-evoking, I pray the spiritual quotations I offer can dispel the discomfort. "Other people believe that discussing difficult topics just adds fuel to a fire they would prefer to extinguish." How do people extinguish fires without discussion of the ways and means to do so?

Danette (2008-09-06 13:52:35)

I live in Florida. Need I say any more? I think not. I think Mother Nature put Florida on the Earth to protect the rest of the nation from disasters like hurricanes. Yes, they do hit other parts of the Gulf Coast and Eastern Seaboard of the U.S., but for the majority of the time, we seem to have a huge magnet on us saying, "Visit FLorida." Natural disaster and man-made(Like the Titanic) happen all throughout out history. And over the years, right or wrong, I have viewed natural disaster as Mother Natures population control. Do I view man-man disaster the same way? Yes and no. Take 911 for instance. That was man-made, but that was a planned incident. The Titanic was man-made...in a manner of speaking, but unplanned. I feel for those who are in either predicament. But if these things did not happen, what would our population be? I am not saying all this death is right or wrong. It is what it is, and for the most part there is nothing we can do about it. You can prepare for a hurricane til the cows come home, but if Mother Nature has her way, she will do what is her job and beware those in her path. Thanks once again fro a very enlightening post!

amzolt (2008-09-06 14:44:49)

Danette, Thanks for such an interesting response! I lived in Florida for about 8 years and never experienced a hurricane. But I did experience an earthquake in Cleveland, Ohio. Ironic, eh?

soulMerlin (2008-09-02 14:25:57)

I have been protected at many times of my life, by forces I was very aware of at the time, but which in the 'rational' light of day appear to be an illusion... ..equally I have been strengthened and broadened by adversity, which seemed to intentionally test me, but which equally fades with the dawn. I hold onto this quote from EE Cummings: And in a Mystery to be - When time from Time shall set us free Forgetting Me - Remember Me. henry

### 1.7.2 Rationale for This Blog (2008-09-03 23:12)



[1] If you've been here before you know Our Evolution is a process of bringing together News Items, Personal Commentary, and Spiritual Quotations to Explore the Crises of our time and provide a forum for Discussion and Reflection.

The comments you add to blog posts are the life-blood of Our Evolution !

The more we all discuss the issues, the more we can help relieve the suffering and heartbreak of the fellow members of our Human Family...

Alexander M Zoltai

**From the Atlanta Journal Constitution:** [2]Getting back to normal after a major crisis takes time

"Let it ever be borne in mind that we earn our victories through test and trial; we turn crisis to the advantage of progress by seizing the opportunity it provides to demonstrate the viability and winning power of our principles."

The Universal House of Justice, Ridvan 150, 1993

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2. [http://www.ajc.com/health/content/health/stories/2008/09/03/lecrone\\_crisis\\_normal.html](http://www.ajc.com/health/content/health/stories/2008/09/03/lecrone_crisis_normal.html)
3. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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Liara Covert (2008-09-05 08:38:35)

Amzolt, your references reveal you draw from extensive knowledge. Each human being takes on the character that he or she has adopted throughout earthly life. One belief system suggests for those who communicate with dwellers in the afterlife, that earthly religious views do not determine spiritual status or awareness in the Beyond. Even many an avowed agnostic has attained higher awareness than individual churchgoers who neglected application of ethics in their lives. It is not what you say so much as how you live that determines whether and how you evolve.

amzolt (2008-09-05 14:52:42)

Liara, I was hoping the quote I supplied would be seen as echoing your previous comment. Maybe I chose the wrong quote for you?

Liara Covert (2008-09-05 00:05:57)

To me, each human being is meant to do the best that he or she can with the circumstances that present themselves each moment. As we learn to view difficulties and even hostile people with gratitude, each is an opportunity to practice patience and to discover rare and valuable occasions to develop qualities and abilities we had forgotten we have.

amzolt (2008-09-05 00:16:57)

Liara, My best reply to your valuable comment is a quote from my Faith's Writings: "I hope that thou hast abandoned all such mortal things, and when thou hast attained to this great bounty, that is, when thou art delivered from the attachments of this mortal world, and hast intended to endure all calamities in the path of God – in such wise that reproaches on the part of the enemy will seem to thee as praise and glorification, and the blame of the people of hatred will appear like unto admiration and applause, and the bitterness of afflictions will taste as the honey of favor and all hardships be as sweetness – then canst thou step into the path of the Kingdom and become the herald of God." (Compilations, Baha'i Scriptures, p. 454)

amzolt (2008-09-04 22:14:44)

Catherine, Right on!!!

amzolt (2008-09-04 22:15:03)

Robin, Wonderful idea, Robin!! I sent your comment to her—we'll see what happens! She's got some dynamite poetry!!!

Robin Easton (2008-09-04 15:40:29)

Well, I came prepared to comment and Catherine has yet again left me speechless and said things in my own heart! You have a winner with her here Alex. You two make a great tag team. You ought to do a joint post or an interview or record a discussion together. It would make for a reading!!!

Catherine. (2008-09-04 15:23:52)

Let the moving waters calm down, and the sun and moon will be reflected on the surface of your being. The significance of one's birth is irrelevant, it's what you do with your life that makes you who you are.

dc (2008-09-08 23:52:54)

I enjoyed your comment ( #6) to Liara. Your choice was good; it was really meant for me.

amzolt (2008-09-08 23:59:17)

dc, Glad you found value in the quote! I'm finding, as the community of this blog grows, more synchronicity seems to be happening...

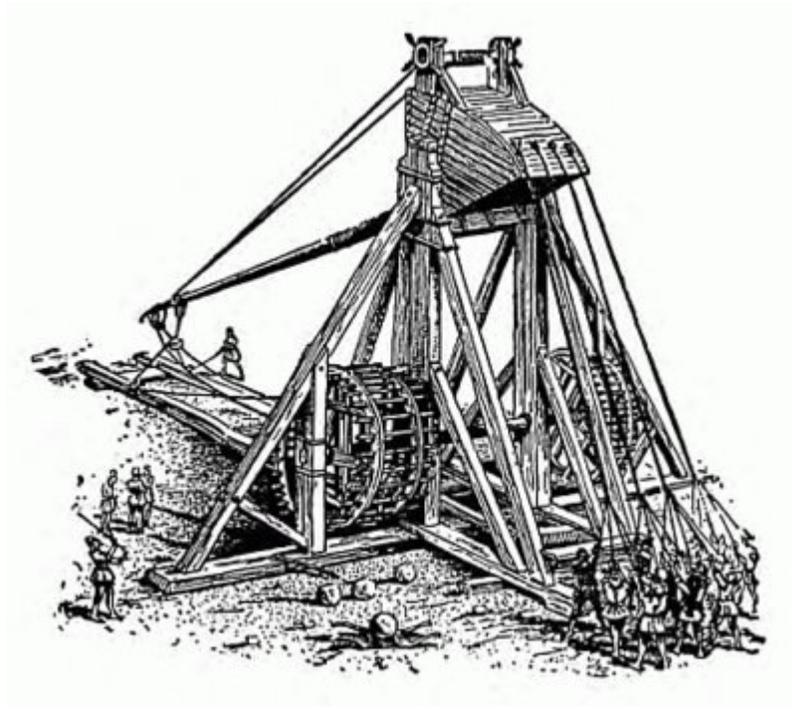
dc (2008-09-09 03:03:19)

The quote is everything. May I copy it for my bulletin board? If not, I understand; then where can I find it?

amzolt (2008-09-09 04:51:57)

dc, Please do copy the quote to your bulletin board. Do append the source. Here is one source: [http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai\\_scriptures/8.html](http://bahai-library.com/compilations/bahai_scriptures/8.html) I obtained it from this software: <http://www.bahai-education.org/ocean/>

### 1.7.3 What Good Is The Military ? (2008-09-05 00:45)



[1]

The military has become part and parcel of life in our crisis-ridden world. Can we live without massive military investment?

**From The Guardian:** [2][Time for a real review of defence spending](#)

**From the Zimbabwe Star:** [3][China rattled by Indian weapons buildup](#)

**From the Atlantic.Com:** [4][Military Resistance at the RNC](#) “Footage of Iraq Veterans Against the War doing street theater in Denver during the Democratic National Convention”

*“But wait, Alex. There’s so many bad people in the world. How can we defend ourselves without a strong military?”*

Try this on for size: [5][National Security Through Civilian-based Defense](#)

Today’s Spiritual Quote:

“If a man slays another man, we brand him as a murderer and criminal and sentence him to capital punishment, but if he kills one hundred thousand men, he is a military genius, a great celebrity, a Napoleon idolized by his nation. If a man steals one dollar, he is called a thief and put into prison; if he rapes and pillages an innocent country by military invasion, he is crowned a hero. How ignorant is humankind! Ferocity does not belong to the kingdom of man. It is the province of man to confer life, not death. It behooves him to be the cause of human welfare, but inasmuch as he glories in the savagery of animalism, it is an evidence that divine civilization has not been established in human society.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 103

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2. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/sep/04/military.defence>
3. <http://story.zimabwe.com/index.php/ct/9/cid/2411cd3571b4f088/id/401404/cs/1/>
4. <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200809u/veterans-against-war>
5. <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizationsf8b4.html>
6. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
7. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-09-05 05:16:00)

Out beyond the idea of wrong doing and right doing there is a field when the Soul lies down in the grass,the world is to full to talk about ideas,language,event the phrase each other doesn't make any sense.

Liara Covert (2008-09-10 11:32:59)

Deeper self-understanding is always within reach. There is no time constraint. Each human being has as long as it takes to reconnect with the kind of inner energy required to reframe problems.

amzolt (2008-09-09 23:13:30)

Liara, Again! Thank you for your perceptive response!!

Liara Covert (2008-09-09 23:00:00)

Everything has a purpose. Human beings create things to draw attention to the "why." However, people rarely examine the "why" on a level that deepens self-understanding.

amzolt (2008-09-10 14:56:50)

Liara, "Deeper self-understanding is always within reach" Yes, whether through crisis-induced inspiration or conscious creative imagination...

## 1.7.4 The War Against Free Speech (2008-09-05 22:30)



[1] When most people see the words "police state" they think of Nazi Germany, or maybe some of the current African states, or possibly Niger:

**From OneWorld.Net:**[2] U.S. Reporter Arrested Covering Nigeria Oil Story "An award-winning U.S. journalist covering 'the economic and ecological disaster' taking shape in a strategic oil-producing region of Nigeria was arrested this week on spying charges..."

Journalists (especially those covering abuse of rights by the police) have recently experienced the dreadful repercussions of police-state-mentality in the United States of America:

**From OneWorld.Net:**[3] RNC: Media Intimidation Condemned "Police and local and federal officials in St. Paul, Minnesota are under fire from independent media groups for their crackdown on reporters at this week's Republican National Convention."

The last news link has some extremely interesting but possibly nerve-wracking videos showing abuse of journalists' rights.

The quote below has these words, "...*masses of people unable to exercise the functions of citizenship...*". When journalists are treated in repressive ways and arrested in the course of their duties, citizens are deprived of information critically necessary for competent discharge of their duty.

*Today's Spiritual Quote:*

"An equal standard of human rights must be upheld, and individuals given equal opportunities. Variety and not uniformity is the principle of organic society. Since lack of opportunity, repression and degrading conditions have created masses of people unable to exercise the functions of citizenship, such persons are a moral trust laid upon the conscience of the rest, to educate the ignorant, train the immature and heal the sick."

Bahá'í International Community, 1947 Feb, *A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights*

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2. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/357263-reporter-covering-niger-delta-disaster-arrested#1>
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Barney (2008-09-06 07:34:39)

Sadly "security" is being used as an excuse by agents of the state in many parts of the world to stop not only journalists but ordinary citizens from exercising various essential rights, such as freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, thought and religion. As I Baha'i, I advocate universal human rights, which I regard as essential for human dignity, the fulfilment of human potential and the building of a new, global, civilization based on justice. Of course, human rights by themselves won't do the trick. There has to be a spiritual foundation which will motivate people to transform themselves spiritually and morally so that they fully recognize their responsibilities as well as their rights. Thank you for including the excellent quotation from the Baha'i International Community statement.

amzolt (2008-09-06 14:50:41)

Barney, In this dark and squirming world, the moral transformation you speak of seems so impossible unless certain spiritual considerations are entertained—the amazing power of free-will and the indomitable strength of the Prophets. Would that more folk could See...

jan4insight (2008-09-06 19:43:34)

Thank you for posting about this - more attention needs to be given to these shameful actions that are undermining the foundation of our free society. As presented on DemocracyNow.org, the "orders" to carry out these illegal arrests at the RNC appear to have come from higher up - the FBI, CIA, and Dept. of "Homeland Security" have all been implicated. I predict that more will be revealed in the days. It will be interesting to see how it all plays out.

Liara Covert (2008-09-07 13:13:19)

What if the world is as it appears to you because you desire to perceive it that way? One view is that nothing that has ever been inflicted on humanity is impossible to reverse. You view what you choose and how you choose to view it. You could eliminate a sense of pain and suffering, but you do not. Whatever a person chooses to write and how has a vibration energy. You use your energy to reflect personal whims, dwell on problems or, channel your energy to help the energy state of the whole world. You can discuss matters like starvation, oppression and environmental crises as problematic or, you can take action to make what you consider to make a positive difference. It is intention behind your action that makes a difference.

anzolt (2008-09-06 21:52:13)

jan, Thanks for the thoughtful comment. I couldn't avoid posting about this. The videos brought me to infuriated tears !

anzolt (2008-09-07 13:42:51)

Liara, It is sometimes hard to determine whether your comments are directed to "everyone" or to me in particular...

Catherine. (2008-09-14 04:07:23)

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you, this is the principal difference between a dog and a man. A brief word about religion.. Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.

anzolt (2008-09-14 16:16:02)

Catherine, More and more VALUE you add to this blog !!!

Liara Covert (2008-09-08 02:04:35)

My intention is invite everyone to consider certain ideas. I may use second or third person point of view, but my underlying intention is the same.

### 1.7.5 Who Is Writing The Future ? (2008-09-07 13:34)



[1]

It would seem that the Past and Present are just about too much to handle these days. So, who's writing our Future? Will it just *happen*? Should it be left up to those who've wrecked our past and present?

**From Agence France-Presse:** [\[2\]HIV-AIDS orphans face life alone in Swaziland](#)

**From Unicef:** [\[3\]Situation worsens for children as relief measures falter in Horn crisis](#)

**From Save The Children:** [\[4\]Children living on highways to escape Bihar floods killed by traffic](#)

The children that manage to live through these crises are the ones most likely to affect our future; they are, even now, "writing" the future—in their hearts . . .

And, it's not just the children who suffer in extremely bleak ways in Africa, East Asia, India, or China that are doing this Writing. Children of the affluent are doing their heart-writing, too.

All these young and mostly tender souls are the Witnesses of our age. Those who live into adulthood are the ones who will, based on their past, decide what's to be done in a world nearly completely devastated by near-term crises.

Children have always been the Future. Too bad I won't live to see the remarkable achievements of the future adults who overcome our mistakes and build a new world on the skeleton of what we've left them.

Today's Spiritual Quote comes from [\[5\]a document that evaluates the Twentieth Century:](#)

"...the deliberate extermination of millions of helpless human beings, the invention and use of new weapons of destruction capable of annihilating whole populations, the rise of ideologies that suffocated the spiritual and intellectual life of entire nations, damage to the physical environment of the planet on a scale so massive that it may take centuries to heal, and the incalculably greater damage done to generations of children taught to believe that violence, indecency, and selfishness are triumphs of personal liberty. Such are only the more obvious of a catalogue of evils, unmatched in history, whose lessons our era will leave for the education of the chastened generations who will follow us."

Bahá'í International Community, 1999 Feb, *Who is Writing the Future: Reflections on the Twentieth Century*

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3. [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_45506.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_45506.html)
4. [http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/41\\_6548.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/41_6548.htm)
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ezonearticles &raquo; Blog Archive &raquo; Who Is Writing The Future ? (2008-09-07 13:41:19)  
[...] Original amzolt [...]

ravenscawl (2008-09-08 03:19:20)

Alex It is unfortunate, but is as it's always been. Within every generation there is but few who seek to move forward from the bonds set before them. Indeed it is this process that facilitates the need for forward thinking and hope, your very faith is a creation of this process. So you must continue to hope, and share, and ,teach,. In so doing by some small measure you may help to write a better future, even if it be for only one who would share what they've learned with another. kem

amzolt (2008-09-08 04:05:26)

Kem, History shows that the faithful few have inevitably moved the rest of us forward and upward.

Alexys Fairfield (2008-09-09 00:31:27)

Alex, This reminds me of the quote, "The sins of the father are visited on the son." So much of what is happening is a direct consequence of what was done behind closed doors, over a handshake, cash, arms, oil, power plays, etc. Children are our future and we have to do everything in our power to protect them.

amzolt (2008-09-09 00:48:53)

Alexys, Wanna guest post on my blog about that?

Danette (2008-09-09 01:55:04)

I don't want to seem like the wet blanket in the crowd,, and not to take away from the devastation these people and countries are going through, but has anyone ever thought to tell them about birth control. I know it will not solve every problem, I mean come on, look at our country and how many babies dadies are walking around. My sister had a friend of hers back in Michigan and all three of her children were from three different men. And we are supposedly educated.

amzolt (2008-09-09 02:20:13)

Danette, You're not being a wet blanket. I welcome reasoned discussion—kicking the tires—plus, discussion is critical for understanding... Two things I'm sure of: \* When the education level is high in a country, the birth rate is lower. \* When the infant mortality rate is high, the birth rate skyrockets.

amzolt (2008-09-09 02:47:37)

Ivan, One idea for circumventing restricted internet access is this document: [http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/guide\\_gb\\_md.pdf](http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/guide_gb_md.pdf) As far as copying my posts, please do !!!

Liara Covert (2008-09-09 05:00:35)

Some people view the past, present and future as the same thing, fragmented by the human mind in ways that enable it to grasp concepts. If you choose to believe everything is available all of the time and everything is also happening simultaneously, then your perspective of time and its meaning in your life also changes.

ravenscawl (2008-09-09 06:07:48)  
alex can you send Ivan your news letter? Kem

amzolt (2008-09-09 06:13:18)  
Kem, Great idea !!!

amzolt (2008-09-09 06:13:44)  
Liara, Thank you for your perspective...

Ivan (2008-09-09 02:38:22)  
First time I discover your blog Amzolt, and I appreciate the way you introduce problems and address them. Unfortunately, I cannot share any link of your blog with my Chinese friends (yes, I live in China) –though I would be happy to do so– for I cannot access the "wordpress" blogs without an anonymizing proxy. Do you have any suggestion for me to share the content of your entries? Would it be ok if from time to time I would copy and paste your entries to share them in another way? Please, if you have or anyone else has any suggestion on that, I would love to hear them! Thank you!

### 1.7.6 Peace ? (2008-09-09 06:04)



[1]  
Peace?

*When?*

*How?*

Today, the spiritual quote will follow directly after the news clips, for reasons that will become very clear:

**From the Chicago Tribune:** [2][Chicago schools, cops to curb student violence](#)

**From the Associated Press:** [3][Spain: Street violence after immigrant's death](#)

**From the Guardian, UK:** [\[4\]Sex, violence and classroom action](#)

”There is nothing so heart-breaking and terrible as an outburst of human savagery!

”I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content.

”Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and happiness.

”When soldiers of the world draw their swords to kill, soldiers of God clasp each other’s hands! So may all the savagery of man disappear by the Mercy of God, working through the pure in heart and the sincere of soul. Do not think the peace of the world an ideal impossible to attain!

”Nothing is impossible to the Divine Benevolence of God.

”If you desire with all your heart, friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 29

[5]”These principles for nonviolence were adapted by the Denver Area Task Force for: A Season for Nonviolence - January 30-April 4, 1998

”Inspired by the 50th & 30th memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.”

- 1 – Today, I will reflect on what peace means to me.
- 2 – Today, I will look at opportunities to be a peacemaker.
- 3 – Today, I will practice nonviolence and respect for Mother Earth by making good use of her resources.
- 4 – Today, I will take time to admire and appreciate nature.
- 5 – Today, I will plant seeds—plants or constructive ideas.
- 6 – Today, I will hold a vision of plenty for all the world’s hungry and be open to guidance as to how I can help alleviate some of that hunger.
- 7 – Today, I will acknowledge every human being’s fundamental right to justice, equity, and equality.
- 8 – Today, I will appreciate the earth’s bounty and all of those who work to make my food available (i.e., grower, trucker, grocery clerk, cook, waitress, etc.)
- 9 – Today, I will work to understand and respect another culture.
- 10 – Today, I will oppose injustice, not people.
- 11 – Today, I will look beyond stereotypes and prejudices.
- 12 – Today, I will choose to be aware of what I talk about and I will refuse to gossip.
- 13 – Today, I will live in the present moment and release the past.
- 14 – Today, I will silently acknowledge all the leaders throughout the world.
- 15 – Today, I will speak with kindness, respect, and patience to every person that I talk with on the

telephone.

16 – Today, I will affirm my value and worth with positive "self talk" and refuse to put myself down.

17 – Today, I will tell the truth and speak honestly from the heart.

18 – Today, I will cause a ripple effect of good by an act of kindness toward another.

19 – Today, I will choose to use my talents to serve others by volunteering a portion of my time.

20 – Today, I will say a blessing for greater understanding whenever I see evidence of crime, vandalism, or graffiti.

21 – Today, I will say "No" to ideas or actions that violate me or others.

22 – Today, I will turn off anything that portrays or supports violence whether on television, in the movies, or on the Internet.

23 – Today, I will greet this day—everyone and everything—with openness and acceptance as if I were encountering them for the first time.

24 – Today, I will drive with tolerance and patience.

25 – Today, I will constructively channel my anger, frustration, or jealousy into healthy physical activities (i.e., doing sit-ups, picking up trash, taking a walk, etc).

26 – Today, I will take time to appreciate the people who provide me with challenges in my life, especially those who make me angry or frustrated.

27 – Today, I will talk less and listen more.

28 – Today, I will notice the peacefulness in the world around me.

29 – Today, I will recognize that my actions directly affect others.

30 – Today, I will take time to tell a family member or friend how much they mean to me.

31 – Today, I will acknowledge and thank someone for acting kindly.

32 – Today, I will send a kind, anonymous message to someone.

33 – Today, I will identify something special in everyone I meet.

34 – Today, I will discuss ideas about nonviolence with a friend to gain new perspectives.

35 – Today, I will practice praise rather than criticism.

36 – Today, I will strive to learn from my mistakes.

37 – Today, I will tell at least one person they are special and important.

38 – Today, I will hold children tenderly in thought and/or action.

39 – Today, I will listen without defending and speak without judgment.

40 – Today, I will help someone in trouble.

41 – Today, I will listen with an open heart to at least one person.

42 – Today, I will treat the elderly I encounter with respect and dignity.

43 – Today, I will treat the children I encounter with respect and care, knowing that I serve as a model to them.

44 – Today, I will see my so-workers in a new light—with understanding and compassion.

45 – Today, I will be open to other ways of thinking and acting that are different from my own.

46 – Today, I will think of at least three alternate ways I can handle a situation when confronted with conflict.

47 – Today, I will work to help others resolve differences.

48 – Today, I will express my feeling honestly and nonviolently with respect for myself and others.

49 – Today, I will sit down with my family for one meal.

50 – Today, I will set an example of a peacemaker by promoting nonviolent responses.

51 – Today, I will use no violent language.

52 – Today, I will pause for reflection.

53 – Today, I will hold no one hostage to the past, seeing each-as I see myself-as a work in process.

- 54 – Today, I will make a conscious effort to smile at someone whom I have held a grudge against in the past.
- 55 – Today, I will practice compassion and forgiveness by apologizing to someone whom I have hurt in the past.
- 56 – Today, I will reflect on whom I need to forgive and take at least one step in that direction.
- 57 – Today, I will forgive myself.
- 58 – Today, I will embrace the spiritual belief of my heart in my own personal and reflective way.
- 59 – Today, I will enlarge my capacity to embrace differences and appreciate the value of every human being.
- 60 – Today, I will be compassionate in my thoughts, words, and actions.
- 61 – Today, I will cultivate my moral strength and courage through education and creative nonviolent action.
- 62 – Today, I will practice compassion and forgiveness for myself and others.
- 63 – Today, I will use my talents to serve others as well as myself.
- 64 – Today, I will serve humanity by dedicating myself to a vision greater than myself.

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

**[6] Let's have a conversation !**

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/nonviolence.gif>
2. <http://blogs.trb.com/chicago-breaking-news/2008/09/chicago-schools-cops-to-curb-s.html>
3. <http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5jAkeEJ5qaFE3-y05PJXqMDQ04IbAD932F9900>
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6. [http://www.readriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
7. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Liara Covert (2008-09-09 12:48:22)

Peace is everywhere a human being would choose to look. It is a choice, a state of mind and incentive to transform.

amzolt (2008-09-09 15:13:30)

Liara, Your words in this comment: "choose", "choice", "mind", "transform", are key concepts...

Parke Burgess (2008-09-09 21:43:59)

Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful!

amzolt (2008-09-09 22:20:55)

Thank you, Parke !!!

tap (2008-09-10 13:44:48)

Beautiful, brilliant... thanks for this great post if we read the 64 ways, daily, what a difference we will make!  
thank you

amzolt (2008-09-10 14:33:37)

tap, Yes, read them till we end up practicing them . . .

Tomas (2008-09-10 15:59:00)

Great post. You share the truth. Thank you. Yet while my mind rejoices, the heart break apart - I am not worthy living - all I can is my patient waiting for the disability pension...Comprehension of personal needlessness hurts more than bodily hardships...Sorry for my weakness: the hearty confession of the truth spotted your perfect post.

Alexander M Zoltai (2008-09-10 16:36:11)

Tomas, "Be not in despair, but rather smile by the mercy of thy Lord; and be not sorrowful when meeting with worldly difficulties and depressions, for they pass away – and thine shall be immortality during ages and centuries, times and cycles." (Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha v1, p. 177)

Evita (2008-09-10 20:31:36)

Alex - this is a list that is so worth sharing! It is what the true riches of life are made of. Thank you for sharing it as each line of this post is filled with extreme inspiration! Peace as Liara said is a choice, one that is in each of our hands - perhaps one day all on this planet will choose it.

amzolt (2008-09-10 20:33:36)

Evita, "...perhaps one day all on this planet will choose it." I feel that global state-of-being is Inevitable !

Robin Easton (2008-09-11 02:11:23)

I am learning more and more, every single year and day, that peace is a choice and it literally starts at home with me, with each of us, and how we treat others in our immediate lives....and of course beyond. We often don't see the struggle with Aunt Martha or our sister or brother or mother or father as a place to learn about and choose peace, a place to model peace, a place to let go of judgment and unrealistic expectations of how we think another "should" behave, feel, do or be. Can we simply love them? Can we create a response and space of love for them to be whoever they are? These are pivotal choices that start right here in OUR lives, not some place over seas. Every day we choose to create war or peace. Can we look at the areas of our own lives where there is conflict and offer love? Can we hold this person in love and peace even in the face of possible or absolute rejection (if we are "in love" there is no rejection). And even more fundamental, can we love ourselves? As we would a small wounded child. If we can truly love and forgive ourselves, deeply, where we live in a state of grace and tenderness with ourselves everyday,...then we can easily love others. If we can do even a fraction of this – and we are capable of doing ALL of this – then we change the world.

amzolt (2008-09-11 03:16:17)

Robin, You are a Heavenly Communicator !!!

## 1.7.7 Global Unity (2008-09-11 06:59)



[1]

[2]image credit

The Mother of Pangea Day

Yesterday's post was about how we can live peace in our daily lives, in spite of the horrific violence and crushing oppression that bedevils us. This post is about how Global Peace can grow from the seeds of peace we sow in our daily lives.

**From the San Angelo Standard-Times:** [3][11 DAYS OF GLOBAL UNITY: An introduction](#)

**From the Naperville Sun:** [4][Naperville artist celebrates common ties by weaving threads from across the globe](#)

**From the Washington Times:** [5][Time for 'Global Freedom Coalition'](#)

May 10, 2008, *Pangea Day*, was historic—a Seed Day in humanity's growth toward Global Unity—[6][four hours of film](#), created by individuals around the globe, shared by individuals around the globe. In the words of the creators of Pangea Day: “In a world where people are often divided by borders, difference, and conflict, it's easy to lose sight of what we all have in common. Pangea Day seeks to overcome that — to help people see themselves in others — through the power of film.”

I covered the event here when it happened but it just seems like a good time to bring it to our attention again . . .

Here's a video of [the first 25 minutes](#) of Pangea Day:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KfXIISY6L0>]

*Today's Spiritual Quote:*

“The economic connection between disarmament and development represents only one side of the issue. A spiritual connection also exists. Resources spent for weapons drain not only national treasuries; they also drain the reservoirs of human hope and trust.

“The two issues must be approached in an integrated manner. Not only can disarmament

further the cause of development; development can further the cause of disarmament. Indeed, the key to advancing the cause of both disarmament and development lies in fostering a sense of global unity. Unless unity is attained, true peace and security will remain out of reach."

Bahá'í International Community, 1987 Aug 24, *Relationship Between Disarmament and Development*

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**[7] Let's have a conversation !**

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1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/tt08\\_pangea.jpg](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/tt08_pangea.jpg)
2. [http://www.tribecafilm.com/filmguide/Tribeca\\_Talks\\_Pangea\\_Day.html](http://www.tribecafilm.com/filmguide/Tribeca_Talks_Pangea_Day.html)
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8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-09-11 18:19:57)

Hi Alex, It's nice to know that you are keeping us aware of such pressing issues in the world. I think that you would make a great president. Btw, great photo.

amzolt (2008-09-11 18:34:32)

Alexys, Thanks for the encouragement! The picture is rather dramatic but Jehane Noujaim, the mother of Pangea day, is a filmmaker... It's fascinating to watch her express her dream for Pangea Day (before it happened) during a TedTalk: [http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/jehane\\_noujaim\\_inspires\\_a\\_global\\_day\\_of\\_film.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/jehane_noujaim_inspires_a_global_day_of_film.html)

Tomas (2008-09-12 12:11:16)

Global Peace can grow from the seeds of peace we taste while reading your blog. You help recognize the flowers in our daily lives. Thank you dear Alexander

Sophia (2008-09-12 01:50:59)

I just got an email today that said there isn't going to be a Pangea Day film festival in 2009. I missed this year's and had hoped to see next year's, but now I can't. :( I will have to watch your 25 minute video, and hopefully maybe I can find some other Pangea Day videos on the web whenever I find time.

amzolt (2008-09-12 01:59:05)

Sophia, There's a link in that post that says. "Four Hours of film" that has the whole program!!

anzolt (2008-09-12 19:36:36)

Tomas, Your honoring me makes me realize my humility—I may work hard to post articles but the life-blood of the blog are readers who comment!

### 1.7.8 More Global Unity (2008-09-13 01:04)



[1] Yesterday I brought your attention to a remarkable seed-event in the struggle for Global Unity. Today I'm providing more information about it, hopefully to encourage you to let it influence your thinking and feeling in a way that inspires you to take action !

The usual news clips and the usual spiritual quote are not here today. I feel bringing this event to your awareness is the news and your response to it is the spirituality.

Take a little time and re-live the initial dream for this amazing event, the whole event, or some highlights:

[2][Video of Jehane Noujaim presenting her wish for Pangea Day](#)

[3][The whole four hours of Pangea Day](#)

[4][A one hour highlight video](#)

[5][The first twenty five minutes](#)

Here's some feedback, immediately after the event, from [6][the Pangea Day website](#):

"The first-ever Pangea Day was a monumental success...People from everywhere tuned in to watch the live broadcast in Cairo, Kigali, London, Los Angeles, Mumbai, and Rio de Janeiro and grassroots events flourished in cities, communities, and private homes.

"The response has been tremendous. Here's a sampling of the voices we've heard from so far":

"This has been my dream to have such day for years, and today I see it come to reality!"

*Farsheed, an Iranian-Canadian 'global citizen'*

"I just stumbled onto the last half hour of the Pangea Day show here in Toronto and am so happy I did...I'm 48 yrs old and got the most wonderful feeling of finally belonging to a community that speaks to and for me...I'm going to check out the web site and find a drum to bang and some people to hug and love!

*Ursula of Toronto, formerly of Kircubbin, Northern Ireland*

"It's 4:00 am here and I couldn't go to bed without writing to you and telling you how beautiful, thought-provoking and deeply moving the experience was."

*Rhea from Chandigarh, India*

"Next year - and there MUST be a next year and many years thereafter - please have sponsors everywhere on our planet promoting and advertising this great event and making sure the world watches..."

*Barbara, South Africa*

"I did not intend to spend hours in front of the TV today but I could not turn it off. You have re-introduced hope in my life, and probably to millions of others today. You gave a gift to the world!"

*Lisa, Victoria, BC*

"Watching the different stories of people, I see that there is hope and will to come together, to unite. I hope to see Pangea Day every year."

*Nabeel in Karachi, Pakistan.*

"We are Islamic people. We're from Bangladesh. The Pangea Day event was great. We have to say, that was one of the greatest 4 hours of our lives!"

*The Khan Family in Quebec, Canada*

"I was touched, moved, and inspired. Coming from a third world country, which has a terri-

ble reputation worldwide, where there is an extreme political unrest, suicide bombings all over the town...the events...made me feel a lot better. That maybe there is some hope.”

*Fizza in Pakistan*

”We started watching the event with the intention to go for dinner at some point... But... we couldn’t leave!”

*Ana & Martin in Spain*

**Here are ways you can take action on the feelings spawned by Pangea day:**



[7] Avaaz.org – The World in Action  
Stop the clash of civilizations. Support peace in the Middle East.

[8] Take action



[9] Charity: Water  
Make the right to clean water a reality.

[10] Take action



[11] Interfaith Youth Core – Building a Global Interfaith Youth Movement

Experience religious pluralism; get involved in an interfaith dialogue or community service project.

[12] Take action



[13] Kiva – Loans That Change Lives  
Lend as little as \$25 to an entrepreneur in the developing world today.

[14]Take action



[15] ninemillion.org – A UNHCR Education and Sports Campaign  
Give refugee children worldwide the chance to learn and play.

[16]Take action



[17] ONE – The Campaign to Make Poverty History  
Fight global poverty. Join ONE.

[18]Take action



[19] United Nations Population Fund  
Stand up for women and protect maternal health.

[20]Take action



[21] The We Campaign – We Can Solve the Climate Crisis

Call on world leaders to prevent the worst consequences of global warming.

[22]Take action



[23] WITNESS – See It. Film It. Change It  
Sign the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and tell your story.

[24]Take action

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[25]*Let's have a conversation !*

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/atlas-with-earth1.gif>
2. [http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/jehane\\_noujaim\\_inspires\\_a\\_global\\_day\\_of\\_film.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/jehane_noujaim_inspires_a_global_day_of_film.html)
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26. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Lady Banana (2008-09-14 17:31:30)

Came across your blog at <http://jlmowriter.blogspot.com/> I wonder if you may be able to answer a question at my own blog.. it is indeed a coincidence.

amzolt (2008-09-14 22:06:03)

Lady Banana, I just posted my response on your blog...

### 1.7.9 Heads or Tails ? (2008-09-14 21:41)



[1] It's always a choice, no matter how much pain is happening, whether you'll attempt to rise above it or wallow in it.

**From the Lewiston Sun Journal:**[\[2\]The Sweet Sting of Relief](#)

**From empower:**[\[3\]You're In Pain. You Want Relief. Naturally](#)

**From the Daily Record, Scotland:**[\[4\]I climbed all 284 Munros \[mountains\] despite suffering from two debilitating conditions](#)

I spent some time yesterday looking back at the first few posts of this blog. I began it in March, just two months before the end of a torturous eleven-month medical drug therapy to rid my liver of a deadly virus (Hepatitis C). The first posts were all about the pain of the treatments, about how debilitating and depressing they were but, also, expressing my determination to soar as far above the physical disorders as I could.



**7 Ignorance & lack of education.**

**8 Multiplicity of languages.**

*Evoking Moral Attitudes Conducive to Enduring Peace*

**9 Material Achievements and Spiritual Perfections**

**10 Two Wings of Progress**

**11 The Power of a Moral Character**

”Our greatest efforts must be directed towards detachment from the things of the world; we must strive to become more spiritual, more luminous, to follow the counsel of the Divine Teaching, to serve the cause of unity and true equality, to be merciful, to reflect the love of the Highest on all men, so that the light of the Spirit shall be apparent in all our deeds, to the end that all humanity shall be united, the stormy sea thereof calmed, and all rough waves disappear from off the surface of life’s ocean henceforth unruffled and peaceful.”

Abdu’l-Baha, *Paris Talks*, p. 87

[12]Stumble This Post

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

[13]Let’s have a conversation !

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/soarabovepain1.gif>
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14. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-09-15 21:02:07)

Catherine, Even though the series of posts is hard work, I am slowing down to do it, if that makes sense...

Catherine. (2008-09-15 05:13:11)

I will be looking forward to read all of you're great post's.. in the mean time slow down and everything you are chasing will come around and catch you.

anzolt (2008-09-16 18:37:44)

Alexys, "Bow to the Stars"!!! Got it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Alexys Fairfield (2008-09-16 18:36:06)

Hi Alex, You have come a long way. You've made it through the rain. Now it's time to sing your song, dance your dance, write your book, do your thing and bow to the stars.

george wesley dannells (2008-09-18 05:51:27)

"The Search for Values in an Age of Transition" is a classic document. Thank you for bringing it to my attention again, Alexander.

anzolt (2008-09-18 06:38:27)

george, Yes! Glad I could be of service !! It's giving me the meta-ponders . . .

### 1.7.10 Path Toward Peace - Step One (2008-09-16 20:28)



[1]

#### *Inducing the Will to Act*

High-minded ideals are powerless to change the world unless we act on them. Seems simple enough yet it's apparent that a sufficient amount of action has yet to occur—wars, terror, oppression, hate are still the gruesome menu of "modern" culture.

Even taking **no** action toward a more peaceful world is taking action. We can't avoid action if we want to stay alive.

**From OneWorld.Net:** [2]Development Aid Declining Worldwide

**From the Center for Global Development:**[3] Poverty afflicts more than half the world's people

**From the Utne Reader:**[4] In Praise of Economic Pain

But, what do we *choose* to act on? Here's the place most people get it wrong if they *really* want peace. Too many folk feel that talking it up with friends and neighbors is helping. But, if that talking never leads to concrete action, it was a total waste. Too severe a judgement? What if the talking is to "raise people's consciousness" about what needs to be done? Still, if it doesn't lead to concrete action, it's been a waste of time. *Preparing* ourselves to *take action for peace*, even if we see most of the world huddling under the tent of inaction, is the first step toward helping our world attain lasting peace.

Our actions can be extremely local—peace in our family, peace in the neighborhood, peace in the village, town, or city.

Our actions can be extremely global—serving on international committees of action or Non-Governmental Organizations, traveling to take the message of *acting for peace* to other lands, serving others in local environments far from our home.

Strongly motivated action comes from high ideals blended with intense emotion—what some would call spiritual motivation.

Bottom-line, no one acts for peace if their life is completely focused *only* on themselves...

The next post in this series will focus on one of the most insidious barriers to peace—Racism.

*Spiritual Quote:*

"What profit is there in agreeing that universal friendship is good, and talking of the solidarity of the human race as a grand ideal? Unless these thoughts are translated into the world of action, they are useless.

"The wrong in the world continues to exist just because people talk only of their ideals, and do not strive to put them into practice. If actions took the place of words, the world's misery would very soon be changed into comfort....

"If I love you, I need not continually speak of my love—you will know without any words. On the other hand if I love you not, that also will you know—and you would not believe me, were I to tell you in a thousand words, that I loved you."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 16

[5]Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

[6] *Let's have a conversation !*

You can also explore and discuss the ideas of this post at

[7] *Our Evolution's Forum.*

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/volition.gif>
2. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/357360-development-aid-declining-worldwide#1>
3. <http://www.cgdev.org/section/topics/inequality>
4. <http://www.utne.com/2008-09-01/Environment/In-Praise-Of-Economic-Pain.aspx>
5. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/path-toward-peace/>
6. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Path Toward Peace &laquo; Our Evolution (2008-09-16 20:54:15)

[...] Toward Peace Step One: Inducing the will to act. Eliminating barriers to peace. Step Two: Racism. Step Three: Extremes of wealth & poverty. [...]

amzolt (2008-09-17 09:11:17)

Thank you, Catherine, for such pertinent aphorisms!

amzolt (2008-09-17 01:34:36)

Kristi, "The path towards peace begins with becoming open minded..." I can certainly agree with that ! Still, to \*become\* open minded takes action, eh?

Catherine. (2008-09-17 05:39:49)

Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future of peace.. Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love and peace.!

Kristi (2008-09-17 01:31:00)

The path towards peace begins with becoming open minded, then helping others become the same. With open mindedness, there is no prejudice or hate. There is peace within ourselves that we can radiate towards everyone we meet.

amzolt (2008-09-18 16:22:35)

Tomas, "...the peace we experience is the award for our faithfulness..." Totally lovely sentiment !!!

Tomas (2008-09-18 16:19:58)

You wrote: Even taking no action toward a more peaceful world is taking action. We can't avoid action if we want to stay alive. All I can to add is just to say Amen. Thus I question myself, am I alive? The truth was grasped such way - Each day is the test to our consciousness and the peace we experience is the award for our faithfulness.

Liara Covert (2008-09-23 02:16:48)

Peace is something that begins inside each human being. It is not one person's job to impose ideas on or compel other people to act. You set an example and hope to inspire people with your own behavior. Human beings have free will.

amzolt (2008-09-23 02:56:29)

Liara, Exactly...

Path Toward Peace ~Prologue &laquo; RAVENSCAWL (2008-10-08 05:47:53)

[...] One: Inducing the will to act Step Two: Eliminating Racism Step Three: Preventing economic disparity Step Four: Fostering [...]

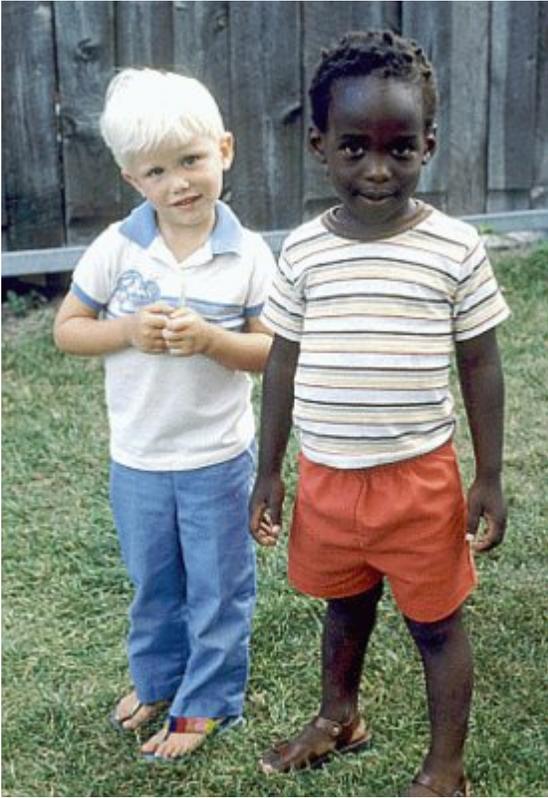
Aasha (2008-11-09 15:30:08)

Our awareness to speak of world peace is a noble act which will only be compliment with an ACTION.

amzolt (2008-11-09 18:43:05)

Aasha, Yes! Action rules!!

## 1.7.11 Path Toward Peace - Step Two (2008-09-18 23:13)



[1]

### *Eliminating Racism*

Do you practice racism?

**From AsianWeek:** [2]"I'm Not, Like, Racist"

**From IndependentOnline:** [3]Rhodes sorry for past racist actions

**From TribalFootball:** [4]Scotland and Ireland slammed by anti-racism agency

Here's a definition of racism:

**belief in racial superiority:** the belief that people of different races have different qualities and abilities, and that some races are inherently superior or inferior.

It might be good to define prejudice, too:

**opinion formed beforehand:** a preformed opinion, usually an unfavorable one, based on insufficient knowledge, irrational feelings, or inaccurate stereotypes.

I feel we *all* have to be rigorous in self-examination concerning tendencies toward racism.

It's an ingrained behavior, driven deep by ages of irrational action.

Ever been faced by any of these situations?

Your child wants to marry someone of different color.

You are asked to work closely with a person of different color.

Your partner was formerly involved with someone of different color.

You find yourself in a situation that demands you live for an extended time with people of different color.

If you haven't had to face those situations, I urge you, with an open heart, to imagine you are experiencing them. \*\*\* How do you honestly feel?

One factor that clouds this whole issue is the behavior of people who identify with their skin color—acting in ways that make them feel exclusive.

It's going to take a phenomenal commitment to rid our planet of this illness. It will take "[5]genuine love, extreme patience, true humility, consummate tact, sound initiative, mature wisdom, and deliberate, persistent, and prayerful effort."

Also, recent thinking has made the idea of separate human races a distinctly non-scientific viewpoint. [6]I'll offer one opinion for your examination.

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Racism, one of the most baneful and persistent evils, is a major barrier to peace. Its practice perpetrates too outrageous a violation of the dignity of human beings to be countenanced under any pretext. Racism retards the unfoldment of the boundless potentialities of its victims, corrupts its perpetrators, and blights human progress. Recognition of the oneness of mankind, implemented by appropriate legal measures, must be universally upheld if this problem is to be overcome." The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, *The Promise of World Peace*

[7]Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[8]Let's have a conversation !

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/eliminating-racism.gif>

2. <http://www.asianweek.com/2008/09/18/asian-celebrity-gossip-im-not-like-racist/>

3. [http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=13&art\\_id=vn20080918055202746C902167](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20080918055202746C902167)

4. <http://www.tribalfootball.com/?q=node/201306>
5. <http://www.gkindia.com/holidays/raceunityday.htm>
6. [http://www.pbs.org/race/000\\_About/002\\_04-background-02-06.htm](http://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-background-02-06.htm)
7. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/path-toward-peace/>
8. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
9. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
10. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-09-20 15:26:56)

Catherine, You are this blog's angelic philosopher !!!

amzolt (2008-09-20 06:23:07)

Kristi, You're blessed to have ridden through the cultural tests and come out with acceptance !

Steven S. (2008-09-19 00:06:06)

Don't forget - racism isn't just the same as personal prejudice. Racism is also the institutional effects of past prejudice as well. [1]We might avoid being prejudiced ourselves but that's not enough. We also have to give up the privilege that past prejudice has granted us - whether we asked for it or not.

1. <http://ideatrash.blogspot.com/2008/08/can-you-stop-being-part-of-problem.html>

amzolt (2008-09-19 00:14:01)

Steven, Thanks for that illuminating comment !!!

Brandi Magill (2008-09-19 12:57:00)

The photo is perfect for your topic Alex. When I think of racism instantly I think of a child whom because of their innocence except all humans as equals. Again, we should learn from our children. Racism is a horrible fact of life and seems to be getting worse by the day.

amzolt (2008-09-19 15:26:45)

Brandi, You made my reason for using the picture rise to my conscious awareness ! I often spend quite a bit of time choosing images for the posts but rarely make conscious choices—it's almost always a feeling-sense that picks the right pic...

Kristi (2008-09-20 05:52:30)

I can't say it was always true in the past, but I can say that I would be able to handle all of those "what if" scenarios now. It should be more about who the person really is inside than just their race or skin color.

Catherine. (2008-09-20 14:56:28)

My thought on this, I would think and say that racism is taught at home, from the parents. My comment is this... There are two things to aim at in life, first to get what you want, and after that to enjoy it. Only the wisest of mankind achieve the second.

Path Toward Peace ~Prologue & RAVENSCAWL (2008-10-09 04:51:55)

[...] One: Inducing the will to act Step Two: Eliminating Racism Step Three: Preventing economic disparity Step Four: Fostering altruism & philanthropy Step [...]

rainforestrobin (2008-09-24 21:34:48)

I have been in all of the situations you list here (except my child wanting to marry someone of a different color...as I don't have children.) I had no qualms about the things you list here at all. In fact if I thought about it: I feel excited to learn about another culture. In the past people have often said to me, "What was it like being with 'them'" Or some other innuendo where I didn't at first know what they were talking about until they said, "You know, because they are different or colored or whatever." It was only then that I realized I had not even thought about it. I have lived in several multi-racial communities and am at my happiest there. I love the mix of styles, languages, beliefs, cooking, etc. I also think that STEVEN S. is a dynamic thinker because he is looking at the deeper problem. I read his article and it is spot on! An example of this is: I could say that I am not racist, which is true, BUT what about the countries that are STILL, TODAY, using slave labor, factory sweatshops, chaining children and women to looms and workbenches, or keeping them trapped by giving them a tiny bit of food they would not have otherwise...all to make trinkets for the USA. You can read more about it on these sites. I've not thoroughly checked them out; they are just to make a point. <http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=479> <http://www.coopamerica.org/programs/sweatshops/whatyoucando/9coolway.s.cfm> Steven is right in that we have to make conscious choices beyond the one of personal non-racism. If we even buy products made by people enslaved we are saying, "Yes, they aren't worth more than that. It's okay they are suffering to make a new key chain for me. It's just one of 'those people' over 'there' somewhere in one of 'those countries'." And it's not enough that we simply educate ourselves but we need to get involved in bringing to these people the positive changes they DESERVE. They ARE me. We have to shift a much deeper type of thinking that is almost like a deep dark drugged dream that we forget upon waking. You could pick any number of examples. Like I said this is just one example off the top of my head. Maybe Steven had some examples of his own. I was hoping I'd see them in his wonderful article. And the change we create might be right in our own neighborhood. Example: I live in a Hispanic, Mexican, Native American and Anglo neighborhood and I do a yard sale once a summer. I often get many struggling Mexicans and they are delightfully warm, hardworking and loving people. Very kind and appreciative of EVERYTHING. They will pay me a quarter for a shirt and I tell them I'm having a sale, which in essence I am, and I give them five more free shirts or whatever. They are so touched that some of them cry and hug me and I cry with them :) :) and we are all SO happy. I tell them that the shirts are all OURS to share. We are the same. People help me, I help them, they help someone else and on it goes. Sometimes they bring something back for me. I fall in love with them. And they with me. And they come every summer that I have a sale and we remember each other. I make very little "monetary wealth" on my yard sale but I go away the richest woman alive. Some friends tell me that I shouldn't give the stuff away. YES I should and do and will. Because Steven is right, it goes much deeper than personal racism. If one among us goes without, we all go without. We may not see it but we are tragically impoverished when we silently agree to let others live under repression...even if the agreeing is in the form of inaction. When we start to REALLY see "other" as "self", we cannot stop ourselves from taking action and loving.

amzolt (2008-09-24 22:01:27)

Robin !!! You \*must\* post this at the new forum: <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/> Actually, the fourth forum down the main page, "Eliminating Racism". Your beautifully artistic writing style truly gleamed when you commented on the potential buried in each of us: "We have to shift to a much deeper type of thinking that is almost like a deep dark drugged dream that we forget upon waking." And I sobbed tears of joy when I read this: "...I give them five more free shirts or whatever. They are so touched that some of them cry and hug me and I cry with them :) :) and we are all SO happy." And, the pure and sweet wisdom of: "If one among us goes without, we all go without. We may not see it but we are tragically impoverished when we silently agree to let others live under repression...even if the agreeing is in the form of inaction."

Please-oh-please, with whatever-you-most-thirst-for-on-top, post this to Our Evolution's forum...

iman (2008-09-27 08:17:07)

Nice post. As you say, racism is "an ingrained behavior, driven deep by ages of irrational action". This seems to be the case with many of our behaviours today. I feel that growing recognition of the need to address certain issues will result in a series of 'generation iterations' before we are able to reverse trends that took many generations to become ingrained in us.

amzolt (2008-09-27 08:48:22)

iman, Yes... One way to trudge willing through all the suffering yet ahead is to realize, like you say, that it will take generations of slow behavior change to wipe out the deeply entrenched racial attitudes; \*yet\*, once that is realized (and, I firmly believe humanity will reach that shining shore), there will be eons of amity and love among the variously-colored flowers of our human garden.

Liara Covert (2008-10-07 06:51:44)

The spirit and soul of a human being has no color, ethnicity or label per se. We are each pure love. There is no such thing as racism unless you choose to believe it. If you think about it or channel energy into the concept in other ways, you are fuelling a fire that could be extinguished due to lack of negative thought energy.

amzolt (2008-10-07 14:02:25)

Liara, Good to see you agree with the most progressive scientists! ;-)

Aasha (2008-11-09 15:51:30)

I guess this is where we emphasise on progressive revelation . Our practices and beliefs are to be directed to civilization rather than merely holding on faithfully to the past. Surely this opens the door for us to fly free among the rest.

amzolt (2008-11-09 18:54:43)

Aasha, Glad you're aware of the concept of Progressive Revelation. I'll be exploring it in an upcoming post!  
p.s. I've tried to get these responses to you through e-mail, too, and they are repeatedly rejected....

### 1.7.12 Path Toward Peace - Step Three (2008-09-20 23:58)



[1]

#### *Preventing Economic Disparity*

A few extremely rich and so many poor... It's criminal! Greed and corruption must be banished, the vast majority of human beings must be given a fighting chance to make their place in the world, children should not starve to death for lack of food while other children are world-weary with affluent lust.

**From The Economic Times:** [2]Global financial crisis: The Story so far

**From Principled Profit:** [3]Ethics Could Have Avoided The Collapse of Lehman, Merrill Lynch

**From the Seattle Post-Intelligencer:** [4]Articles of Faith: Ethical lessons to draw from economic crisis

As I'd mentioned a few posts ago, this series on *Path Toward Peace* is a major challenge for me, spiritually and emotionally. This morning, as I was pondering how to write today's post, I decided to take a break (always good when the creative juices feel stopped-up) and stroll down to the [5]Java Street Café. The owner, Sam, was not too busy and I thought I'd bring up what I was pondering for my blog post—I mean he is a good business man and highly attuned to financial concerns. I wasn't sure what he'd say about economic disparity and was amazed at what he did say.

He brought up a concept that dealt with providing a fixed income to each citizen, not socialism but a humane method of lifting the burden of economic distress from human endeavor—not

social security but social insurance, proactive at that.

Here was a man, focused on profit and loss, talking about altruistic business and government—a way to ensure that each human being had the means of a basic existence—pure justice and equity. This is a far cry from the existing situation in today’s ruinous economic game plan. We touched on the idea of the owners of businesses providing profit-sharing to employees. And Sam crowned this inspiring discussion with a statement about the necessity of being aware that the wealthy exist on the labor of the common person.

The next post in this series will deal with the spiritual and emotional transformations necessary for humane economic activity. Nevertheless, we must be willing to act, in whatever capacity we can handle, to instill fairness into our economic activities.

*Spiritual Quotes:*

”The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war.”

Compilations, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 551

”A financier with colossal wealth should not exist whilst near him is a poor man in dire necessity. When we see poverty allowed to reach a condition of starvation it is a sure sign that somewhere we shall find tyranny. Men must bestir themselves in this matter, and no longer delay in altering conditions which bring the misery of grinding poverty to a very large number of the people. The rich must give of their abundance, they must soften their hearts and cultivate a compassionate intelligence, taking thought for those sad ones who are suffering from lack of the very necessities of life.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 153

[6] **Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series**

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/economic-disparity.gif>

2. [http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Indicators/Global\\_financial\\_crisis\\_The\\_Story\\_so\\_far/articleshow/3507868.cms](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Indicators/Global_financial_crisis_The_Story_so_far/articleshow/3507868.cms)

3. <http://principledprofit.com/good-business-blog/ethics-could-have-avoided-the-collapse-of-lehman-merrill-lynch/2008/09/17/>

4. [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/379840\\_faith20.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/379840_faith20.html)

5. [http://bestcoffeeshopindayton.com/?page\\_id=15](http://bestcoffeeshopindayton.com/?page_id=15)

6. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/path-toward-peace/>
7. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
8. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
9. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-09-21 05:29:54)

Sounds as though you had a good chat with Sam Alex.. Good questions and very good answers from Sam, yes how true.. What the Mind can Conceive & Believe, it can achieve.. Be not afraid of going slowly, be afraid of standing still.!

Catherine. (2008-09-21 14:32:55)

Why are we here? You know planet earth, the grind of the mundane, the exhilaration of love and birth, the dread of tomorrow, the roller coaster ride of eternity..

amzolt (2008-09-21 14:36:27)

Catherine, It is very good to have a cafe so near my apartment. To relax from my work on this blog and broaden my perceptions!

Nadim (2008-09-22 12:19:01)

I was watching a documentary the other day about a major governmental election a few years back. One party, portrayed as the champions of social justice, proposed raising taxes slightly in order to balance the extremes of wealth and poverty. Their arguments were quite compelling, and in opinion polls prior to the election it looked like they would win easily. Lo and behold, election day arrives and the other party wins. When the swing voters were asked why they went the other way on election day, it came down to "doing what seems right" vs "serving personal interests" and they chose the second option. The question is, how do we reach a state in society where people will willingly sacrifice some personal comfort for the good of the whole? Is this going to happen or do we give up and say human nature is inherently selfish? I believe it will happen eventually - but we will certainly require a strengthening of our own moral convictions, whether as individuals or as institutions. This is the critical role that true religion must play. Look forward to your coming pieces... there are indeed many dimensions to this theme!

amzolt (2008-09-22 12:28:55)

Nadim, "The question is, how do we reach a state in society where people will willingly sacrifice some personal comfort for the good of the whole?" My feeling is that there will have to be tremendous suffering (even more than is happening) worldwide to bring people to the feeling necessary to live beyond their egos...

Nadim (2008-09-22 12:38:43)

Agreed.

judi moran (2008-09-22 13:02:34)

Dear Alex, Thanks for this thought-provoking article. Profit and greed so often fuel capitalism and run this country. I believe in capitalism but I also believe we are our brother's keeper. This coffee shop owner is a rare breed. Sounds like he has his priorities straight. As the Bible says: The love of money is the root of all evil. Not money itself, but the inordinate love of money that elevates it above our concern for others. Care, Jlo

Alexander M Zoltai (2008-09-22 15:48:04)

Judi, Very perceptive comment, Judi ! I was raised by two Christian ministers—mom and dad—and that bit of Scripture—”The love of money is the root of all evil.”—was one of the first I learned, as well as learning how people would consistently mis-quote it !!

On the Path towards Peace: Steps along the way | Baha’i Views (2008-09-22 21:38:04)

[...] }: The topics are: Step One: Inducing the will to act. Step Two: Eliminating Racism. Step Three: Preventing economic disparity + The first three have already been posted Step Four: Fostering altruism & philanthropy Step [...]

amzolt (2008-09-22 21:57:18)

Thank you, thank You, gw !!!

Tomas (2008-09-23 17:57:39)

The talking sounds nice...yet is there any chance to impact the current injustice factually? I ...don’t want to think about what the rich should do, or how should look the behavior of the poor, because THAT not unites us and enlightens the path of the peace but deepens the abyss between the neighbors. The musing about what OTHERS should do for WE could enjoy the peace looks like ...a musing. Just think. Who are the rich? Are they not we ourselves in the concrete? And who are the poor? They are we again. ... While buying a cup of coffee to my disabled friend, I don’t sacrifice a penny, but buy great pleasure to myself - that not the altruism but my natural right to enjoy a sip of fresh air. By helping other I participate in sharing of the love that warms my own heart too. Meanwhile while talking about what others should do I just DIVIDE the humanity into poor me and the rich wrongdoers... I think it’s obvious where such politic can lead. WHEN WE RECOGNIZE OURSELVES IN OTHER - when we accept the spiritual realm not by words but by our whole life honor God - we ourselves become worthy respect. So when mother cares for her baby, she don’t think about any profit for self ... and we too try to help if our brother or sister is lacking without doing any politics or business plans. Unfortunately our society hold on the idea of profit... selfishness may be decorated nicely yet such beauty cant change the truth. We either love and share our love or reason about the need to love and thus inadvertently contribute to the threatening mess of today but not participate in the fabulous flight of peace that don’t need any words but the heart - we need nothing to invent but open our own hearts to God and be faithful... Am I such? I greatly appreciate your post. Thank you for the help to group my thoughts for to leave a comment and thus ...all the above humbled me - silenced my wish to complain for my helplessness Prior coming here I put a picture on my blog (it is connected with other on other blog) Please have a look by clicking on a link <http://dayfly.wordpress.com/2008/09/23/benefits-of-pain/>

amzolt (2008-09-23 19:17:12)

Tomas, So glad you responded at such length and very happy your writing helped you clarify your feelings! You clearly anticipated the topic of the very next post !! Also, the link to your picture is very welcome in this blog. I want everyone to become familiar with your spiritually aesthetic art !!!

Path Toward Peace ~Prologue & RAVENSCAWL (2008-10-07 17:09:46)

[...] One: Inducing the will to act Step Two: Eliminating Racism Step Three: Preventing economic disparity Step Four: Fostering altruism & philanthropy Step Five: Eliminating unbridled nationalism [...]

amzolt (2008-10-07 17:16:09)  
Kem, You honor and humble me...

Aasha (2008-11-09 16:09:26)  
Money is not everything, but everything needs money. This is the sad state where the world is now. I would rather ponder on how much is enough? When we are still indulged with "sky is the limit", none of us are going anywhere.

amzolt (2008-11-09 18:44:59)  
Yes, Aasha, we all need to reconsider the economic issues—how much is "enough", how much to "share", how much is spiritually "correct"...

### 1.7.13 Path Toward Peace - Step Four (2008-09-23 18:59)



[1]

#### *Fostering altruism and philanthropy*

Placing others' welfare above our own can seem such an impossible ethical directive but, imagine... *Your most dear partner is being physically assaulted.* Cling to that image and read on.

**From the Boston Globe:** [2]Nonprofits gird for loss of funding "Some local nonprofits and charities fear they may lose millions of dollars in funding following the collapse of major Wall Street investment firms."

**From WorldChanging:** [3]Using Philanthropy to Fuel Innovation "...share some thoughts about how we might better use philanthropy to fuel innovation for sustainability."

**From the Wall Street Journal:** [4]Wealthy Son Aims to Build His Legacy "...build a profitable business and serve as a platform for people looking to do good."

Placing others' welfare above our own is a critical need as we follow the Path Toward Peace. The example up there of putting ourselves between our beloved and an attacker is the archetypical pattern. It can also serve as a model for other aspects of our life—infusing them with an altruistic motivation.

Let's go to an extreme here, a situation that many Faith traditions hold up as noble—placing the welfare of our enemies above our own welfare...

Many folk will immediately reject this as an option. Fact is, this very prescription for a truly spiritual reaction to adversaries is the type of admonition that scares many people away from religion...

We'll be exploring the material/spiritual polarity in a future post but, for now, consider this:

*If we truly love someone we will do all in our power to attend to their welfare. So, it appears to follow that those we don't feel worthy of our altruism must be those we don't truly love.*

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."

King James Bible, Luke 6:27-28

"The fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of the heart and spirit... Hearts must be so cemented together, love must become so dominant that the rich shall most willingly extend assistance to the poor and take steps to establish these economic adjustments permanently. If it is accomplished in this way, it will be most praiseworthy because then it will be for the sake of God and in the pathway of His service. For example, it will be as if the rich inhabitants of a city should say, 'It is neither just nor lawful that we should possess great wealth while there is abject poverty in this community', and then willingly give their wealth to the poor, retaining only as much as will enable them to live comfortably.

"Strive, therefore, to create love in the hearts in order that they may become glowing and radiant. When that love is shining, it will permeate other hearts even as this electric light illumines its surroundings. When the love of God is established, everything else will be realized. *This is the true foundation of all economics.* Reflect upon it."

Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 238

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Kristi (2008-09-24 00:04:52)

In some ways, I can see how holding the welfare of your enemies above your own could be mutually beneficial. If your enemy had any conscience, he would not be an enemy to someone that wanted to help him.

Alexander M Zoltai (2008-09-24 00:06:06)

Kristi, Bingo !!!

Catherine. (2008-09-24 06:33:32)

To forgive is to set the prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you..

amzolt (2008-09-24 06:42:01)

Oh, Catherine, you really need to write a book and share all the wisdom you bestow on this blog !!

Evita (2008-09-24 22:52:36)

Alex - this series is a fantastic idea and I have been enjoying it tremendously! I don't think your passion and dedication to helping others could have been portrayed any better!

amzolt (2008-09-24 23:24:56)

Evita, You honor me with your tremendously encouraging comment! This series is a true test for my mind, heart, and spiritual sensibilities...

isabella mori (2008-09-25 04:25:41)

a fantastic series, alex! you never cease to amaze me. stepping between the beloved and an attacker - what an interesting image ... let me try a thought experiment. fortunately, i don't think i have any personal enemies but there are some people who i'm not terribly enamoured with. my ex husband, for example. placing my ex-husband's welfare above my own ... hmmm ... i need to mull that over a bit. but there IS a freeing feeling somewhere ... (what you said about the prisoner?)

amzolt (2008-09-25 09:24:37)

isabella, Well, my dear, I'm not a psychologist (though those who've received Tarot or astrology readings from me try to pin that label on my jacket) so the issue of ex-husbands is a bit extracurricular but the quote from the Bible mentions, among other altruistic actions, praying "...for them which despitefully use you." This in itself is acting to improve another's welfare, eh?

hemarli (2008-09-26 07:06:14)

i am in quietness blessed to see the thoughts on altruism and read further on enemies and forgiving .so true thankyou for sharing .hope i find my way back to this page.

amzolt (2008-09-26 07:19:47)

hemarli, Thank you for the lovely comment!! Your words, "i am in quietness blessed..." are a blessing to me !!

Cooking Lady (2008-09-26 12:50:29)

How can you receive if you first do not give?

amzolt (2008-09-26 18:15:04)

Cooking Lady, Yes! Very simply put yet very deep wisdom. Far too many people totally miss the personal practicality of that maxim!

Aasha (2008-11-09 16:24:11)

Prayer is the ultimate that mutually benefit everyone regardless of situation. "To forgive is to forget".

amzolt (2008-11-09 18:47:21)

Yes, Aasha, forgiveness is a golden action!

#### 1.7.14 Path Toward Peace - Step Five (2008-09-25 17:07)



[1]

#### *Eliminating unbridled nationalism*

The peoples of all nations are screaming for unity, their hearts bleeding, yet this strident call is made the slave of petty nationalistic agendas.

**From Al Bawaba:** [2]Haifa refuses to answer those who doubted her nationalism

**From Indian Muslim News and Information:** [3]Book: Communalism, Caste and Hindu Nationalism—The Violence in Gujarat

**From the Times Online, UK:** [4]People's Alliance for Democracy's narrow nationalism in Thailand

I was born in the United States of America. Still live here, though I've traveled to Canada, Mexico, Viet Nam, Japan, and the Philippines.

I used to love my country as I love my parents, claiming them as place and people of my origin.

I still love my country but not, any longer, like I love my parents. I've learned that my place of origin is the Earth.

The Earth has always been whole and unified. Even though certain humans have declared various areas of Her surface as separate from other areas and stained Her soil with torrents of blood to maintain those national boundaries, She is whole.

Certainly, there are things I don't like about my country of birth, just like there were things I didn't like about my parents. But when I consider my true place of origin, this lovely blue-green-brown cosmic spaceship, I can find nothing about her I don't like.

She *is* troubled. I can hear Her voice, deep, throbbing tones, pleading with the children on Her surface, "*Now, don't make me scold you...*"

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens."

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 250

"...torrents of precious blood are spilled in defense of these imaginary divisions of our one human habitation, under the delusion of a fancied and limited patriotism.

"After all, a claim and title to territory or native land is but a claim and attachment to the dust of earth. We live upon this earth for a few days and then rest beneath it forever. So it is our graveyard eternally. Shall man fight for the tomb which devours him, for his eternal sepulcher? What ignorance could be greater than this? To fight over his grave, to kill another for his grave! What heedlessness! What a delusion!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 355

"Unbridled nationalism, as distinguished from a sane and legitimate patriotism, must give way to a wider loyalty, to the love of humanity as a whole. Bahá'u'lláh's statement is: 'The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens'. The concept of world citizenship is a direct result of the contraction of the world into a single neighbourhood through scientific advances and of the

indisputable interdependence of nations.”

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 3

”O contending peoples and kindreds of the earth! Set your faces towards unity, and let the radiance of its light shine upon you. Gather ye together, and for the sake of God resolve to root out whatever is the source of contention amongst you. Then will the effulgence of the world’s great Luminary envelop the whole earth, and its inhabitants become the citizens of one city, and the occupants of one and the same throne.”

Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 217

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Catherine. (2008-09-26 02:14:51)

True remorse is never just a regret over consequences, it is a regret over motive. If the truth doesn’t save us, what does that say about us.?

amzolt (2008-09-26 02:18:23)

Again, Catherine, you give us penetrating wisdom...

hemarli (2008-09-26 07:10:41)

thankyou again i see a need for a new sense of common unity you open the path bless

amzolt (2008-09-26 07:20:58)

hemarli, Thank you for another blessed comment !!!

Dr. Mohamed Taher (2008-09-26 15:20:50)

Thanks for the comment on God.com's post. I agree with you. But, the picture came as part of the blog post's baggage.

amzolt (2008-09-26 18:19:22)

Dr. Taher, Not to worry. I only hope you can pass the comment on to that blogger, eh?

iman (2008-09-27 08:21:48)

Lovely series of posts which gets one thinking...

amzolt (2008-09-27 08:51:08)

iman, Very glad you like the series! It's a real growth experience for me!! I hope you'll explore the forums I've set up to deepen and broaden the discussion of these issues: <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

Evita (2008-09-27 19:39:19)

Ah the best line of all in this post "I've learned that my place of origin is the Earth." When people now ask me (especially my students) what is my background, nationality, ethnicity or any such thing, I reply with "I am from Earth, aren't we all?"

amzolt (2008-09-27 19:46:01)

Wonderful, Evita !!! What do you teach?

Evita (2008-09-28 01:30:50)

Hi Alex, Right now I teach senior secondary school students science, mainly biology, health science, etc. But I am making this my last year of formal work as I want to pursue my greater passions. Even though I love teaching and interacting with youth a lot, I love writing even more. I want to write on the blogs more frequently as well as write books and perhaps teach on a greater and broader scale adults on health, spirituality and similar topics.

amzolt (2008-09-28 02:09:03)

Evita, Bravo ! A dream not pursued is a fantasy... Dream on, fair lady !!!

Wilma (2008-10-01 01:25:31)

A quote from The Intenders of the Highest Goods email says it all. "Perhaps the most insidious dramas we take part in have to do with our identification and allegiance to a particular nation. We identify with this country or that, and in doing so, we isolate ourselves, to one degree or another, from everyone else in the world. We agree upon arbitrary, make-believe boundaries and tell ourselves that we are the good guys, while anyone else who lives outside of our country's boundary lines is not as good as us." Why, oh why have we become so possessive instead of sharing and knowing there is enough and loving the variety?

amzolt (2008-10-01 01:34:36)

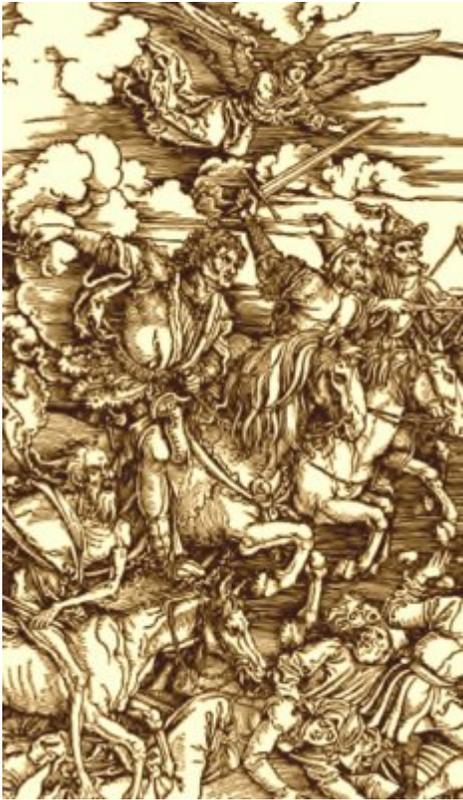
Wilma, "Why, oh why have we become so possessive instead of sharing and knowing there is enough and loving the variety?" Basically, humans (with "permission" of our Creator) have been, for eons, perverse creatures. Yet, God assures us that His Plan includes a sufficient amount of time for us to "get it right"—Ultimate Mercy since God doesn't "need" us—it's a complete Mercy that we exist and are Graced with the opportunity

to better ourselves!

Aasha (2008-11-09 16:51:19)

Only if we let go the past will the future be bright. Many among us have failed to understand that only by giving & sharing we receive even more. Whatmore to practice this.

### 1.7.15 Path Toward Peace - Step Six (2008-09-27 19:42)



[1]

#### *Eliminating religious strife*

Mary and Martha were having a discussion in the coffee shop. They'd just met fifteen minutes before and had been chatting about the debate between Obama and McCain. Mary said, "Well, seems we agree about who to vote for. What are you doing Sunday morning? I'd love to talk again—maybe while we walk the lower trail in the Metro Park." Martha said, "Oh, I'll be going to church Sunday morning. How about Friday around noon?" Mary said, "Oh, I can't, that's our time for community prayer in the mosque."

They chatted for a bit more but the conversation withered away into banalities and, by the time they parted, both knew there would be no lasting friendship.

**From the Jerusalem Post:** [2]"The reality of today's Middle East is the same centuries-old one of ethnic and religious strife that extends far beyond the borders of the State of Israel."

**From the Egyptian Daily News:** [3]"Rashwan rather blamed Israel for creating 'civil and

religious strife between the different Arab countries.”

**From the Times of India:** [4]”Barely eight months after it was ravaged by attacks on Christians, Kandhamal is back in the headlines as a symbol of religious strife. For more than a week now, Kandhamal’s Christians have been brutalized, their homes pillaged and burnt, chased into the forests, left to languish in relief camps.”

It’s a shame about Mary and Martha. They were headed toward a beautiful friendship but, because they adhered to different Faith traditions, they sacrificed fresh happiness and sharing.

Well, at least they didn’t start butchering each other’s families and friends...

How long has humanity been killing in the name of religion?

How many mothers have lost children because of religious dogmatism?

How many children have been orphaned because of political decisions empowered by absurdly false religious doctrines?

It’s no wonder so many people will say, *”Oh, I’m definitely a spiritual person. I’m just not religious.”*

Is there some way to practice a religion (including, of course, a spiritual life) and not exclude other people, not see those in different religions as evil, not try to keep the All-Loving God in an armored box locked tightly in a room of the ego?

*Spiritual Quotes:*

”That the divers communions of the earth, and the manifold systems of religious belief, should never be allowed to foster the feelings of animosity among men, is, in this Day, of the essence of the Faith of God and His Religion. These principles and laws, these firmly-established and mighty systems, have proceeded from one Source, and are rays of one Light. That they differ one from another is to be attributed to the varying requirements of the ages in which they were promulgated.”

Bahá’u’lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 13

”Religious strife, throughout history, has been the cause of innumerable wars and conflicts, a major blight to progress, and is increasingly abhorrent to the people of all faiths and no faith. Followers of all religions must be willing to face the basic questions which this strife raises, and to arrive at clear answers. How are the differences between them to be resolved, both in theory and in practice? The challenge facing the religious leaders of mankind is to contemplate, with hearts filled with the spirit of compassion and a desire for truth, the plight of humanity, and to ask themselves whether they cannot, in humility before their Almighty Creator, submerge their theological differences in a great spirit of mutual forbearance that will enable them to work together for the advancement of human understanding and peace.”

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 3

”There can be no doubt whatever that the peoples of the world, of whatever race or religion,

derive their inspiration from one heavenly Source, and are the subjects of one God. The difference between the ordinances under which they abide should be attributed to the varying requirements and exigencies of the age in which they were revealed. All of them, except a few which are the outcome of human perversity, were ordained of God, and are a reflection of His Will and Purpose. Arise and, armed with the power of faith, shatter to pieces the gods of your vain imaginings, the sowers of dissension amongst you. Cleave unto that which draweth you together and uniteth you.” Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 217

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Catherine. (2008-09-27 21:57:02)

Doesn't this go to show, how parents instill all such to their young..no wonder religions and faith of different people can't get along, or be friends, due to these teachings ..very sad indeed, my comment on this is.. The weak can never forgive, is the attribute of the strong.

amzolt (2008-09-27 22:02:50)

Yes, Catherine, we must be strong to forgive !!!

ravenscawl (2008-09-28 03:03:03)

The fact is most religions could find commonality in both word and expectation...  
<http://www.acommonword.com/>

amzolt (2008-09-28 15:02:02)

ravenscawl, Thank you the heads-up on that site!!! Here's a similar one from the Baha'is:  
<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/bic/OCF/>

Efren Hill (2008-10-02 08:12:07)

I sent my buddy a link to your article and he appreciated it!

amzolt (2008-10-02 13:50:48)

Efren, Thanks for sharing it !

amzolt (2008-10-03 18:04:08)

Kristi, Seems to me you're totally right! If religion isn't to spread love and harmony, we're better off without it.

Kristi (2008-10-03 17:02:57)

I think if all religions would focus on how everyone should love and respect one another vs. which one is right or wrong, then so much more of the world would live in harmony.

Path Toward Peace ~Prologue & laquo; RAVENSCAWL (2008-10-08 05:40:54)

[...] Fostering altruism & philanthropy Step Five: Eliminating unbridled nationalism Step Six: Eliminating religious strife Step Seven: Eliminating the denial of the equality of women & men Step Eight: Eliminating [...]

Aasha (2008-11-09 17:07:21)

If religion is comprehen to compliment the almighty, nothing more is to worry about. The various culture practiced in each religion is also a major contribute to the diversity of acceptance of religion itself.

amzolt (2008-11-09 18:48:46)

Aasha, My current series of posts is an intensive look at religion...

Aasha (2008-11-10 06:38:56)

War in the name of religion is a price we pay for the complexity of our ignorance. Failing to understand what is the common call of all religious teaching is where we'r opening the door for massive distruction.

## 1.7.16 Path Toward Peace - Step Seven (2008-09-30 02:06)



[1]

*Eliminating the denial of the equality of women & men*

If you're a man, do you treat women as complete and full equals?

If you're a woman, are you willing to help men understand the benefit *to themselves* of treating women as equals?

**From the Champaign, IL, News Gazette:** [2]Normal school district named in sex abuse lawsuit

**From the Macau Daily Times:** [3]Vietnam women break silence on domestic violence

**From the Turkish Daily News:** [4]Women launch campaign to ensure gender equality in politics

Most people are aware of the issue of equality of the sexes. Many are striving to attain a consciousness of total equality; yet, many still harbor attitudes that perpetuate disunity, though attempting to act as if they support equality. Some still blatantly proclaim that men and women never were and never will be equal.

Until a person knows in their heart that women are just as capable, just as intelligent, just as human as men, that person will contribute to an evil that cripples humanity...

I mentioned women helping men understand the self-benefit of achieving equality. There is a

document that spells out [5]the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality. Perhaps women could read it and pass it on to the men in their lives. Perhaps a dialogue could ensue.

Perhaps I'm dreaming...

Well... Yes! I'm dreaming a dream of Reality—the fact that men and women are equal even when human actions attempt to thwart that unity.

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"In this Day the Hand of divine grace hath removed all distinction. The servants of God and His handmaidens are regarded on the same plane. Blessed is the servant who hath attained unto that which God hath decreed, and likewise the leaf moving in accordance with the breezes of His will. This favour is great and this station lofty."

Adib Taherzadeh, quoting Bahá'u'lláh, *The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* v 4, p. 200

"Divine Justice demands that the rights of both sexes should be equally respected since neither is superior to the other in the eyes of Heaven. Dignity before God depends, not on sex, but on purity and luminosity of heart. Human virtues belong equally to all!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 162

"The emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged pre-requisites of peace. The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified. Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge."

The Universal House of Justice, *Compilations, Lights of Guidance*, p. 618

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Catherine. (2008-09-30 14:10:12)

I believe most people have the intellectual capacity to grow, but what they lack is the emotional capacity.

amzolt (2008-09-30 14:16:41)

Extremely astute comment, Catherine ! Thank you !!!

Aasha (2008-11-10 09:05:07)

A perfect human is a collective of both man and women. Neither superior to one another; difference in details not the root. It's just a STATE OF MIND.

## 1.8 October

### 1.8.1 Path Toward Peace - Step Eight (2008-10-02 00:48)



[1]

*Eliminating ignorance & lack of education*

God gave us a brain.

I feel pretty certain He wants us to use it.

Even faith needs knowledge to remain strong.

**From the Guardian, UK:** [2]'These pupils face several challenges'

**From the Bangkok Post:** [3]Education 3.0 Wonderland: The university of tomorrow could be in a virtual world.

**From the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation:** [4]Veep challenges varsity students to educate citizenry

Since we're considering Ignorance/Education in this post, I feel a couple definitions are in order:

*Ignorance:* The lack of knowledge or education

*Education:* The gradual process of acquiring knowledge

Pretty basic, eh?

Let's explore the word histories of those two words:

*Ignorance:* from in- "not" + Old L. gnarus "aware, acquainted with,"

*Education:* from the Latin term educare, educatus meaning 'bring up, rear'; linked to educere meaning 'to lead forth' or 'bring out'

So...

Ignorance is lack of education and education is to "bring out" or "lead forth". Seems to me that there's something already "*in there*" that's being brought or led out. Certainly, we shouldn't have a situation where something is stuffed into a person...

Still, far too many people in the world are having what they can contribute to our human family blocked or choked off !

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess. Through a word proceeding out of the mouth of God he was called into being; by one word more he was guided to recognize the Source of his education; by yet another word his station and destiny were safeguarded. The Great Being saith: Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom."

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 259

"Strain every nerve to acquire both inner and outer perfections, for the fruit of the human tree hath ever been and will ever be perfections both within and without. It is not desirable that a man be left without knowledge or skills, for he is then but a barren tree. Then, so much as capacity

and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception and eloquent speech.”

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Compilation of Compilations* vol. I, p. 247

”Close investigation will show that the primary cause of oppression and injustice, of unrighteousness, irregularity and disorder, is the people’s lack of religious faith and the fact that they are uneducated. When, for example, the people are genuinely religious and are literate and well-schooled, and a difficulty presents itself, they can apply to the local authorities; if they do not meet with justice and secure their rights and if they see that the conduct of the local government is incompatible with the Divine good pleasure and the king’s justice, they can then take their case to higher courts and describe the deviation of the local administration from the spiritual law. Those courts can then send for the local records of the case and in this way justice will be done. At present, however, because of their inadequate schooling, most of the population lack even the vocabulary to explain what they want.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 18

”The cause of universal education, which has already enlisted in its service an army of dedicated people from every faith and nation, deserves the utmost support that the governments of the world can lend it. For ignorance is indisputably the principal reason for the decline and fall of peoples and the perpetuation of prejudice. No nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens. Lack of resources limits the ability of many nations to fulfil this necessity, imposing a certain ordering of priorities. The decision-making agencies involved would do well to consider giving first priority to the education of women and girls, since it is through educated mothers that the benefits of knowledge can be most effectively and rapidly diffused throughout society. In keeping with the requirements of the times, consideration should also be given to teaching the concept of world citizenship as part of the standard education of every child.”

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 3

[5] **Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series**

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2. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2008/sep/29/villagevoices.education>
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7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Catherine. (2008-10-02 04:47:17)

Our memories are card indexes consulted and then returned in disorder by authorities whom we do not control.

amzolt (2008-10-02 14:06:21)

So powerful, Catherine! Poetic, too!!

A. Decker (2008-10-03 19:31:09)

"...most of the population lack even the vocabulary to explain what they want." I'm pretty sure, this also inhibits their ability to even know, in certain terms, what they want. This makes them (us, I should say, I speak from experience) more easily led astray. This is a crucial matter, now as ever. Good post, Amzolt.

amzolt (2008-10-03 19:33:55)

Mr. Decker, Thanks for the critical distinction between "explaining" and "knowing" !

rainforestrobin (2008-10-03 19:43:03)

Being almost completely self-taught I strongly related to these two powerful lines. "Seems to me that there's something already "in there" that's being brought or led out. Certainly, we shouldn't have a situation where something is stuffed into a person." I am not against formal education, but it certainly was not my path. Formal education was so extremely limiting that it left me feeling impoverished and repressed. As a kid I felt like I had entered the dark ages. I was climbing the walls like one imprisoned. Almost no teacher ever asked me what I thought or felt. It didn't even occur to them that I might have an opinion. Our collective culture (USA) doesn't yet see children as fully developed souls who have something to contribute to the positive growth of our culture, the healing of our spirits and planet. We are "racists" against children and we don't even see it. In our own limited intelligence we often do not see the shining intelligence of our children. When a child goes unseen, un-nourished...just like a plant...it often withers and is forced to live at a lower level or consciously suffer the great pain of not being seen. In our own limited thinking we limit our brilliant children. I believe VERY strongly in learning and exposing children (anyone for that matter) to situations/stimuli that help expand their minds, creativity and insight and make them hungry to ask questions and seek answers, make them develop a lifelong desire to explore, to know all aspects of themselves and their world. We are capable of greatness. PS Been to the forum and am trying to post the racism response but having a bit of difficulty. Will try again today or tomorrow. I was honored you ask and loved your comment. It touched me. Thank you my friend.

amzolt (2008-10-03 20:00:13)

Robin, I, too, struggled with the school system's idea of education but I've never stopped learning... Naturally, letting all the world's children receive an education is quite scary to the entrenched powers. Nevertheless, we \*are\* progressing toward peace, unity, and tranquility on this, our home. The entrenched privileged few will become fewer still...

Bruce Eggum (2008-10-04 20:31:39)

"Education" is a deceiving term. Education is based on "facts known" and deemed absolute. These unquestionable and absolute facts we have been taught rule our thinking and our lives never to be questioned. Of course the fact is absolute until it is disproven, then the new fact is "absolute". Absolute facts keep us from seeking and searching for new methods, alternative ways. Religious teaching also restricts the indi-

vidual by enforcing rules and absolute dogma. Of course when one religion disagrees with the concept of another religion, fighting and bitterness occur. Most wars have begun over disagreement of one religion's rule to another. It is ironic that virtually all religions teach meditation. Meditation enables us to be in touch with our spiritual higher power that will guide and teach us. However if our newfound spiritual guide brings new awareness contrary to the old dogma, it is likely called blasphemous or witchcraft. So much for enlightenment. "...most of the population lack even the vocabulary to explain what they want." If there are two people speaking different language, which one should learn the others vocabulary? If the uneducated lack the sophisticated words, doesn't it behoove the educated to listen and interpret those of the others "language"? Certainly the "others" can express pain, hunger, fear, compassion, need, love. Here we have the "head" (educated mind) (ego centered) not the "heart" ( spiritual, love, emotion, compassion, ) (nature centured) ruling our behavior. Peace, Bruce

anzolt (2008-10-04 21:44:22)

Bruce, Thought-provoking comment! "Education is based on "facts known" and deemed absolute." Hope you noticed the difference struck between "stuffing-in" and "leading out". "Religious teaching also restricts the individual by enforcing rules and absolute dogma." This happens when humans get in the way of the Messenger's Message... Also, there are certain religious/spiritual "rules" that operate similar to gravity—if you jump out of a tall building, you'll splat—if you lie and cheat, you'll end up confused and broke... "If there are two people speaking different language, which one should learn the others vocabulary?" I feel the goal is a "third" global language...

Aasha (2008-11-10 09:29:14)

Be it formal or informal education, it compliments each other. Most of us learned alot but neither have put it into practice nor able to share it. In my own words, formal education will enable us to communicate well so as to relate our thoughts silky smooth. Whereby, informal education enrich us with the capability to adobt and see things from different angle as experience enlighten each individual in their own way.

## 1.8.2 Path Toward Peace - Step Nine (2008-10-03 20:37)



[1]=[2]

*Resolving the impediments induced by the multiplicity of languages*

Ever been in a foreign country, not knowing their language?

Ever fallen in love with someone and couldn't use words to express that love in their native tongue?

Ever wondered if translations really get the meaning across?

**From MarketWatch:** [3] *Across Systems* to Demonstrate New Language Portal Solution

**From the Korea Times:** [4] Book Reviews Loss of Native Languages

**From the Kansas City Star:** [5] Learning a new language: It's a small world after all

From [6] WikiAnswers: "Scientists have counted approx. 6500 languages, half of which are, however, threatened to die off soon, as they are no longer passed on. Not counted in above figure are pure sign-languages or computer-languages."

Also not counted are the multitude of business, political, religious, and neighborhood jargons and slangs.

Is a global language necessary?

Would having to learn your native language and a global language be too hard for people?

Again, is translation a guarantee that understanding has occurred?

What are some of the difficulties *you've* experienced because of different languages?

Have a look at a [7]slide presentation about the difficulties of learning another language.

Bottom line: Understanding each other is a major contributor to being at peace with each other...

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"The day is approaching when all the peoples of the world will have adopted one universal language and one common script. When this is achieved, to whatsoever city a man may journey, it shall be as if he were entering his own home."

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 249

"The races of mankind are not isolated as in former days. Now, in order to be in close relationship with all countries it is necessary to be able to speak their tongues.

"A universal language would make intercourse possible with every nation. Thus it would be needful to know two languages only, the mother tongue and the universal speech. The latter would enable a man to communicate with any and every man in the world!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 155

"A fundamental lack of communication between peoples seriously undermines efforts towards world peace. Adopting an international auxiliary language would go far to resolving this problem and necessitates the most urgent attention."

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, *The Promise of World Peace*, p. 3

[8]Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/languages.gif>

2. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/languages1.gif>

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<http://www.slideshare.net/Cindy422/>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-10-03 20:56:48)

The global language is love. We can always find ways to express it - it is our real native tongue. It will be here long after we are gone and long before we return. It is ingrained in our being. :D

georgewesley (2008-10-03 22:13:38)

Thank you again for this fine series, Alexander. On another topic... Last night during our weekly devotional meeting I was accessing material off the web for inclusion in our devotions that had art by Baha'is as a focus. I came across one of your poems, which I was delighted to share at the gathering.

amzolt (2008-10-03 21:32:29)

Alexys, Thanks for gracing the blog with your loving presence !

amzolt (2008-10-03 22:22:42)

George, So glad your sharing my work! Alone, in my humble cave, I wonder if my service is worthwhile...

amzolt (2008-10-04 15:08:01)

Catherine, right on !!!

Catherine. (2008-10-04 14:57:24)

Good question,as far this subject ,one looses so much,in lost in translation.. Many a long dispute among divines,may be thus abridged.It is so.It is not so. Make the most of all that comes,and the least of all that goes.

Liara Covert (2008-10-07 06:11:53)

I share Alexy's view about the global language being love. Perceived problems arise when different personalities choose different ways to interpret core feelings. Misunderstanding, dillusion and selective blindness about love all arise out of fear. Nurture love to dissolve fear.

amzolt (2008-10-07 06:22:06)

Liara, Amen!

Bill Chapman (2008-10-07 10:37:48)

I think Esperanto deserves more support. It really is a remarkable linguistic tool. I've used Esperanto for many years on my travels. It does not automatically bring about love and peace, but it does allow you to discvuss with people why they think as they do. A good place to start is [www.esperanto.net](http://www.esperanto.net)

amzolt (2008-10-07 14:13:22)

Bill, Thanks for that link! Here are a few quotes from the Baha'i Writings about Esperanto: "The love and effort put into Esperanto will not be lost," he answered, "but no one person can construct a Universal

Language. It must be made by a Council representing all countries, and must contain words from different languages. It will be governed by the simplest rules, and there will be no exceptions; neither will there be gender, nor extra and silent letters. Everything indicated will have but one name. In Arabic there are hundreds of names for the camel! In the schools of each nation the mother tongue will be taught, as well as the revised Universal Language.” (Abdu’l-Baha, Abdu’l-Baha in London, p. 94) His Excellency ABDUL BAHÁ, addressed the Paris Esperanto group on February 12, 1913, at a banquet which was accorded him at the Hotel Moderne in that city. M. Bourlet, President of the Paris Esperanto Society, in introducing Abdul Baha, said that one of the principles of the great world religion which he was promulgating, was the establishment of a universal language. There was a deep silence as Abdul Baha arose. His remarks were punctuated by cheers as he walked up and down the banquet hall, stopping to emphasize with frequent gesture. He spoke in Persian, M. Hippolyte Dreyfus of Paris interpreting into French. Here and there one noted that the French translation was undergoing still further interpretation by Esperantists for the benefit of neighbors who did not understand French but knew Esperanto, - the occasion itself offering a noteworthy argument for the imminent need of a universal tongue. (Abdu’l-Baha, Divine Philosophy, p. 141) Our hope is that among the people the Esperanto language may hereafter have a powerful effect. Thou hast now sown the seed. Assuredly it will grow. Its growth dependeth upon God. (Abdu’l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu’l-Baha, p. 308) Esperanto has been in wide use, more so than any similar language, all over the world, and the Bahá’ís have been encouraged by both the Master and the Guardian to learn it and to translate Bahá’í literature into it. We cannot be sure it will be the chosen language of the future; but as it is the one which has spread most, both East and West, we should certainly continue to co-operate with its members, learn to speak it, and translate Bahá’í literature into it. (Shoghi Effendi through his Secretary) (Compilations, Principles of Bahai Administration, p. 27)

Aasha (2008-11-10 09:50:30)

Although common language is needed for economic growth and civilisation, nothing can withstand the language of love when it comes with pure heart. Even silence speaks a thousand words. Language merely speaks the language of convenient rather than certainty.

justinlessard (2008-12-01 18:40:41)

Several ministries are attempting to translate the Bible into various languages that have never heard the Gospel. This helps revive the use of the language in a big way. They feel less need to learn, and thereby teach, other neighboring languages. Check out more on this at: <http://justinlessard.wordpress.com/2008/11/30/we-are-blessed-to-have-gods-word/>

amzolt (2008-12-01 19:33:51)

Justin, Thanks for that input!! Having Scripture in your native language is a plus for the individual and the culture!!!

### 1.8.3 Path Toward Peace - Step Ten (2008-10-06 17:05)



[1]

#### *Two Wings of Progress: Material Achievements and Spiritual Perfections*

Ever wondered why, if we're such brainy and advanced creatures, we have so many critical crises going on?

Ever pondered how spiritual solutions to those crises could resolve even the material factors?

What's wrong with the quote in the following news item?

**From The Moultrie Observer:** [2]An Energy Overview: "A U.S. declaration of energy independence to be achieved in the next decade can develop the 'know how' to reconstitute the basis for our material civilization. This would replace the now skeletal wealth-generating engines of the smoke-staked industrial age with means of many magnitudes greater productive and wealth-building potential."

The first thing wrong with that quote is the idea of U.S. energy independence.

When will the leaders get it right? We live in an interdependent world. Anything based on nationalistic independence will fail and, in the process, harm others in the Human Family.

The other thing wrong with the quote is the article it's in: a careful analysis of the "solution" to a failed factor in the equation of material civilization. There is no mention of spiritual values. The only word even coming close is "ideal" and it indicates a material use of brain-power directed toward a material solution for a material world...

There is no doubt that we live in a material world.

There is also no doubt that the proponents of strict material solutions for the crises of our world have completely failed to resolve those crises and daily add to the confusion and suffering of our Family.

Material civilization has contributed many wonderful and positively helpful products and processes to our struggle as *spiritual entities with material bodies* living on the Earth.

The issue is the continuing and disturbing failure to recognize the spiritual side of the equation...

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"Wert thou to attain to but a dewdrop of the crystal waters of divine knowledge, thou wouldst readily realize that true life is not the life of the flesh but the life of the spirit. For the life of the flesh is common to both men and animals, whereas the life of the spirit is possessed only by the pure in heart who have quaffed from the ocean of faith and partaken of the fruit of certitude. This life knoweth no death, and this existence is crowned by immortality. Even as it hath been said: 'He who is a true believer liveth both in this world and in the world to come.' If by 'life' be meant this earthly life, it is evident that death must needs overtake it."

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 120

"A superficial culture, unsupported by a cultivated morality, is as 'a confused medley of dreams', [1] and external lustre without inner perfection is 'like a vapor in the desert which the thirsty dreameth to be water'. [2] For results which would win the good pleasure of God and secure the peace and well-being of man, could never be fully achieved in a merely external civilization....

"Be just: can this nominal civilization, unsupported by a genuine civilization of character, bring about the peace and well-being of the people or win the good pleasure of God? Does it not, rather, connote the destruction of man's estate and pull down the pillars of happiness and peace?"

[1 Qur'án 12:44; 21:5.]

[2 Qur'án 24:39.]

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp. 60-62

[3] **Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series**

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amzolt (2008-10-09 02:22:29)

Liara, Again, Amen!!!

Liara Covert (2008-10-08 23:55:01)

To clarify what I said before, "it is not anyone's job to impose ideas." Yet, human beings do this, consciously or unconsciously based on what they feel is important to them. It is up to each person to decide which ideas to adopt. We are all called toward improved life experience. Catherine's comment about 'the religion of kindness' makes a powerful point. We are each the creator of our own experience. Unless we choose to view our lives through selfless senses or the 'eyes of Source,' then we are not choosing to be all that we are. To guide all your thought, word and behavior by love or positive feelings, opens you to all you are.

Liara Covert (2008-10-07 02:52:14)

Leaders will do what they perceive is "right" at a given moment. That is not to say this will be compatible with your own view of what is desirable. Each human being creates a reality based on personal feelings. If you maintain your own expectation and attitude, then your real life situation will evolve accordingly. If you feel disappointment, then you are distracted from your expectation. You are urged to work through that inner disappointment to the point where you feel some kind of relief, and then you change your energy vibration. What you see, highlight and experience relates back to how you feel. The evidence emphatically surrounds you. Truth is felt. Stop facing reality and start creating reality.

amzolt (2008-10-07 03:24:09)

Liara, Can you extrapolate a little more about how your thoughts, so well expressed in this comment, relate to the two aspects of material achievements and spiritual perfections?

Catherine. (2008-10-07 06:20:34)

So innocent and powerless as we are, as standing in a dictionary how potent for good and evil we become in the hands of one who knows how to combine them. Nothing is illegal if one hundred business men decide to do it. Pray there's immeasurable power in it.

amzolt (2008-10-07 06:23:26)

Catherine, Thank you, dear heart!

Liara Covert (2008-10-07 06:48:34)

Achievement reflects desire or ambition. You can desire to learn on different levels, to obtain physical things, even think you work to attain levels of spiritual enlightenment. What makes sense to a person at a given moment can also change in the next moment. You may have different desires and work to achieve them simultaneously. You may also attune to energy and forces unseen and go with the flow. This does not require struggle. Spiritual perfection exists all the time. It always has. Each human being is perfect. Yet, he who nurtures ambition forgets there is no need to "achieve." As Catherine so astutely remarks, legality is subjective. Self-interest and its consequences are also subjective. As you learn to rise above what you used to fear, you realize you are safe, secure, loved and nothing harms you unless you choose to believe it does.

amzolt (2008-10-07 14:00:37)

Liara, You say, "This does not require struggle.". What would \*you\* say to a person who feels they need to struggle to find the freedom you profess? What steps can they take to "lose" the feeling of struggle?

Path Toward Peace ~Prologue & laquo; RAVENSCAWL (2008-10-07 17:10:23)

[...] education Step Nine: Resolving the impediments induced by the multiplicity of languages Step Ten: Two Wings of Progress Step Eleven: The Power of a Moral [...]

Liara Covert (2008-10-07 21:37:58)

Struggle is a choice. Not struggling is also a choice. A person needs to arrive at a level of awareness where the nature of choices is better understood. Individual human beings only accept and take responsibility for their lives when their consciousness is ready. It is not your job to teach people or force ideas on them. If someone creates a need to struggle, then somewhere, deep inside him, he is convinced he has lessons to learn from that. He will only shift mindsets and stop struggling when he has learned all his soul feels that he must learn from that particular experience.

anzolt (2008-10-07 22:12:08)

Liara, "It is not your job to teach people or force ideas on them." It is certainly not my job to force ideas on people but it is my job to teach... "He will only shift mindsets and stop struggling when he has learned all his soul feels that he must learn from that particular experience." This is why I feel it is my job to teach: to, hopefully, help people learn what their soul has to teach them; to help them navigate their experiences in a productive fashion...

YogaforCynics (2008-10-08 04:57:22)

In answer to your questions at the top, obviously that depends on how you define "spiritual." To most people, "spiritual" is almost synonymous with religion. In that sense, my answer would have to be "spiritual solutions" are a huge part of the problem. Organized religion has probably been the most destructive force in the history of the world and continues to be so. And, certainly, any exclusionary belief that pits my God (or lack thereof) against somebody else's, or gives those with my beliefs a name that differentiates us from them, does nothing but create a more divided and hateful world (Krishnamurti took this even further, saying that all beliefs are inherently divisive, and I'm not sure he wasn't right). To be fair, I've read enough of this blog to know that what I've just described isn't what you're talking about, nonetheless, I'm a bit dubious about the claim I see again and again among "spiritual types" (who include most of my friends and they seem to count me among them) is that the problem is that our society has lost the spirituality we had in such wonderful past times as the Middle Ages or the Puritan colonies or the corrupt theocracy of the Lamas in Tibet. The trouble with that is that practically everybody in America believes in God, while the far more compassionate societies of Northern Europe are the most atheistic in the history of the world (I'm not counting the forced, official atheism of communist countries). Certainly, it seems strange to say that the U.S. has been trying for "purely material solutions"—this is a country in which nobody can seriously so much as consider running for president without publically espousing his belief in God, and in which conservative fundamentalists have played such large roles in the government over the past thirty years—including in undercutting environmentalism, as they believe the Rapture will come before things get really bad...and, in fact, it's in order to make that happen sooner that they seem to see armed conflict in the Middle East as a good thing. The George W. Bushes and Osama Bin Ladens of the world certainly see the "spiritual side of the equation"—in fact, it's central to their worldviews, so it seems awfully strange to me that anyone would imply that it's this "side of the equation" that's being neglected. Would I like to see a society in which people understand our deep interconnectedness, that we are, ultimately, all one? Yes, I would (hence that thing above about spiritual types considering me one of them). However, in doing so, I think the last thing we need is to turn to the Koran or Bible or any other text with so much blood splashed

on its pages, and away from religious belief (which would include secular religions like Marxism, as well as atheism, which is based on suppositions every bit as unprovable as those of any religion). Wow, I wasn't planning on going on such a lengthy rant and hope I haven't given (too much) offense....

ravenscawl (2008-10-08 05:34:58)

Liara "He will only shift mindsets and stop struggling when he has learned all his soul feels that he must learn from that particular experience." Or when his mind and/or spirit is broken.... "It is not your job to teach people or force ideas on them." I assure you the the idea of peace cannot be forced, Indeed it is to be planted like a seed and cultivated, and one who would seek to share the knowledge of it's growth is a Teacher... kem

amzolt (2008-10-08 14:36:49)

YogaforCynics, No offense taken. Much insight gained. I fully understand how the term "spiritual" can induce feelings that rise up in defense against the antics and crimes of members of organized religions. My own Faith says: "Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth, give birth to spirituality, and bring life and light to each heart. If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division, it were better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a religion would be a truly religious act. For it is clear that the purpose of a remedy is to cure; but if the remedy should only aggravate the complaint it had better be left alone. Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion. All the holy prophets were as doctors to the soul; they gave prescriptions for the healing of mankind; thus any remedy that causes disease does not come from the great and supreme Physician." Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 130

Catherine. (2008-10-08 15:59:21)

Speaking of religion. My religion is simple. My religion is kindness.! Men build to many walls and not enough bridges.!

amzolt (2008-10-08 16:02:55)

Supreme wisdom, Catherine!! Bless you !!!

Robin Easton (2008-10-10 19:08:36)

"“Lord,” I prayed, “am I dead or alive?” A dazzling play of light filled the whole horizon. A soft rumbling vibration formed itself into words: “What has life or death to do with Light? In the image of My Light I have made you. The relativities of life and death belong to the cosmic dream. Behold your dreamless being! Awake, my child, awake!”” Well, I was going to leave a comment here and then I did something I don't usually do. I started reading all the other comments....and completely lost my train of thought. It went out the window. So I respond to some of the comments. I had a discussion the other day with a very close friend and we talked about healers and healing. After she said that I was a healer. I said, "No, I am only ME. I have no desire to set out to heal or teach anyone." My friend looked puzzled and I said, "I am not saying that things I may say or do or be might not help another person heal or learn. But to say I am going to heal or teach another person doesn't exist for me. It's the wrong focus. I have stepped away from 'being' into 'doing'. I prefer to focus on 'being' Robin, 'being' Life, 'being' Love as much as I can. I prefer to focus on letting go and simply loving. I don't need books, or words or concepts...I simply want to love. I am compelled to love, whether it is returned or not. That does not matter. I prefer to focus on creating positive change that infuses me with love and healing. In doing these things if my life touches another person's and they grow or heal from it...wonderful. But to step away from myself and say, 'I am going to

'teach' someone...then I am not 'being' with/in myself and they are not really getting ME. If in being myself and moving through the world doing the thing I crave most, which is to love, if that changes lives or the planet then that is grace." I also believe that we are ALL teachers (whether we are wise or not, whether we are kind or not, whether we are learned or not). I have been around "painful" people or in painful situations and they have at times been my most cathartic and powerful teachers and healers, because I chose to use what came at me for growth...to create more Life, wisdom, compassion and Love. So I think in essence we are ALL teachers, all of Life is a teacher, if we want to learn. But as to forcing myself, my beliefs, or my desire to teach or heal on another person I have no desire to do that. Why? Because I've learned that most people are already full and wise in themselves and what they really need is to be SEEN. Once seen they flourish because they already ARE the Divine. I believe that each person has their own path that is so beautifully unique that no can see themselves better than they can. Each person is a unique tangent of Life. And just as I saw (in the rainforest) individual creatures/beings within a given species evolving when all the rest were not...I know that we humans are the same. Life is the same. That's infinity. That is the vastness of potential and evolution. In light of that I can only be fully myself and if that heals or teaches another person then that is beautiful, but I cannot begin to know another's path of evolution. They may be walking a path no one has ever walked before. Because Life/Light is forever expanding. In my teaching I may bring them down to a level that is far below their own. I would do well to simply listen, learn and love. I might see things I've never seen before. The End!!! LOL LOL : )

amzolt (2008-10-10 20:13:54)

Robin, I loved the way you ended your comment with a hearty Laugh !!! Is the first paragraph, "Lord," I prayed....Awake, my child, awake!", your words? The whole comment thrilled my soul; it has the fragrance of divine roses... You know I'm a Bahá'í but I don't think I ever told you the meaning of that Persian word: Follower of the Light.

Robin Easton (2008-10-10 20:34:18)

"Oops" I forgot to credit that quote. It came from David's site who posted the quote and story which you can read here: <http://davidnotes.com/2008/10/10/robin-easton-exceptions-paramahansa/> I think you will enjoy it and relate to it. And I did not know that Bahá'í meant LIGHT. How beautiful that is. Yes, it is about Light. Also I am very touched by your words. Thanks Alex.

amzolt (2008-10-10 23:14:42)

Robin, Thanks for the link!!

Aasha (2008-11-10 10:31:41)

"A friend will know our tears before it reaches our eyes". We will only realise the material achievement if we are spritually prepared. Spritual perfection is the only way to overcome greed and practice sharing and love among mankind.

## 1.8.4 Path Toward Peace - Step Eleven (2008-10-09 02:09)



[1]

### *The Power of a Moral Character*

This is the most difficult blog post I've ever written.

It's the last in a series of eleven posts concerned with the [2]*Path Toward Peace*.

It's a summation of all the other posts and a clear call toward embracing the single factor that will assure [3]the other steps in the process are capable of being activated and practiced productively.

**From the Financial Times:** [4]Paul Newman And A Lesson In Morality

**From the Morris County, New Jersey, Daily Record:** [5]Morality, honesty will help the nation

**From The American Enterprise Institute:** [6]Does the Free Market Corrode Moral Character?

**From the Irish Times:** [7]Sarkozy calls for capitalism with dose of morality

We've covered a lot of ground in this series:

Racism, Economic Disparity, Altruism, Nationalism, Religious Strife, Equality of Women and Men, Universal Education, a Global Language, and the Twin Powers of Civilization: Material Achievements and Spiritual Perfections.

Now, we face the one quality that makes us able to bring all the other issues to a harmonious resolution: **A Moral Response to the Crises Stalking Our Human Family.**

So, why did I say this is the most difficult blog post I've ever written?

Bringing up the word "Morality" in our ultimately materialized culture can make people fade away very quickly; and, I want people to attend to the issues raised in this blog.

"Morality" is a word that can induce feelings of stricture—loss of "freedom" and a sense that one has to abide by someone else's idea of what's right and wrong.

There's a common attitude floating around that we humans are the top of the evolutionary tree (more than likely true) and we have the "right" to do whatever we "think" is best.

The whole issue of Religion and where our best Guide for appropriate behavior comes from.

And, most importantly, I'm certainly not the best person to be telling other people what they "should" do...

Still, there are attitudes and actions that *work better than others* when we attempt to further the impending realization of Global Peace. And, they are **Moral Attitudes and Actions**.

Here's a list of virtues from the [8]Virtues Project that are powerful medicine for enabling us to take the kind of action necessary to advance the process of attaining Global Peace:

assertiveness forgiveness orderliness  
caring friendliness patience  
cleanliness generosity peacefulness  
commitment gentleness perseverance  
compassion helpfulness purposefulness  
confidence honesty reliability  
consideration honor respect  
cooperation humility responsibility  
courage idealism self-discipline  
courtesy integrity service  
creativity joyfulness tact  
detachment justice thankfulness  
determination kindness tolerance  
diligence love trust  
enthusiasm loyalty trustworthiness  
excellence moderation truthfulness  
flexibility modesty understanding  
unity

I encourage each of you to check yourselves against this list—take an inventory of your moral capa-

bility—find out if you have the weapons, *at the ready* , that will empower you to aid our beleaguered Human Family in its Quest toward Peace and Tranquility...

*Spiritual Quotes:*

”O people of God! Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men. This can best be achieved through pure and holy deeds, through a virtuous life and a goodly behavior.”  
Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 93

”Within the very breath of such souls as are pure and sanctified far-reaching potentialities are hidden. So great are these potentialities that they exercise their influence upon all created things.”  
Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, quoting Bahá’u’lláh, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 23

”...the happiness and greatness, the rank and station, the pleasure and peace, of an individual have never consisted in his personal wealth, but rather in his excellent character, his high resolve, the breadth of his learning, and his ability to solve difficult problems. How well has it been said: ’On my back is a garment which, were it sold for a penny, that penny would be worth far more; yet within the garment is a soul which, if you weighed it against all the souls in the world, would prove greater and nobler.’”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 23

[9] **Read the Rest of the Path Toward Peace Series**

[10] **Stumble This Post**

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[11] *Let’s have a conversation !*

**You can also explore and discuss the ideas of this post at**

[12] *Our Evolution’s Forums.*

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/morality1.gif>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/path-toward-peace/>
3. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/path-toward-peace/>
4. [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9c61af1c-91ac-11dd-b5cd-0000779fd18c.html?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9c61af1c-91ac-11dd-b5cd-0000779fd18c.html?nclick_check=1)
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10. <http://www.addthis.com/web-button.php?type=bn&bm=3&fd=3&where=blog&url=http%3A%2F%2F&blogtype=wordpress&stats=y>
11. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)

12. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

13. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Nadim (2008-10-09 07:34:44)

Dear Alex, This has been a truly illuminating series, and I appreciate all the hard work you have put in. You have given us a great (daunting!) checklist to refer to. The discussion of the term "morality" I think reflects many people's sentiments... in a sense there is a tendency to confuse "morality" with "moralizing", which in turn gets associated with religion. Superficially - and looking at the state of many religious communities - this may be the case. But some thoughtful reflection on the essence of true religion will dispel these concerns. In studying the lives of the divine Prophets, reading the lessons in the Holy Books you have quoted from, and paying attention to their inner meanings, we see how they actually (dare I say it) complement one another. "Verily, we should consider the divine Prophets as the intermediaries, but mankind has made use of Them as causes of dissension and pretexts for warfare and strife. In reality, They were the intermediaries of love and reconciliation. If They were not sources of love and fellowship amongst men, then undoubtedly They were not true, for the divine wisdom and purpose in sending the Prophets was the manifestation of love in human hearts. Therefore, we must investigate reality. First of all, let us determine whether these Prophets were valid or not by using rational proofs and shining arguments, not simply by quoting traditionary evidences, because traditions are divergent and the source of dissension." Abdu'l-Baha  
Warm greetings, Nadim

Catherine. (2008-10-09 06:21:02)

The bridge Between manifestation and Reality It's one of the most important things to come to realize as we all walk down the path of self awarness. Where is the bridge that closes the gap between our conscious and subconscious realities? Keep an open mind, be open to any and all possibilities.!

amzolt (2008-10-09 15:06:38)

Thank you, again and again, Catherine !

amzolt (2008-10-09 15:07:41)

Nadim, Your presence here and your astute comments are a blessing !

ravenscawl (2008-10-09 15:16:12)

Morality is a thorn to Humanity, For its reality is a discourse founded most often in circumstance, Thus lending itself as directional, most often only to be judged in retrospect for use by those who would aspire to circumnavigate it. Kem

Catherine. (2008-10-09 16:59:49)

It requires self esteem to receive- not self love but just a pleasant acquaintanances and liking for oneself. Calling this knowdlege of transplant.!

amzolt (2008-10-09 17:00:08)

Always making me think, Kem!

Evita (2008-10-09 20:50:39)

Ah yes Alex - morality...this is indeed not an easy subject to approach. My experience with this is that in

some religions people feel obligated to be a certain way...have a certain "moral code" instead of following their human essence and hence act out in all sorts of ways. The truth is when we look deep within we know what is "right" and what is so called "wrong" in our actions and words towards others. We do not need anyone to guilt us into doing or saying anything or believing anything. We only need to look within and snap back into the consciousness of light that we are. Ah, but that is the problem....how many people really look within themselves?

amzolt (2008-10-09 21:15:27)

Evita, Yes, how many do look within—gets hard for them with all the outer sensationalism going on... This sentence of yours is a true Gem: "We only need to look within and snap back into the consciousness of light that we are."

Liara Covert (2008-10-10 02:15:08)

Another perspective is that no path to peace exists. If you believe that love and peace are part of human essence, then the path described may be understood as the path to removing self-created illusion. You have all you need and do not choose to realize it. Instead, you prefer to learn lessons on your way back to realizing the truth of who you are.

amzolt (2008-10-10 02:18:29)

Imagining that people are not suffering from a lack of global peace, persisting in a self-induced dream-world of there-really-are-no-problems, will not aid our Human Family.

Liara Covert (2008-10-10 02:49:35)

You can view the "path to peace" as an individual perception and/or as a collective situation. You can begin to grasp consciousness as an individual and also as a collective experience. As you evolve to discern energy at different levels, you begin to feel stability and inner peace in comparison to what stability and inner peace are not. What you think about will attract situations and events of a similar energy vibration. You will perceive those vibrations that are most like how you feel. If you choose to think or talk about "lack" of anything, then you will sense these things more strongly. If you choose to think about peace, then you will invite more of that. Another way to look at this is to consider "peace" demonstrations versus "anti-war" demonstrations. The mindset and energy vibrations of participants in each event differs. Some people unknowingly contribute to conflict in low energy. They are confrontational. Imagine how people you associate with peaceful mindsets. People like Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama and others promote global peace in their word choices, writing and particular behaviour. Every human being is a student and a teacher. We learn from all.

YogaforCynics (2008-10-10 04:15:14)

I'm not sure where in the world you're writing from but where I live, in the U.S., the problem with the word "morality," especially when it's used in conjunction with "family," is that it tends to be used by politicians and media to mean "sexual puritanism." What it DOESN'T mean in our public discourse is compassion, pacifism, or concern for the poor and downtrodden—in fact, those tend to be associated with communism. It also doesn't mean caring for the earth and the air and water we all depend on, since that implies pagan earth worship or, again, communism. From what I see, something similar has happened in most parts of the world where religion plays a large part in public life. As such, religion seems, more often than not, to be the enemy of the morality that you describe here, and far moreso than "materialized culture" (particularly as a lot of religion, such as the extremely popular "prosperity gospel," actually encourages materialism, just as

churches throughout history, and throughout the world today, have encouraged war). In your kind response to my previous comment you described your own religion, differentiating it from what I had been describing. I'm aware of Bahai, somewhat, as well as a number of other faiths that do seem to be truly working in a spirit of peace and love. Then, I can say the same for a lot of atheists and agnostics (in the interest of full disclosure, I consider myself a committed agnostic—not in the wishy-washy sense of not knowing what to believe, but in the sense of believing strongly that neither I nor anyone else can ever truly know. Thus, I consider doubt a far greater virtue than faith). Thus, again, while I think that you and I share many values, I do not see religion as the solution to anything.

Catherine. (2008-10-10 15:21:48)

Remember that your character is your destiny. If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, you will be very lonely. I figure God put me here and He can take me back anytime He pleases. Put your heart, mind, intellect and soul even to your smallest acts. This is the secret of success!

amzolt (2008-10-10 18:20:04)

Catherine, Oh, so true, my dear!!

amzolt (2008-10-10 18:26:32)

YogaforCynics, You said, "I do not see religion as the solution to anything." I feel it depends on the specific religion. If it does the things you've said, promoting war or extremely materialistic living, then, no, it is not part of the solution. Then, again, one must differentiate between the religion and the way its followers practice it. Most religions, in their pure state (just after the Messenger of God manifested) were potent solutions for human ills. It's when the humans begin to dogmatize the teachings and interpose their limited thinking that things go sour...

ravenscawl (2008-10-11 05:11:53)

"Remember how we talked about how religions are a lot like lamp shades?" she asks the group. "They may look different, they may be different colors or sit in different rooms, but they all have the light of God inside of them." Layli Miller-Muro Class Teaches Virtues to Children of Many Faiths <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=87809254>

amzolt (2008-10-11 05:23:46)

Wonderful, Kem !!! I'm familiar with the type of children's classes described in the link you provided. The consensus is that most parents want something like this!!

Aasha (2008-11-10 10:45:56)

The reality of death is not the fear of human, its how they die is being feared of. Most of us wants to be remembered and loved during our absence. How we can achieve this? The reward will only attain its position if you reflect and polish your character. Character is weigh on the morale values one carry upon themselves. In whatever position you may be, if your decision is based on a platform of pure heart and good thoughts & character, success is always by your side.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-29 12:55:48)

Very perspicuous and powerful quote! Care to share the source?

Hardeep Zinta (2009-04-29 12:43:13)

dear bahai friend, It is very very difficult for me to write about morality. purity is my morality. be pure in both way (words and also in actions)here are some verses about this topic. "Be pure,o People of God,be pure;be righteous,be righteous"—— "Let the remembrance of death be the patched coat you wear,let the purity of virginity be your way in the world,and let faith in the lord be your walking stick". your's saincerly, Hardeep Zinta, Ukraine.

Hardeep Zinta (2009-05-23 09:17:45)

dear bahai friend, I took first spirtual quote from Bahai faith and second quotation from sikhisem. your sincerely, Hardeep Zinta, Ukraine.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-23 13:30:38)

Thank you for your feedback! The Word is universal...

### 1.8.5 GoodBadGoodBadGood (2008-10-11 00:37)



[1]

What *is* good or bad?

Can anyone say with surety that any given act is one or the other?

Aren't there cases where what's thought bad ends up furthering good?

How the heck should we decide?

Some would say, "*Should* we decide?".

**From Country Music Television:** [2]Good Songs for Bad Times

**From the Times Online - UK:** [3]Why you can bet that a good read will be truly bad

**From MarketWatch:** [4]The bad economy is good for the environment

I'm not about to tell you what's good for you or what you do that's bad. It wouldn't be good for me to do that 'cause it's bad form—won't make me or you any better.

There are a ton of sources that will tell you what's good or bad, from scholarly essays to rap

songs. There are even people shouting on street corners, shouting right in your face, that you're going to Hell.

And, with penetrating effect and long-lasting influence, our mothers and fathers (and, sometimes, sisters and brothers and uncles and aunts and grandparents) have told us we should do This and never do That...

I'm a member of a Faith that my parents never practiced. They were Christian ministers and I'm a Bahá'í. They worked to put their Faith into practice and I struggle, daily, to be true to mine.

So, is it reasonable to cling to the moral standards of a religion? Is it more reasonable to cling to a humanistic, scientific view of human behavior? Can the two perspectives be blended?

Are we intelligent enough to decide what's good or bad on our own with no input from others, whether human or divine?

Just to keep the discussion lively, consider this: *Within every horribly bad happening is the seed of a gloriously good outcome.*

Here's a video that should stir up even more discussion. It starts out with a bit of a shock, quickly becomes fascinating, and ends as pure delight!

[youtube=http://jp.youtube.com/watch?v=oP59tQf\_njc]

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"Question. – Is man a free agent in all his actions, or is he compelled and constrained?

"Answer. – This question is one of the most important and abstruse of divine problems. If God wills, another day, at the beginning of dinner, we will undertake the explanation of this subject in detail; now we will explain it briefly, in a few words, as follows. Some things are subject to the free will of man, such as justice, equity, tyranny and injustice, in other words, good and evil actions; it is evident and clear that these actions are, for the most part, left to the will of man. But there are certain things to which man is forced and compelled, such as sleep, death, sickness, decline of power, injuries and misfortunes; these are not subject to the will of man, and he is not responsible for them, for he is compelled to endure them. But in the choice of good and bad actions he is free, and he commits them according to his own will."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 248

"The sundering of science and religion is but one example of the tendency of the human mind (which is necessarily limited in its capacity) to concentrate on one virtue, one aspect of truth, one goal, to the exclusion of others. This leads, in extreme cases, to fanaticism and the utter distortion of truth, and in all cases to some degree of imbalance and inaccuracy. A scholar who is imbued with an understanding of the broad teachings of the Faith will always remember that being a scholar does not exempt him from the primal duties and purposes for which all human beings are created. All men,

not scholars alone, are exhorted to seek out and uphold the truth, no matter how uncomfortable it may be.”

The Universal House of Justice, *Messages 1963 to 1986*, p. 390

[5]Stumble This Post

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[6] *Let's have a conversation !*

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2. <http://blog.cmt.com/2008-10-10/good-songs-for-bad-times/>
3. [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest\\_contributors/article4902900.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest_contributors/article4902900.ece)
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7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Liara Covert (2008-10-11 03:46:35)

One perspective is "good" and "bad" are inventions selected when human beings forget all experience has value. It has been suggested that the words you use reflect your own state of grace or level of self-acceptance.

Catherine. (2008-10-11 05:10:12)

The man who views the world at 50 the same as he did at 20 has waisted 30 years of his life,good or bad.!Pretty much as Journalists who do not believe the lies of politicians,but they repeat them- which is even worse,journalism is publishing what someone doesn't want us to know the rest is propaganda.It is up to the individual to know what is good,or bad,and right from wrong,with a guided and honest upbringing.Almost like a Languash which is an anoymous,collective and unconscious art, the result of the creativity of tousends of generations.

amzolt (2008-10-11 05:25:39)

Once again, Catherine, you come through with solid wisdom !!!

amzolt (2008-10-11 05:26:43)

Liara, You said, "...the words you use reflect your own state of grace or level of self-acceptance." I heartily agree!

Dr. Mohamed Taher (2008-10-11 12:54:31)

Good or bad, isn't it all in the mind, and mind they say is all One. Its the vision of the beholder that makes the difference, I suppose. The idea of forum, that you just initiated is good if you get good discussions and can avoid the bad diversions. So, again we are floating in the middle of good and bad, not intentionally although. Best, MT

amzolt (2008-10-11 15:34:35)

Thanks for your comment, Dr. Our minds do seem to be the key to discerning good from bad though the heart is quick to follow with conscience-pangs.

davidlind (2008-10-12 01:01:45)

So if I shoot you tomorrow it might be good because next week you were going to run over a little kid. Not intentionally of course. But I saved the little kid. But my intent was not to save him. My intent was evil. Something else intervened and made lemonade out of lemons. Thanks! But I'm still going to jail and I will also not be able to vote in the next election. Darn! Bottom line is I did a bad thing when I shot you. Your family will lose a lot. And maybe that little kid was a budding serial killer. Too many variables. We need to do what's right. Or we don't matter.

amzolt (2008-10-12 01:22:25)

David, Absolutely ! It's refreshing to hear definite moral values being expressed. I do hope you realize my questions in the post were to make folks with less definite ideas think... But then, if someone reads to the end of the post, the spiritual quotes should let them know where I'm coming from.

kikolani (2008-10-12 18:03:37)

I think that if you know your own personal values, you will be able to easily judge good from bad using them. If you feel guilt, ask yourself if it is because you betrayed your own values, or those that others have put into your mind. Also, I think some bad things are done as means to a good end, like breaking another society's laws to free an innocent person from imprisonment, for example. Kristi

amzolt (2008-10-12 18:20:16)

kikolani, Thanks for your input! I wish more people actually had a clear inner state of evaluating their actions based on more than the shifting and unstable moral situation so prevalent.

ravenscawl (2008-10-13 03:30:05)

"Also, I think some bad things are done as means to a good end" I know I've certainly laid many a paves in the road of good intentions... kem

amzolt (2008-10-13 13:07:18)

Kem, "...many a paves in the road of good intentions" Wonderful phrase !!!

Robin Easton (2008-10-13 16:25:33)

This is such a fun post as it makes us think and inspires us to respond. But again, I did what I hever do and I read all the other comments and realized that combined they had all said it all. The only thing I will say is this (and I say it not because it hasn't already been said but simply to have fun and to statisfy my desire to leave a comment :) :) I think all any of us can do is listen to our hearts truth, and our gut

instincts, and we may or may not be right but at least we have acted as consciously as we can. And as to having free will or as to having control over our lives...I think we can simply do the best we can and that we don't have control over everything....BUT for myself I almost 100 % have control over how I respond to any given situation. I simply look at life as manure (and I don't mean "crap") but as a VERY rich growing medium that can produce the most amazing flowers, fruits and vegetables! It may not always smell great, but if we don't mind getting our hands a bit dirty (sometimes a LOT dirty) we can produce miracles and wonders beyond our wildest imagination.

amzolt (2008-10-13 16:52:21)

Wonderful, Robin!! Now, I can use the Manure Method of Motivation !!!

davidlind (2008-10-13 20:18:27)

Read to the end of the post? What sort of strange suggestion is this?

amzolt (2008-10-13 20:47:12)

David, Did you like the video?

Danette (2008-10-18 22:31:26)

There was an episode in Star Trek the Original Series, in which Captain Kirk had to let Edith Keeler die, for if she had lived, Hitler would have taken over the world. Granted, that is strictly sci-fi, but it goes to show you that the Butterfly effect is something to be pondered. You go left, or do you go right?

amzolt (2008-10-19 00:33:55)

Danette, Great reference! And, thanks for mentioning the Butterfly Effect...

Leanne (2008-10-22 03:56:44)

In far too many ways, America has become very black and white. Everything is either/or. One problem with this world view is that not only is everything set up as a binary, but one side of the binary is usually seen as superior to the other. White is not just the opposite of black, it's BETTER than black. Even among dark skinned races, lighter skin is seen as better. Masculine is not just the opposite of feminine, it's SUPERIOR to the feminine. But not everything in this world is a binary. Red is not the opposite of blue. Masculine is not the opposite of feminine. Happy is not the opposite of sad. Love is not the opposite of hate. We tend to think of them that way, but the world is much richer than that. We hurt ourselves and dishonor each other when we limit ourselves this way. We can each do a little to make the world a better place if we start exploring the joys of "both/and" thinking in our own lives, and with our own friends. Something to think about in this very binary election cycle we're in!

amzolt (2008-10-22 04:05:25)

Leanne, Wonderful Wisdom!! Both/And all the way !!!

## 1.8.6 What's The Use of Sacrificing ? (2008-10-14 01:22)



[1]  
Ever wanted to sacrifice yourself?

I can hear someone saying, *Why in hell would anyone want to do that?*

Our current world culture permits some to have the feeling they never have to give up anything while forcing millions into a state of perpetual sacrifice.

What's the solution?

**From Y Net News:** [2]Arab driver who ignited Akko riots 'ready to sacrifice himself'

**From Fair Investment Company:** [3]Scots sacrifice savings accounts to pay off debts, finds Lloyds TSB

**From Daily News Central:** [4]Don't Sacrifice Health to Stay Afloat in Tough Times

What's really gained by never sacrificing?

What if mothers and fathers don't sacrifice for their children?

What if politicians don't sacrifice for their constituents?

What if the rich don't sacrifice for the poor?

Time for a definition. "Sacrifice" has a root meaning derived from "sacred"—to make holy. It's highest meaning is to give up something lesser for something greater.

Current culture seems to short-change most everything, even word meanings. Sacrifice has come to mean merely loss—giving up and not getting in return.

Naturally, if one is too egotistical, it's very difficult to see what can be gained by sacrificing; but, one thing definitely acquired is growth.

The best example I can think of is the growth each of us has experienced in our journey through life on the Earth.

The first thing sacrificed is the womb. Next is mother's milk. Then comes the loss of security in the shelter of home through introduction to the wider world. Each grade of school sees the sacrifice of limited understanding for an ever-growing fund of knowledge. Each love lost has the power to enlarge the heart. Every opportunity closed off opens new paths...

Even Life itself is lost with the rebirth of death—believed by some as new life in the ineffable Worlds of God.

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"Our greatest longing is that truth may be established in the world, and in this hope we draw near to one another in love and affection. Each and all are whole-hearted and selfless, willing to sacrifice all personal ambition to the grand ideal towards which they strive: Brotherly love and peace and union among men!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 100

"He bore hardships, he lived through misfortunes, he suffered afflictions. From the lips of the Manifestation he heard marvelous things. He was shown the lights of Paradise; he won his dearest wish. And at the end, when the Daystar of the world had set, he could endure no more, and flung himself into the sea. The waters of sacrifice closed over him; he was drowned, and he came, at last, to the Most High."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Memorials of the Faithful*, p. 35

"Know thou that when the Son of Man [Jesus] yielded up His breath to God, the whole creation wept with a great weeping. By sacrificing Himself, however, a fresh capacity was infused into all created things. Its evidences, as witnessed in all the peoples of the earth, are now manifest before thee. The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive, and resplendent Spirit."

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 85

"Ponder that which befell Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, may the life of all else be a sacrifice unto Him. How severe the afflictions which the leaders of the Jewish people and of the idol-worshippers caused to rain upon Him, Who is the sovereign Lord of all, in consequence of His

proclamation of the unity of God and of the truth of His Message! By the righteousness of My Cause! My Pen groaneth, and all created things weep with a great weeping, as a result of the woes He suffered at the hands of them that have broken the Covenant of God, violated His Testament, rejected His proofs, and disputed His signs. Thus recount We unto thee the tale of that which happened in days past, haply thou mayest comprehend.”  
Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 57

[5]Stumble This Post

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[6] *Let's have a conversation !*

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1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/sacrifice.gif>
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6. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-10-15 05:48:17)

Don't be a victim of circumstances around you. Believe that your life is worth living, and your belief will create the fact.!

Catherine. (2008-10-14 06:22:32)

We live in a vibrational Universe. Everything is a vibration...from thought to thing, science and spirituality both agree that what appears to be empty space is actually a field of unlimited consciousness and potential. What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning.!

On Baha'is as Vandalizing the Few Remaining Certitudes of Life: The mockery above, the praise below | Baha'i Views (2008-10-21 20:05:16)

[...] Our Evolution, a blog by Alexander Zolkai, an ascriber to the Baha'i faith, comes a wonderful look at the original meaning of the word sacrifice, with some great thoughts about why it is so important to the well being of us [...]

Points of Interest, #34 &laquo; Mind, Soul, and Body (2008-10-29 16:10:22)

[...] Our Evolution, a blog by Alexander Zolkai, an ascriber to the Baha'i faith, comes a wonderful look at the original meaning of the word sacrifice, with some great thoughts about why it is so important to the well being of us [...]

### 1.8.7 Are You Hungry ? (2008-10-15 05:32)



[1] **From OneWorld.net:** [2]”The \$700 billion bailout package for Wall Street recently passed by the U.S. government to mitigate the financial crisis ‘could have wiped out the last traces of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and squalor from the face of the Earth,’ said food and trade policy analyst Devinder Sharma.

So, the financiers who caused the crisis (and made the gap between affluent and squalid wider) are to be preferred over millions of other members of our Human Family?

Where is the justice in this situation?

How long will this assault on virtue and morality continue?

How the hell do the perpetrators of such vile imbalances sleep at night?

It’s become fairly obvious that purely economic or political solutions to global crises don’t work.

**From Inter Press Service:** [3]Poverty, fuel and other crises all interconnected

**From AFP:** [4]World finance chiefs grasp for solutions in firestorm

**From MarketWatch:** [5]Despite Market Rebound, Food Crisis to Follow, Experts Say

**From The Financial Times:** [6]Global bailouts "second-worst solution" to global crisis

It's time to realize why these "experts" in global business can't end our world's problems.

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"As the rich man enjoys his life surrounded by ease and luxuries, so the poor man must likewise have a home and be provided with sustenance and comforts commensurate with his needs. This readjustment of the social economic is of the greatest importance inasmuch as it insures the stability of the world of humanity; and until it is effected, happiness and prosperity are impossible."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Baha'i World Faith*, p. 240

"The fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of the heart and spirit.... Hearts must be so cemented together, love must become so dominant that the rich shall most willingly extend assistance to the poor and take steps to establish these economic adjustments permanently. If it is accomplished in this way, it will be most praiseworthy because then it will be for the sake of God and in the pathway of His service. For example, it will be as if the rich inhabitants of a city should say, 'It is neither just nor lawful that we should possess great wealth while there is abject poverty in this community,' and then willingly give their wealth to the poor, retaining only as much as will enable them to live comfortably.

"Strive, therefore, to create love in the hearts in order that they may become glowing and radiant. When that love is shining, it will permeate other hearts even as this electric light illumines its surroundings. When the love of God is established, everything else will be realized. This is the true foundation of all economics. Reflect upon it."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 238

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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2. <http://us.oneworld.net/issues/health/-/article/357926-world-hunger-bail-out>

3. [http://businessmirror.com.ph/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=399:inter-press-service-poverty-fuel-and-other-crises-all-interconnected&catid=28:opinion](http://businessmirror.com.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=399:inter-press-service-poverty-fuel-and-other-crises-all-interconnected&catid=28:opinion)

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8. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

9. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2008-10-16 04:40:42)

There are  $10^{11}$  Stars in the galaxy. That used to be a huge number. But it's less than the national deficit! We used to call them astronomical numbers. The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings.!

amzolt (2008-10-16 04:56:20)

Catherine, Brilliant Statement !!!!!!!!

praveen (2008-10-15 06:11:12)

Great post, quotes from the Master are thought provoking, Lets unite to rid the world from poverty!! Praveen. <http://www.spraveenitpro.blogspot.com>

On 19 + 2 Baha'i Blogs That Participated in Blog Action Day: The beginning of a list | Baha'i Views (2008-10-16 06:28:30)

[...] <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/10/15/are-you-hungry/> [...]

Cooking Lady (2008-10-18 14:05:11)

What galls me (beyond the entire incident itself) is has anyone seen their so called 'exit' packages. You could feed a small island alone on their 'severance' package. My tokus, they could easily have given up those financial perks and dumped it back into where it needed to be, but we know how that went!

amzolt (2008-10-18 15:51:51)

I think some of the Rich continue to demand more not for the actual use of the money but because it feeds their power...

Leanne (2008-10-20 19:38:42)

I know we're not supposed to become enmeshed in politics as they exist today, but I want to be an educated voter, so I watched the debates. I found it interesting that in the last one, McCain kept referring to Obama's plan for a tax break for the working and middle class and a tax hike for the richest 5 % as "redistribution of wealth." He repeated it several times, each time as if it were a positively revolting idea.

amzolt (2008-10-20 23:39:14)

Leanne, Oh, for the day when people begin redistributing their wealth voluntarily!!

leleff (2008-10-21 21:33:12)

Correction: Leanne's blog address is [verdanta.wordpress.com](http://verdanta.wordpress.com) I reserved [verdanta.com](http://verdanta.com) but I haven't had a chance to do anything with it yet. Hopefully, that's about to change!

anzolt (2008-10-27 01:50:14)

Justin ! Thank you for your insightful comment!! I took a look at your blog {<http://iguanajournal.blogspot.com> } and am very impressed. Your Blog Action Day post will take rereading and digestion for full comprehension... Good blog with great topics!!!

Justin (2008-10-27 01:33:18)

I felt the same contradiction you mention in this post and when I saw an insightful report by oxfam about the state of world hunger and how even the \$12b promised by wealthy governments at the FAO conference in June has not been upheld while governments barely think twice about spending previously unimaginably huge sums to prop up failing banks. I posted about this in my Blog Action Day contribution, check it out.

### 1.8.8 The Game of Life - Introduction (2008-10-17 23:42)



[1]

Is life a game?

From Wikipedia: [2]”A game is a structured activity, usually undertaken for enjoyment and sometimes also used as an educational tool. Games are generally distinct from work...and from art...However, the distinction is not clear-cut, and many games are also considered to be work or art....”

I'll be posting three more articles in this series:

Part One—the [3]Rules of the Game of Life

Part Two—the [4]Playing of the Game of Life

Part Three—the [5]Rewards of the Game of Life

Should take me about two days per article since I'll be ~~playing~~ doing research with a simulation game called [6]Civilization IV as I write the series.

The connections among Life, Games, and Spirituality will unfold as we go along.....

Spiritual Quotes:

"You are the game that death stalketh; stand and he seizeth you, fly and he followeth."

"The stalwart is he who overcometh himself."

Marzieh Gail, From the Sayings of 'Ali, Dawn Over Mount Hira, p. 14

Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

[7]Let's have a conversation ![8]

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2. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Game>
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9. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Catherine. (2008-10-18 05:19:13)

Much work, and research as well the many hours of time devoted to your great work and post's Alex. Skill is successfully walking a tightrope over Niagara Falls, intelligence is not trying. And I'm thinking that Strong minds need no bailouts.

amzolt (2008-10-18 15:47:58)

You are a Great Encouragement for my work, Catherine!!

love-ely (2008-10-19 15:49:59)

Deep thoughts. I still muse it.

Evita (2008-10-18 23:35:18)

I once heard a great speaker talk about how the metaphors we use for life dictate how we see it. This is one of those powerful metaphors in how some people may see life. There is no right or wrong one to use - just as long as it serves the one using it.

anzolt (2008-10-19 00:35:57)

Evita, Interesting perceptions! I'm glad I had the Game Metaphor brought to my attention... Hope you'll read the next three posts and bring your comments here!

forcedgreen (2008-10-22 00:20:37)

You never cease to amaze me with your thinking. I look forward to your endeavor.

anzolt (2008-10-22 00:42:06)

Ms ForcedGreen, ;-) Wow! Thanks for the encouragement!! Haven't been by your blog in quite awhile—trying to budget time in a myriad directions—currently focusing on forums and, of course, these wild posts I write...

### 1.8.9 Game of Life - The Rules (2008-10-21 15:55)



[1] can be viewed as a Game.

Let's accept for the moment that Life

The rules of any game define its play and determine the rewards possible. Kids are real good at trying to change the rules mid-game to adjust the play and, hopefully, make the rewards favor their position (and, sometimes, they'll want to change the rules just to see what happens—flexing their creativity).

Before I present some of Life's Rules, I want to mention just a bit of game history:

There are two games that could claim the oldest tag: The Royal Game of Ur and Senet. Both were found in tombs since the respect afforded games back in the 2000-3000 B.C. era was so high—spiritually powerful in some estimations—the rulers were given a game to play while they roamed the realms of the afterlife, helping them cope with the dangers of the Journey.

Some links on game history:

[2]Astral Castle

[3]Royal Game of Ur

[4]Senet

So, if Life can be viewed as a Game, what are the Rules?

It used to be said that Life doesn't come with Instructions. Some rely on the old (and generally true) adage, "Mom knows best."

It can be difficult to discern the Rules of the Game of Life. There are so many Players, each hoping the Rules they've been using will help them reach the Rewards they seek—so many different sets of Rules, so much disunity—that we witness in our Family's history conflict after conflict, all based on particular rulers' sets of Rules, all played to secure material rewards (even those that claim a spiritual purpose).

If you believe there's a spiritual foundation to Life—if you think there are Principles that can help the Rider of Soul control the Horse of Body—you will eventually discover that Life is a Game that demands Sacrifice, Compassion, Courage, Honesty, and many other virtuous Rules.

We struggle to stay in the Game, we change the Rules when we feel we're losing, we play with fervor when the Reward is within reach. Let's hope we all can learn the Spiritual Rules of Life—learn them so well we don't make others run from our Game, know the Rules so well we don't abandon them when the Rewards seem far away and our poor physical Horse gets frustrated and tries to throw off the Soul-Rider...

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"O ye beloved ones! It is the moment of the ecstasy of the soul and consciousness and the season of running in the arena of sacrifice! Show ye kindness to all; be ye engaged in the refinement of the souls. Become ye as ignited lamps and adorn ye the orchard of being! These days are swiftly passing and this mortal life will remain fruitless and without result. Therefore, while there is yet time and the arrow is in the bow, enter ye the chase and strike ye the game. This game is the good-pleasure of God, and this chase is the merciful Providence; that is, living in accord with the divine instructions."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3*, p. 573

"The young prophet from Nazareth was indeed asking of His auditors a great deal. He was asking them to give up usages and customs, ways of thought and habits of belief which had been honoured among them for centuries and which had become firmly entrenched in the hearts and the lives of all. He called upon them to trust themselves, soul, spirit, and body too, to the new teaching of one who offered them no recognised human credentials whatever. The crisis was indeed a test of spiritual faith and of moral courage. It was meant to be so. It was designed to separate the true-hearted from the insincere, those who genuinely believed in God from those who played a game of make-believe.

George Townshend, *The Heart of the Gospel*, p. 118

The next post will explore how we actually [5]play the Game of Life...

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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Kikolani - Poetry | Photography | Blogging Tips (2008-10-21 21:54:55)

I think the rules definitely have to do with finding your values (including compassion, sacrifice, courage, etc.), and living according to them. The first step is identifying your strongest values, and then applying them as guidelines. Kristi

amzolt (2008-10-21 22:50:42)

Kikolani, Exactly ! There are general rules for everyone (what I was writing about) and then, most importantly, the special rules (values) for each of us!! As long as we adhere to the "generic" rules, our personal rules won't clash with others...

Catherine. (2008-10-22 16:15:45)

Speaking of rules and values, yes we followed them, but from our generation to the now generation, they have slowly vanished, what are we doing with the forests of the world is but a reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another. almost all our faults are more pardonable than the methods we resort to hide them. I think to many people miss the silver lining because they're expecting gold.!

amzolt (2008-10-22 16:21:35)

Catherine, Your wisdom flows and these words, "almost all our faults are more pardonable than the methods we resort to hide them", are supreme wisdom!!!

## 1.8.10 Game of Life - Playing It (2008-10-24 02:06)



[1]

How do you play the Game of Life?

What Rules have you adopted?

What Rewards do you expect?

In the [2]last post in this series I explored ideas about how the rules adopted for a game define the way it's played and the rewards it can offer.

This post is about how we *play* the Game of Life.

In preparation for writing this series of posts I resurrected a game I'd played about a year ago; a simulation game that lets you learn the basics of how to build a civilization. I highly recommend this game, as a fun pastime and as a tool to sharpen your awareness of what actually goes into the long and arduous process of civilization-building. Check it out: [3]Civilization IV.

As far as the effect the rules of a game have on how it's played, I'll offer this experience:

A year ago, I played Civilization IV for a number of months. Since it models the actual circumstances of many cultures and nations, over most of recorded history, as they attempt to establish their conception of "civilization", it's real heavy on the implementation of war and all of its necessities.

I "gamely" persisted in being a peaceful participant in these attempts at building "civilization". I became, in spite of the game's superb design and its fidelity to historical circumstance, extremely frustrated. All my attempts to introduce peaceful principles were engulfed by the war-centered Rules of the game...

When I resurrected the game, to research the principles underlying these posts on the Game of Life, I fortuitously discovered an option called "Always Peace".

Eureka!!!

Now, I could play the game and avoid the grit and grime and death and destruction of war.

Some of the people on the forum that supports the game were puzzled by my desire to play with all the options of war eliminated. Someone even declared that it must be real boring.

Nope, not boring at all. In fact, with war eliminated, I could actually concentrate on what *builds* a real Civilization. I could pay attention to the *people* in my cities—their wants and needs—, I could make profitable decisions about how much industry we needed, how much culture we needed, how to balance material and spiritual aspirations (Yes! This game includes spirituality and it has profound effects on the material success of civilization-building.)

And, to broaden the whole concept of playing the Game of Life, please realize that people don't have to actively embrace war to have inclinations of behavior that can and *have* led to war: selfishness, prejudice, intolerance, religious extremism, egregious nationalism, racism, and materialism, to name just a few.

So, let's entertain those opening questions again:

How do *you* play the Game of Life?

What Rules have *you* adopted?

What Rewards do *you* expect?

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"Their own instincts, no less than the fury of conservative forces, the opposition of vested interests, and the objections of a corrupt and pleasure-seeking generation, must be reckoned with, resolutely resisted, and completely overcome. As their defensive measures for the impending struggle are organized and extended, storms of abuse and ridicule, and campaigns of condemnation and misrepresentation, may be unloosed against them. Their Faith, they may soon find, has been assaulted, their motives misconstrued, their aims defamed, their aspirations derided, their institutions scorned, their influence belittled, their authority undermined, and their Cause, at times, deserted by a few who will either be incapable of appreciating the nature of their ideals, or unwilling to bear the brunt of the mounting criticisms which such a contest is sure to involve."

Messages to America: Selected Letters and Cablegrams Addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America, 1932-1946, *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, p. 144

"The fate-laden world ordeal is moving in steady, pre-ordained crescendo. The blaze of a seemingly uncontrollable fire is leaping, ravaging the last remaining great Power on the European continent. Shadows of God's retributive act are fast gathering. As the arena of world convulsing contest broadens; as wounds it inflicts deepen; as issues it raises aggravate and multiply, so will the operation of the spiritual forces, destined to cast the burden of a travailing age, be accelerated."

Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, *Messages to America*, p. 48

*Major Statement of how People's Rights have been Subjugated with the prevailing Rules of the*

*Game:*

”By far the greatest tragedy resulting from this latest contest for world domination was the blight that it cast over the hopes with which formerly subject peoples had welcomed the opportunity they believed they had been given to build a new life of their own devising. The obstinate determination of some of the surviving colonial powers to suppress such hopes, though doomed to failure in the eyes of any objective observer, had left the urge for liberation in many countries with no recourse but to assume the character of revolutionary struggle. By 1960, such movements, which had already been a feature of the political landscape during the earlier decades of the century, were coming to represent the principal form of indigenous political activity in most subject nations.

”Since the driving force of colonialism itself was economic exploitation, it was perhaps inevitable that most movements of liberation assumed a broadly socialistic ideological cast. Within only a few short years, these circumstances had created a fertile ground for exploitation by the world’s superpowers. For the Soviet Union, the situation seemed to offer an opportunity to induce a shift in the existing alignment of nations by gaining a preponderating influence in what was by now beginning to be called the ’Third World’. The response of the West—wherever development aid failed to retain the loyalties of recipient populations—was to resort to the encouragement and arming of a wide variety of authoritarian regimes.

”As outside forces manipulated new governments, attention was increasingly diverted from an objective consideration of developmental needs to ideological and political struggles that bore little or no relation to social or economic reality. The results were uniformly devastating. Economic bankruptcy, gross violations of human rights, the breakdown of civil administration and the rise of opportunistic elites who saw in the suffering of their countries only openings for self-enrichment—such was the heartbreaking fate that engulfed one after another of the new nations who, only short years before, had begun life with such great promise.”

Commissioned by The Universal House of Justice, *Century of Light*, p. 88

The next post looks at the [4]Rewards of the Game of Life.

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[5] *Let’s have a conversation !*

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3. <http://www.2kgames.com/civ4/home.htm>
4. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/10/26/game-of-life-the-rewards/>
5. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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Robin Easton (2008-10-24 21:24:42)

As to the "rules of life" I don't really have any other than the laws of the Universe. Such as: If I jump off a 500 foot cliff there's a good chance I won't live to walk away (although miracles do happen. :) Or if I traipse through the jungle like a bull in a china shop with no regard to other species and their territory...there's a good chance I could get bitten by a poisonous snake and die. Or if I walk through certain city areas in the middle of the night, a woman alone with no protection or mode of defense, there's a chance I might be raped and/or killed. Or if I set my hand on a red-hot burner there's a chance it will burn my skin (unless I do it fully prepared like a fire-walker). Etc. And even these examples are not set in stone. But as to the rest I have no rules, but I do make choices and think about consequences. I also set boundaries when I need to and let go of things that no longer serve. I try to choose/move-toward that which instills love in me and others. Not because any religion tells to do this, not because I feel a hell exists and it will "get" me, not because I believe "bad karma" will catch up with me, not because I believe acting a certain way will "get me into heaven", and not because I'm pressured to do so, etc. But because I am so filled with love that I am compelled to love. It just feels good to love. As to what reward I expect: The reward for me is to love, whether Love is returned by a particular person or not doesn't even matter because they already are love as am I, and my greatest source of life/joy is the Love I "live in", Love that is with me everyday, one I am in communion with in each breath. I don't really see someone as not loving me. I guess I don't even think like that because Love just IS, no one can take that from me.

amzolt (2008-10-24 23:14:59)

Well, dear Robin, you've got the most important "Rule" down pat!! Love!!! As for what religions say about the rules of life, I wish more people could differentiate between true religion and the mucked-up, materialized versions that protrude their ugly faces into our lives...

Kikolani - Poetry | Photography | Blogging Tips (2008-10-29 01:03:12)

That game is a great way to learn about so much, including history, building networks with neighbors, ways religion can help a culture, and so forth. As far as rewards, I think the most we can ask for is as much peace in our lives. Enough to support our families. And happiness. Kristi

amzolt (2008-10-29 01:33:30)

Yes, Kristi, asking for the reward of peace in our lives can center us in God's love and make us a beacon of hope for others...

### 1.8.11 Game of Life - The Rewards (2008-10-26 20:02)



[1]

What *are* the Rewards for Playing the Game of Life successfully?

In the preceding posts on the [2]Rules and [3]Play of the Game of Life, I explored how the rules of any game shape the playing of that game. Also, the play of a game determines the rewards possible. Seemingly simplistic, eh?

Actually the formula is *Rules > Play > Reward* , and changing *any* of those three factors affects the others.

A fairly cool little game to play is to reverse the formula: *Reward > Play > Rules* . It runs something like this: "If I want reward X, I need to play Y, and that means Z is in effect..." A quick practical example: If I want ice cream, I need to pay some money, and that means I have to work. Simplistic, again, but I think you can see a few applications...

While I was researching ideas for this series of posts, I was playing the game [4]Civilization IV. It's an awesome simulation of the conditions and processes of civilization-building. It endeavors to model history, so, most of the normal play of the game involves politics, subjugation, and war.

I luckily discovered an option the designers provided called *Always Peace*.

Change the rules and you change the way you play the game and the rewards you can expect...

So, what rewards did I reap by playing Civilization in the mode that eliminated war and all its nasty offspring?

The first reward was realizing things I'd already learned intellectually in a hands-on, emotional way.

Next would be the awareness that building a prosperous civilization is very hard work even when war isn't in the equation.

Then, the painful awareness of my citizens' suffering from my mismanagement of the factors of growth.

And also the joy, even though it's *only* a game, when I'd managed things well and my people were fed and happy and productive.

There are many other rewards I gained but those four stand out like blazing stars in the dark of life's struggles.

I need to mention another simulation game that has a multitude of practical applications—it was created as a training tool for nonviolent response to oppressive situations—[5]A Force More Powerful.

So, here ends the tale of my playing life-imitating games. What about the Rewards gained from Playing the Real Game of Life?

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"The rewards of this life are the virtues and perfections which adorn the reality of man. For example, he was dark and becomes luminous, he was ignorant and becomes wise, he was neglectful and becomes vigilant, he was asleep and becomes awakened, he was dead and becomes living, he was blind and becomes a seer, he was deaf and becomes a hearer, he was earthly and becomes heavenly, he was material and becomes spiritual. Through these rewards he gains spiritual birth, and becomes a new creature."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Baha'i World Faith*, p. 323

"As the usefulness and powers of the life (of a child) were not seen in that dark and narrow world (of the womb), but when it is brought into this vast world, all the use of its growth and development becometh manifest and obvious in it, so likewise, reward and punishment, paradise and hell, and the requital of deeds and actions done by it in the present life become manifest and evident when it is transferred to the world to come—which is far from this world! Had the life and growth of the child in the womb been confined to that condition, then the existence of the child in the womb would have proved utterly abortive and unintelligible; as would the life of this world, were its deeds, actions and their results not to appear in the world to come."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3*, p. 644

"The sacrifices involved, the courage, faith, and perseverance...[a pioneering spiritual life] demands, are no doubt very great. Their value, however, can never be properly assessed at the present time, and the limitless reward which they who demonstrate them will receive can never be adequately depicted.... Such a reward, it should be noted, is not to be regarded as purely an abstract blessing confined to the future life, but also as a tangible benefit which such courage, faith and perseverance can alone confer in this material world."

Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, pp. 67-68

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Evita (2008-10-26 21:00:51)

Very good lessons here Alex. I agree that the rewards of life, sometimes no matter how you play are priceless! I also really agree with the reverse approach. Many people believe in the HAVE - DO and then BE formula, while it is much more beneficial to us in life to reverse this and BE - DO - and then HAVE. So instead of living according to "when I have the time or the money, then I can buy the car or the trip and then I will be happy" change the focus to be happy, which will make you want to do things and hence result in having what you thought was your limitation.

amzolt (2008-10-26 21:22:34)

Thank you for the encouraging comment and the excellent analysis, Evita! Glad you also see the "reverse" approach to the "game"...

Catherine. (2008-10-27 15:28:23)

Games-Rules-Rewards! May we all maintain our largest sense of perspective in these challenging times we find ourselves. It is the time to return to a sense of calm, lucid awareness in the midst of storms around us. The price of greatness is responsibility. Your belief creates the fact. It's time to have faith and believe in tomorrow! To be or not to be is not the question it is the answer!!

amzolt (2008-10-27 15:54:35)

Catherine, You regularly amazing me with your wisdom!

## 1.8.12 Peace Through Music (2008-10-28 02:16)



[1] I'm working on a couple posts about the United Nations and whether it's effective in bringing the contending nations of the world together. They should be done in a day or so but I wanted to immediately share a marvelous musical experience that my friend [2]Robin Easton shared with me.

It took ten years to make the video and involved traveling to many different countries. There are about 100 musicians all playing or singing the song, Stand by Me.

The fact that these people were separated by many physical miles didn't stop them from coming close together to create a wondrous (and rockin') rendition of the song.

So, sit back, crank up the sound, and indulge yourself in a musical peace fest!

[youtube=[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_A\\_ma2h0idk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A_ma2h0idk)]

Spiritual Quote:

"The diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord. If you meet those of different race and colour from yourself, do not mistrust them and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them kindness. Think of them as different coloured roses growing in the beautiful garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 53

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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Evita (2008-10-28 03:28:06)

Saw the video and read Robin's post a few days ago - it was all so touching to say the least. It is just so good to know that people like that exist in the world and as for music bringing about peace - most definitely. Music is one of our most powerful mediums for bringing about any change or feeling we want!

Catherine. (2008-10-28 15:47:14)

The need for reasoning is dramatically reduced and the universe becomes a mystery to be experienced, not a riddle to be solved, it becomes virtually impossible to find anything negative about existence, everything seems absolutely perfect, including the sound of music.!

amzolt (2008-10-28 15:54:01)

Yes, Catherine! Lose our little ego minds in the vast flow of musical Love!!

amzolt (2008-10-28 09:12:07)

Evita, Yes! The power of music is profound!! It even carried the creator of the video through ten years of effort to produce what we can now see and hear!!!

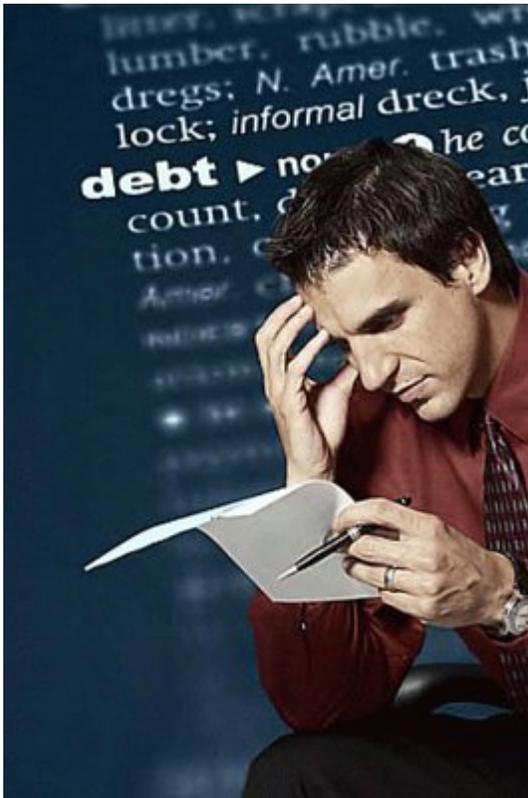
Leanne (2008-10-28 19:49:20)

That. Was. Amazing!

amzolt (2008-10-28 20:04:26)

Leanne, Yeah, Baha'u'llah is Everywhere, eh?

### 1.8.13 Financial Strain (2008-10-29 01:29)



[1] Those posts on the United Nations are still in the works but another Internet friend shared a song with me today and, in light of the global financial situation, I want to share it with you.

First, let me share the lyrics she uses:

”Should prosperity befall thee, rejoice not, and should abasement come upon thee, grieve not, for both shall pass away and be no more.”  
Bahá’u’lláh, *The Arabic Hidden Words*, #52

I want to hazard an interpretation but be aware, when distilling the meaning of holy text, the ultimate interpretation comes from your heart...

Rejoice not if prosperity blossoms because it can swiftly pass away.

Grieve not if you slip into abasement because you can swiftly rise.

Basically, to me, the words convey a need to remain detached from material circumstances; certainly, we need to pay attention and work toward our goals but we also, to remain spiritually whole, need to keep our hearts beating far above the twists and turns of mundane happenings...

The song is by [2]Elika Mahony. Here’s a clip from her bio: *”Vocalist, composer, pianist, and artist, Elika considers herself a world citizen; her parents are from Iran, she was born in the US, raised in Kenya, and now lives in China. Elika’s love of music began when she was a child growing up in Africa. In between she has lived in Israel and Hong Kong. Her music beautifully expresses the diverse*

*cultures that have been a part of her upbringing, blending and reflecting the influences of this varied background, drawing upon classical Western structures but incorporating instrumentation and styles from Iran to Ireland and China to Spain.”*

Enjoy her angelic vocal rendition of Bahá'u'lláh's Words:

[3]Should Prosperity Befall Thee

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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Sophia (2008-10-30 19:52:48)

The interpretation that I have goes like this: No matter our financial identity, we won't take it with us when we die!

amzolt (2008-10-30 20:10:07)

Sophia, Bingo!!!

### 1.8.14 Wrong Religion? Not A Citizen! (2008-10-29 23:15)



[1] Still working on the UN Posts...

The Bahá'ís of Egypt are being confronted with an impossible situation. There's a group trying to organize a world-circling prayer-ring to, hopefully, aid them in their test of Faith:

From: [2]*Horaciones*

"All Egyptian citizens must declare their religious belief in all official National documents which include their ID cards and birth certificates. The documents only allow them to choose one of three religions recognized by the Egyptian government: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Baha'is have the ridiculous choice of either renouncing their Faith by registering as a follower of another religion, or renouncing all their civil rights, such as education, work, health.

"By October 20th, the Egyptian Supreme Court was to decide whether to allow Baha'is to obtain ID cards and leaving the religious affiliation space blank. The Court decided to postpone the decision to November 3rd.

"To support the process, we are organizing another World Wide Prayer Chain for November 2nd, as we had done previously for October 20th. For the entire 24 hour duration of the day, people around the world will be praying in 15 minute intervals that, God-willing, the decision towards the recognition of the Baha'i Faith in Egypt will be taken.

"On the last occasion, over 100 people participated from every part of the globe, from Europe to the Americas, from Bahji to the Temple of Sydney, and even Iran! We are confident the same will happen again...."

[3]Sign-up here!

Spiritual Quote:

"Reveal then Thyself, O Lord, by Thy merciful utterance and the mystery of Thy divine being, that the holy ecstasy of prayer may fill our souls - a prayer that shall rise above words and letters and transcend the murmur of syllables and sounds—that all things may be merged into nothingness before the revelation of Thy splendor."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Prayers*, p. 70

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rubjm9 (2008-10-29 23:24:31)

Hello! This is Ruben, from Antorchas en la oscuridad (<http://antorchasenlaoscuridad.blogspot.com>) Thanks for posting on this initiative! ;D I didnt know about this blog, it looks good.

amzolt (2008-10-29 23:36:57)

Ruben, Thanks for the compliment!!

Catherine. (2008-10-30 05:44:19)

Life is a warfare in which we must give proofs if we would advance,Power does not surrender of itself,it must be seized. Count me in on you're vote,and in you're prayers for the Bahai's Faith.!

amzolt (2008-10-30 14:05:53)

Catherine, you are a gleaming Gem!!!

ravenscawl (2008-10-31 16:32:39)

Alex My father's Side, My mother was Hebrew... Fortunately we can if we choose blend in anywhere! lol...  
kem

ravenscawl (2008-10-31 15:50:31)

As Roma we have fought the same type of temporal divisions, classified as non-citizens still to this day in many countries and states refuse us recognition as even people much less citizens, with rights! There are even places where our existence is illegal! Including Egypt.

amzolt (2008-10-31 16:09:55)

Wow, Kem, had no idea you were Roma!! I'm half Hungarian and folks confuse that with Roma...

amzolt (2008-10-31 16:37:58)

Kem, Well, I'm half Hungarian and half Scottish so I can't blend in anywhere... ;-)

ravenscawl (2008-10-31 16:45:32)

alex Haggis and goulash, what a combination!!!! sorry close to lunch time.. lol! kem

### 1.8.15 What Good Is The United Nations? - Part One (2008-10-30 23:39)



[1]

Does the [2]United Nations actually help in our crisis-laden world?

Can they actually do anything that counts—anything that addresses humanity's ills and facilitates solutions?

From Forbes: [3]A Real Election Choice On The United Nations "U.N. reforms proclaimed with fanfare in recent years have fizzled."

From the New York Times: [4]U.N. Blocked From Pulling Workers Out of Congo "...the peacekeeping troops were overstretched in trying to protect the civilian population, which is caught in the middle of vicious fighting between a rebel group and the Congolese Army."

From The Hindu: [5]Give developing nations a say in financial crisis talks "A day before the United Nations meets to discuss its taskforce on the global financial crisis, ActionAid, along with more than 400 civil society organisations across the world, has issued a statement demanding that

developing nations be included in crisis talks.”

This post will present some of the most pressing international concerns as discussed in a major document presented to the United Nations on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of its founding in 2005. It was presented by the Bahá'í International Community, a Non-Governmental Organization registered with the UN. The document is called [6]The Search for Values in an Age of Transition. It is not casual reading and there's also a detailed [7]Study Guide to help understand the issues and solutions it provides.

I'll give you the essence of the issues dealt with in this post and the solutions they present in the next post.

One of the most powerful statements in this document is: ”The great peace long envisioned by the peoples and nations of the world is well within our grasp.”

Quite a statement, eh? How in the world can an organization make such a statement when we have issues like these to deal with:

”The advancement of men and boys at the expense of women and girls has sorely limited the creative and material capacities of communities to develop and address their problems...”

”...the neglect of cultural and religious minorities has intensified ancient prejudices setting peoples and nations against one another...”

”...an unbridled nationalism has trampled the rights and opportunities of citizens in other nations...”

”...weak states have erupted in conflict, lawlessness, and massive refugee flows...”

”...narrow economic agendas exalting material prosperity have often suffocated the social and moral development required for the equitable and beneficent use of wealth.”

One of the most stunning issues brought up for consideration is the growing importance of the role of religion in discussions of global crises:

”The existing debate about religion in the public sphere, however, has been driven by the voices and actions of extreme proponents on both sides—those who impose their religious ideology by force, whose most visible expression is terrorism—and those who deny any place for expressions of faith or belief in the public sphere. Yet neither extreme is representative of the majority of humankind and neither promotes a sustainable peace.”

Here are a few more snips from the first part of the document:

”...the question of values must take a central place in deliberations, be articulated and made explicit.”

”...the search for shared values—beyond the clash of extremes—is paramount for effective ac-

tion.”

”...we can no longer be content with a passive tolerance of each other’s worldviews; what is required is an active search for those common values and moral principles which will lift up the condition of every woman, man, and child, regardless of race, class, religion or political opinion.”

This is, no doubt, a challenging document but these are, certainly, challenging times.

You may also be interested in my post, [8]Sweet Words Are Crying Out for Potent Action, one of the most popular posts on this blog, which has the text of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In the next post, we’ll look at some of the changes proposed for the United Nations, to transform it into the global peace-promoting organization it was created to be.

Spiritual Quote:

”No social body, whatever its form, has power to maintain essential human rights for persons who have repudiated their moral obligation and abandoned the divine endowment distinguishing man from beast. Civil definitions of political and economic status, if devoid of moral value and influence, are not equivalent to essential human rights but express the expedients of partisan policy. An ordered society can only be maintained by moral beings.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1947 Feb, A Bahá’í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights, Presented to the first session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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Catherine. (2008-10-31 05:44:43)

What sane person could live in this world and not be crazy? Pain is inevitable.Suffering is optional,You never gain something but that you lose something.Clearly a result of some powerful manifestation.Let us enrich ourselves with our mutual differences.!

Vejay Chin (2008-10-31 06:29:19)

Why human being should discuss & debate human rights? Therefore, whats the point of discussing at length? Lay the terms and punish anyone who go against the norm, be it a country or an individual. Waste no time discussing & debating.

amzolt (2008-10-31 09:13:00)

Catherine, Your statement, "Let us enrich ourselves with our mutual differences.", is some of the very best advice I've heard in this blog!!!

amzolt (2008-10-31 09:15:48)

Vejay, Thank you for your comment! Many people would shy away from being so bold but punishing those who harm others is a clear and necessary part of Justice...

## 1.9 November

### 1.9.1 What Good Is The United Nations? - Part Two (2008-11-01 19:38)



[1] Time to put on our thinking caps. Time to search for values and principles that the whole of humanity can embrace. Time to work tirelessly so, at least, our great-grandchildren can have some measure of peace and tranquillity.

Sure, you could avoid thinking hard about these issues but, in my experience, if things weren't going

well and I avoided the effort of critical thought, things got immeasurably worse.

Also, this quote from the last post should lend tremendous power to the effort of thought leading to action:

*“The great peace long envisioned by the peoples and nations of the world is well within our grasp.”*

In the last post, we looked at some of the immensely critical issues testing the effectiveness of the United Nations—the continuing subjugation of women and girls, neglect of cultural and religious minorities, unbridled nationalism, massive refugee flows, narrow economic agendas exalting material prosperity, and the growing importance of the role of religion in discussions of global crises.

How in the world can all these things be resolved in time to avoid a global meltdown?

There is no longer any rational doubt about what can provide the power to make all the changes we must make—[2]The Principle of Oneness—the awareness that we are *All* in the same boat and we must include *All* in the bailing out process...

If you think you don't have to be involved or that other people have the job of resolving these issues, you're ignoring one of the most basic laws of the universe: Everything Is Interconnected.

There are certain important areas of change the United Nations is involved in and some they need to bring to greater urgency in their agendas.

The following points of focus come from the [3]Study Guide to the [4]Bahá'í International Community's 2005 statement to the UN.

“...at what point is it morally legitimate and necessary for the international community to intervene in the affairs of sovereign states? In 2001, in response to this question, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty defined sovereignty not only as an inviolable right (as it had been previously understood) but as a ‘responsibility to protect (its citizens).’ In a historic move during the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly member states, after much debate, endorsed this new understanding of sovereignty.”

“For many years, the level of ‘development’ of a nation was assessed primarily by its Gross National Product (GNP), its GNP per capita and other commodity-based indicators. In 1990, under the leadership of Mahbub ul Haq (former minister of finance of Pakistan) and Amartya Sen (Nobel prize winning economist from India) —the UN released its first annual Human Development Report stating that ‘people are the real wealth of a nation.’” [5]Read the report.

“Several factors have contributed to the near complete rejection of religion in concepts of international relations.”

“In [David Held's] book, *Democracy and the Global Order*, he states that the ‘future has to be conceived in cosmopolitan terms’ which include a set of global institutions shaped by democratic law and which act as a ‘government’ by implementing and enforcing that law. Citing philosopher Immanuel Kant, Held states that ‘cosmopolitan law’ is not a utopian way of thinking about law, but

rather a 'necessary complement' to the existing code of national and international law and a 'means to transform the latter into the public law of humanity'."

Former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, introduced a [6]major report that "took a comprehensive approach – stressing the interdependence of development, freedom, and peace and emphasizing human solidarity as the basis for effective and sustainable solutions to global challenges."

"As the number of countries with significant minority populations grows, states face the challenge of devising policies to effectively govern increasingly diverse ethnic, religious, and linguistic populations." Read the report, [7]Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World.

This is only a representative offering of the super-critical issues facing not only the United Nations but each of us as World Citizens. Will we, through lack of initiative and action, let our world implode on itself?

*Spiritual Quote:*

"It is my hope that this standard of the oneness of the world of humanity may be upraised with the utmost solidity so that the Orient and Occident may become perfectly reconciled and attain complete intercommunication, the hearts of the East and West become united and attracted, real union become unveiled, the light of guidance shine, divine effulgences be seen day by day so that the world of humanity may find complete tranquillity, the eternal happiness of man become evident and the hearts of the people of the world be as mirrors in which the rays of the Sun of Reality may be reflected. Consequently, it is my request that you should strive so that the light of reality may shine and the everlasting felicity of the world of man become apparent."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 12

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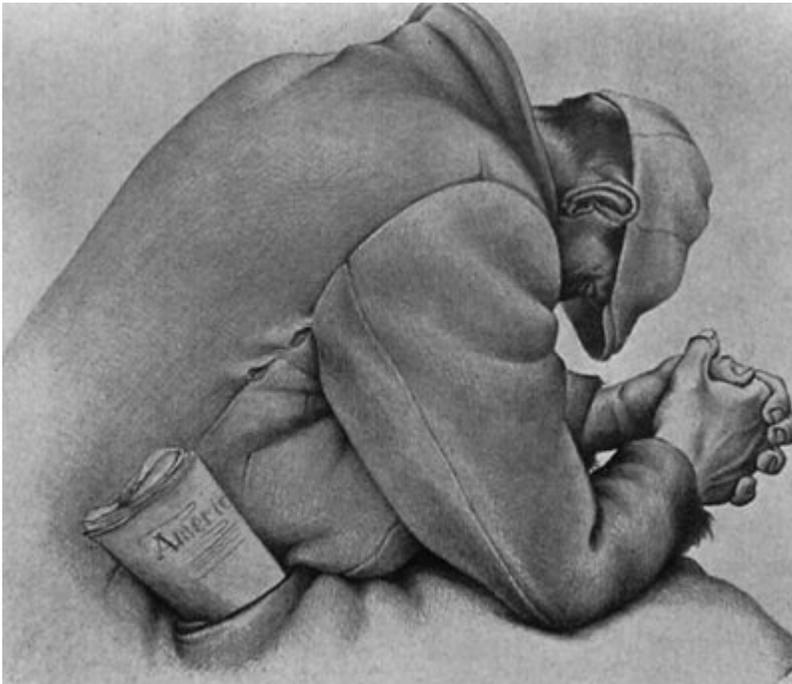
Catherine. (2008-11-02 05:25:19)

It is well enough that people of the nation do not understand the system,for if they did,I believe there would be a revolution before tomorow morning.We must believe in luck,For how else can we explain the success of these we don't like,the road to success is always under constraction.!

amzolt (2008-11-02 13:13:47)

Catherine, You're so right that the changes our world needs depend on All of us changing our hearts. And, YES, the outer changes will come very rapidly when enough people Do change their hearts!

## 1.9.2 What Good Is Religion ? (2008-11-03 15:23)



[1] I live in the United States of America but I'm a World Citizen. I'm concerned about the moral collapse of my birth-country and I'm appalled at the insanities perpetrated world-wide that claim religious justification.

**From Pravda:** 1/10/08 [2]Russian authorities blame Internet for inciting ethnic and religious strife

**From the New York Times:** 6/3/06 [3]Religious Strife Is Pushing Iraq towards Civil War

**From the Guardian, UK:** 15/2/04 [4]Children to study atheism at school

**From [5]OneCountry.Org:** April 2002, "In [6]a letter to 'the world's religious leaders', 466

the Universal House of Justice warns of the danger posed by 'the rising fires of religious prejudice' and calls for decisive action against fanaticism and intolerance....the six-page letter had been delivered to at least 1,600 leaders in more than 40 countries."

I used news clips from 08 back to 02 to indicate the inertia that impedes eradication of the most perverted behavior humans engage in—antagonism and strife based on religious dogma.

Killing someone because they're invading your home territory is bad enough. Killing them because they profess a different religious doctrine is demented.

The letter to the world's religious leaders from the Universal House of Justice is a model of sanity and rationality from the governing body of one of the world's major religions.

They begin by stressing the "Babel of incoherent identities of cultural, ethnic or national origin" that plague our global family.

They go on to indict the fanatical aspects of some of the world's religions:

"Tragically, organized religion, whose very reason for being entails service to the cause of brotherhood and peace, behaves all too frequently as one of the most formidable obstacles in the path; to cite a particular painful fact, it has long lent its credibility to fanaticism."

Then comes a review of the disunifying factors in society that are undergoing profound change:

"At the level of global discourse, however, the concept of the equality of the sexes has, for all practical purposes, now assumed the force of universally accepted principle...no one can mistake the fact that the fetish of absolute national sovereignty is on its way to extinction...racial prejudice has become so universally condemned in principle that no body of people can any longer safely allow themselves to be identified with it."

Then, a stunning concept of religious unity that most organized religions oppose:

"In contrast to the processes of unification that are transforming the rest of humanity's social relationships, the suggestion that all of the world's great religions are equally valid in nature and origin is stubbornly resisted by entrenched patterns of sectarian thought."

More on the tragedy of non-religious religion:

"...the greater part of organized religion stands paralyzed at the threshold of the future, gripped in those very dogmas and claims of privileged access to truth that have been responsible for creating some of the most bitter conflicts dividing the earth's inhabitants. *The consequences, in terms of human well-being, have been ruinous.*"

Then, **hope**:

"Vast numbers of people continue to endure the effects of ingrained prejudices of ethnicity, gender, nation, caste and class....The point, rather, is that a threshold has been crossed from which

there is no credible possibility of return. Fundamental principles have been identified, articulated, accorded broad publicity and are becoming progressively incarnated in institutions capable of imposing them on public behaviour. There is no doubt that, however protracted and painful the struggle, the outcome will be to revolutionize relationships among all peoples, at the grassroots level.”

And, the increasing awareness of global Oneness:

”Out of the welter of religious doctrines, rituals and legal codes inherited from vanished worlds, there is emerging a sense that spiritual life, like the oneness manifest in diverse nationalities, races and cultures, constitutes one unbounded reality equally accessible to everyone.”

And, whether you’re religious or not, this final statement should resonate with your moral consciousness:

”With every day that passes, danger grows that the rising fires of religious prejudice will ignite a worldwide conflagration the consequences of which are unthinkable. Such a danger civil government, unaided, cannot overcome. Nor should we delude ourselves that appeals for mutual tolerance can alone hope to extinguish animosities that claim to possess Divine sanction. The crisis calls on religious leadership for a break with the past as decisive as those that opened the way for society to address equally corrosive prejudices of race, gender and nation.”

*Spiritual Quote:*

”Inasmuch as human interpretations and blind imitations differ widely, religious strife and disagreement have arisen among mankind, the light of true religion has been extinguished and the unity of the world of humanity destroyed. The Prophets of God voiced the spirit of unity and agreement. They have been the Founders of divine reality. Therefore, if the nations of the world forsake imitations and investigate the reality underlying the revealed Word of God, they will agree and become reconciled. For reality is one and not multiple.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 141

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3. [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/06/international/europe/06spiegel.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/06/international/europe/06spiegel.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)
4. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2004/feb/15/uk.schools1>
5. [http://www.onecountry.org/e141/e14101as\\_UHJ\\_Letter.htm](http://www.onecountry.org/e141/e14101as_UHJ_Letter.htm)

6. [http://info.bahai.org/pdf/letter\\_april2002\\_english.pdf](http://info.bahai.org/pdf/letter_april2002_english.pdf)
7. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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amzolt (2008-11-03 17:57:20)

Your wisdom is very welcome here, Tomas!!

Tomas (2008-11-03 17:54:18)

Amen the world tests our faithfulness - arranges a stage to the miracles: while the overview frightens indeed, my heart blossom out with the hearty welcome. The personal response don't know any math - when two come together, God join them and everything revives... wow! Peace and love

Liara Covert (2008-11-04 00:27:01)

Anything is only ever as good as you interpret it to be. Human beings cannot change conditions or other people. You can only ever change your perception. How you see is based on how you feel. If you do not like what you see, then you can always change how you feel. Your feelings are a gauge.

amzolt (2008-11-04 03:21:17)

So, Liara, care to share how you feel, see, and interpret religion?

Alexys Fairfield (2008-11-04 07:02:10)

Hi Alex, Lovely photo. It is my hope that one day religion will actually bring people together, not tear them apart. Religion is the most misinterpreted text in the world. Maybe if people stopped "interpreting," and dropped the books, we could have a chance at love for our fellow man. I find it very disturbing that atheism will be taught in school. Telling children that there is no God is like telling them there is no hope.

Catherine. (2008-11-04 07:22:30)

There is no greater impediment to the advancement of knowledge than the ambiguity of words. We must quit trying to streamline and old business, old politics, old schools, old family structures. Simply defending and revoking the past is digging our own graves. Time is God's way of keeping everything from happening at once.!

Kikolani - Poetry | Photography | Blogging Tips (2008-11-04 21:26:09)

I think if every religion could just get to the basics, and focus on just being good to one another and following basic values, then it would be a wonderful world. Instead, most focusing on which one is right, which one is wrong, everyone is a sinner and going to hell unless they donate a certain amount or blow up their enemies, etc. Kristi

amzolt (2008-11-04 16:13:59)

Dear Alexys, Rather than: "Maybe if people stopped 'interpreting,' and dropped the books, we could have a chance at love for our fellow man." If may be preferable to follow this Advice: "...they that tread the path of faith, they that thirst for the wine of certitude, must cleanse themselves of all that is earthly - their ears from idle talk, their minds from vain imaginings, their hearts from worldly affections, their eyes from that which perisheth. They should put their trust in God, and, holding fast unto Him, follow in His way.

Then will they be made worthy of the effulgent glories of the sun of divine knowledge and understanding, and become the recipients of a grace that is infinite and unseen, inasmuch as man can never hope to attain unto the knowledge of the All-Glorious, can never quaff from the stream of divine knowledge and wisdom, can never enter the abode of immortality, nor partake of the cup of divine nearness and favour, unless and until he ceases to regard the words and deeds of mortal men as a standard for the true understanding and recognition of God and His Prophets.” (Baha’u’llah, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 3)

amzolt (2008-11-04 16:15:30)

Catherine, ”Simply defending and revoking the past is digging our own graves.” Truer words were never spoken!

amzolt (2008-11-04 22:12:56)

Kristi, Yes! The inner Truths, not the outer dogmatic laws—heart not head...

Evita (2008-11-05 02:54:18)

Wise words Alex! Interesting that you are talking about this as I just a couple of days ago saw the movie from Bill Maher called ”Religulous” and despite the fact that Maher has his own thoughts on God and spirituality, the movie he put together is so well done. He exposes so many facts about the world religions that just don’t make sense. We are supposed to be all one and love and care for each other equally but the division of the world’s major religions is mind-blowing. I highly recommend this movie for anyone who is interested in getting a greater perspective on religion and how the world currently is set up - it is funny, because it is a comedy, but it is also very sad because what he shows we all know is true. I did a write up of it too on Evolving Beings, for anyone who wants to know more about the movie and comments.

amzolt (2008-11-05 03:24:49)

Good call, Evita! I often watch Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert and feel their comedy, more often than not, comes very close to the truth... Hey, folks! Check out Evita’s blog: <http://blog.evolvingbeings.com/posts/194/movie-review-bill-mahers-religulous/>

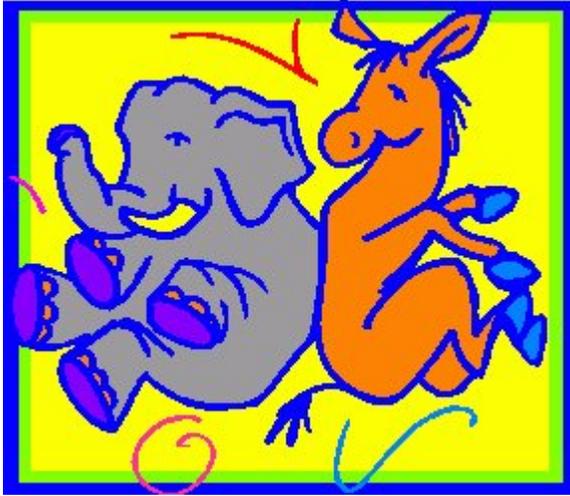
Liara Covert (2008-11-05 11:15:25)

As you asked for additional view, I would have to agree with Silver Birch who says, ”What is called religion has failed the world.” It is not purely guided by motives of service and altruism, or promoted solely to better humanity. Some people believe the truth of religion is demonstrated by mediumship insofar as verifiable contact with the other side enables you to strengthen understanding of immortal souls. No longer must religion rest purely on belief, faith, hope or fear of death and the hereafter. It is brought within the realm of ascertainable fact that some part of your soul, lives on. You may initially grapple with the concept of a spiritual being, but you are that already, incarnated in the physical on earth to achieve growth. You have choices and free will. Life is your oyster.

amzolt (2008-11-05 14:35:45)

Liara, Thank you for the explication!! You reminded me of this quote from my religion: ”Bahá’u’lláh taught, that Religion is the chief foundation of Love and Unity and the cause of Oneness. If a religion become the cause of hatred and disharmony, it would be better that it should not exist. To be without such a religion is better than to be with it.” Abdu’l-Baha, Abdu’l-Baha in London, p. 28

### 1.9.3 Are You Political ? (2008-11-05 06:04)



[1] This post is a huge departure for me. I normally use news clips, personal commentary, and spiritual quotes to address the issues of our culture.

I work hard to keep the discussion valid for a global audience even though I live in the United States of America.

Well, today, in America, the news is all political, all presidential, all pervasive...

I'm sitting in my favorite café and will attempt to do some "live" blogging—writing without forethought, as events unfold. I'm not going to cover what's happening on the TV but what's happening with the people around me...

Here goes!

It's quarter to six and the only people in the café are me, a woman getting ready for a Mary Kay meeting in the back room, and Sam, the owner. Sam just said he hopes to finish his work soon so he can sit on the couch, in front of the big-screen TV, and "get involved"...

Another patron arrives and promptly settles on the couch and begins working on his personal letter-writing...

Five till six: Two more patrons, getting ready to play a war-game...

Five after six: Talk is starting to percolate—"when will the pundits start projecting a winner...?"

Sam just made a personal pronouncement about why this election will be a nail-biter: the candidates are so radically different—not politically but as far as their characters are concerned.

{ personal aside: I hope readers in countries other than America will make comments on this post ! }

Five till Seven: Sam is on the couch!

Five after seven: The war-game is heating up and Sam looks happy with the first projections.

{personal aside: the confrontational, partisan rhetoric from the television is starting to get to me... }

Seven-thirty: Both couches inhabited; it's starting to warm up...

Eight-fifteen: Laptop in use on the couch; spirited discussion begins; the couples playing games start a new one...

Eight-thirty-five: Cell phones in use; discussion tones down...

Nine-ten: Some folks are heading home to sleep; willing to see what happened in the morning...

Nine-thirty: Much discussion of the difference between the various projections of the winner—MSNBC, Fox, Google...

{personal aside: Amazing how excited people can get over media projections... }

Eleven o'clock: Obama projected as winner; one woman running outside, cell phone to ear; the rest of the folks look a bit shocked; then, most everyone leaves the cafe...

McCain concedes with impeccable grace while his followers shout rude comments, Jesse Jackson in tears, and three people remain in the café...

Obama gives acceptance speech...

My enduring impression will be the blending of skin color on the stage and the hope of human harmony as Joe Biden joins him and the two families stream in while Mr. Obama clearly shows how humbled he feels to be elevated to a position of leadership in our crisis-riddled world...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...the breeding-ground of all these tragedies is prejudice: prejudice of race and nation, of religion, of political opinion; and the root cause of prejudice is blind imitation of the past—imitation in religion, in racial attitudes, in national bias, in politics. So long as this aping of the past persisteth, just so long will the foundations of the social order be blown to the four winds, just so long will humanity be continually exposed to direst peril."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 247

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Catherine. (2008-11-06 06:42:29)

I am not specially politicaly inclined.I would like to make this comment,without offending any one,you block your dream when you allow your fear to grow bigger than your faith.Life is a gest,and all things show it,I thought so onces,and now I know it,or do you wish to undertake the struggle that consists of rising ledge to ledge in a steady ascent to the top,a struggle where hardships are investments in your future,and the victories bring you irreversibly closer to the world of your moral ideal,and should you die without reaching full sunlight,you will die on a level touched by its rays.Also Wealth has never yet sacreficed itself on the alter of patriotism.

amzolt (2008-11-06 14:02:59)

Catherine, Your comment reminds us all that moral strength is worth whatever sacrifice it takes to maintain.

Imelda / Greenishlady (2008-11-09 16:38:21)

Here in Ireland, what I witnessed was a great delight in America's new possibilities, the potential for unity. I've been absent a lot, busy and not able to check in much, but it was good to read this post, Alex. Thank you for sharing the experience.

amzolt (2008-11-09 18:41:54)

Imelda, Yes! Now, we'll see if Mr. Obama can actually facilitate the changes he talks about....

#### 1.9.4 One Common Faith - Introduction (2008-11-06 16:04)



[1] I want to tell a story.

If you have a decided opinion against religion, you won't like this story.

If you rigidly cling to one human expression of religion—feeling all other expressions are wrong—you won't like this story.

I decided to tell it because I had an online friend recommend a site about an important document that discusses what's wrong and right about religion—making clear sense of the tangled religious history we humans have created.

I'd already read the document, [2] *One Common Faith*, and found the presentation of it on the site, [3] *Changeless Faith*, a valuable and intriguing way to deeply understand a document that, all by itself, could be a major challenge and a difficult message to read and comprehend. The site is interactive and multidimensional.

I urge you, sincerely, to check out the site, [4] *Changeless Faith*.

I recommend patience and an open mind.

I pray I haven't lost my Internet audience...

As an introduction to the next few posts discussing concepts from this document, here's an outline of the major sections:

History's Turning Point  
Disillusionment with the Promises of Materialism  
The Progressive Globalizing of Human Experience  
Humanity's Current Needs Overwhelm Established Religions  
Bahá'u'lláh Recasts the Entire Conception of Religion  
Progressive Revelation and the Failure to Understand It  
Religion's Unity of Purpose  
Religion's Shaping of Civilization  
Enacting the Principles of the New Age  
The Power of Unity: The Model of the Bahá'í Community  
Disunity and the Persistence of Evil  
The Unfolding of the Bahá'í Global Community  
The Day of Fulfilment

My upcoming posts about the ideas of [5] *One Common Faith* won't be a detailed exploration of all those topics—[6] *Changeless Faith* does that. I'm going to choose just a few topics—topics I can relate to current cultural issues that I feel are critical to understanding the failures of humanity in its response to past religions and a hopeful and promising way to practice religion and not lose your spirituality...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth, give birth to spirituality, and bring life and light to each heart. If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division, it were better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a religion would be a truly religious act. For it is clear that the purpose of a remedy is to cure; but if the remedy should only aggravate the complaint it had better be left alone. Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion. All the holy prophets were as doctors to the soul; they gave prescriptions for the healing of mankind; thus any remedy that causes disease does not come from the great and supreme Physician."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 130

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Justin (2008-11-07 04:14:56)

Alexander - Yes, I just found this site too, and I am as excited as you are about it. I already downloaded the audio file and will put it on my ipod in the morning to be able to listen to it over and over. The site is brilliant. I am looking forward to your future posts about concepts brought up in the book!

Catherine. (2008-11-07 07:13:10)

A splendid and great topic. Most would like to have knowledge and power but would prefer to purchase it versus work for it. True knowledge of self, This knowledge cannot be acquired in a book, purchased for all the money in the world, or received as a gift. True knowledge and power must be earned.!

amzolt (2008-11-07 15:37:47)

Justin, Yes, powerful presentation! The Document format is mind-blowingly cool and the Companion format is way Awesome!!

amzolt (2008-11-07 15:38:02)

You are so right, Catherine!!

One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Four :: Bahá'í Perspectives (2008-11-15 19:09:26)

[...] The Story Continues... Link to the beginning. [...]

forcedgreen (2008-11-20 16:23:53)

Alexander ... I am looking forward to reading your posts. I find that you have found some great information worth exploring. Thank you.

amzolt (2008-11-20 16:46:16)

forcedgreen, You're so welcome!! This series was something new for me—had no idea how many posts it would take and it ended with a Poll!! Weird...

## 1.9.5 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part One (2008-11-09 02:40)



[1]

In the last post I said, "I want to tell a story". I also said certain people wouldn't like it...

I'm not sure right now how many posts it will take to tell the story. It starts in the dim past and soars into the unseeable future.

The story won't have a lot of detail but it will have a lot of emotion. The beginning is my early time on our earth as well as the early time of our human family. It's very easy to see the stages of an individual's life mirroring the infancy, youth, adolescence, and maturity of humanity.

Before I launch into the beginnings, I want to give the links to a document and a site that explores the document—they're the immediate stimulus to my needing to tell this story.

The document is [2]One Common Faith—a deep and scholarly exploration of religion (that's the reason some folks won't like this story...).

The web site is [3]Changeless Faith—dedicated to a multimedia learning process that dives into One Common Faith and helps you connect with it in a personal way. {if you're not the type of person who regularly reads deep scholarly documents, I'd recommend starting with the "Companion" part of the site rather than the "Document" part—you'll get a simpler introduction to the concepts and appreciate the full document much more }

### The Story

I was born in 1946 to two Christian ministers—mom and dad. I feel lucky to have had such an early introduction to serious religious life. I've felt conflicted about the deep problems I've had to struggle with to unravel the mystery of Who God really Is—mom and dad or the Ineffable, Unknowable Creator.

I think our earliest ancestors had a somewhat similar problem. The members of our human family who lived during our infancy had to struggle to co-exist with the powers they encountered and

they developed various theories about a Power that ruled over those powers. Lightning or earthquakes are powers (so are mom and dad); why do they happen and what causes them? Later in the story, we'll look at the scientific understanding of this issue but it won't be easy to leave behind the ultimate Mystery about the Origin of our life and struggles in this earthly home...

I went to church four or five times a week. Our early ancestors worshiped in the constant cathedral of nature.

I trembled and uttered inner prayers that my soul wouldn't be damned by my parents. Our earliest ancestors shouted and danced to appease the gods—inner and outer.

I asked my Sunday School teacher questions she couldn't answer. They went to the medicine woman and were instructed to perform rites they weren't expected to understand.

I mostly behaved but grew up to be quite impulsive and rebellious. They did what they had to do to survive and sometimes killed the members of other tribes.

To be continued...

*Spiritual Quote :*

"It is a great mistake to believe that because people are illiterate or live primitive lives, they are lacking in either intelligence or sensibility. On the contrary, they may well look on us with the evils of our civilization, with its moral corruption, its ruinous wars, its hypocrisy and conceit, as people who merit watching with both suspicion and contempt. We should meet them as equals, well-wishers, people who admire and respect their ancient descent, and who feel that they will be interested as we are in a living religion and not in the dead forms of [many] present-day churches."

From letter written on behalf of Shoghí Effendí to the Comite Nacional de Ensenanza Bahá'í para los Indigenas de Sur America, September 21, 1951

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Nadim (2008-11-09 07:34:28)

I'm already excited for the next part! Such a well-chosen spiritual quote... it left me with two thoughts really: - is modern civilization really as "advanced" as it claims to be? - in considering the true value of societal norms, majority very often does not rule.

Catherine. (2008-11-09 06:56:25)

My experience has been a bit like the one that you describe so well, perhaps in a different way of my upbringing, still in search for an answer. Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase, as we live in a moment of history where chance is so speeded up that we begin to see the present only when it is already disappearing, I would say.. The warrior must prepare for the abandonment of everything he does.!

amzolt (2008-11-09 14:20:52)

Catherine, "...we live in a moment of history where chance is so speeded up that we begin to see the present only when it is already disappearing..." This is brilliant and totally accurate!

amzolt (2008-11-09 14:23:41)

Nadim, "- is modern civilization really as "advanced" as it claims to be?" I feel its great material advancement requires a much greater spiritual advancement. Plus, the material advancement of some needs to be shared with all (hmmm... That's probably part of the spiritual advancement...). "- in considering the true value of societal norms, majority very often does not rule." So sadly true...

Robin Easton (2008-11-10 17:24:05)

I love your comments here about early people, just beautiful. I was very heartened to see them. Then, I'm not sure why but I keep getting the impulse to paste a comment I left on the site "IN SEARCH OF MEANING" <http://www.robertkrzisnik.wordpress.com/> I've made a few minor edits and additions. I once was talking with a close male friend; we have great spiritual discussions, and I don't mean religious discussions as neither of us go to church or follow any organized religion. BUT as we were talking he said, "Well, what do you think of 'Spirit or God', what do you think it is? I mean, we need to define what IT is." I looked at him somewhat mystified, (without judgment, but nonetheless forgetting that some people experience that need), and then innocently and genuinely asked, "Why do we need to define it?" He said, "Why?!!! Because we need to know what God/Spirit is!" I said, "But why? I feel no need to know, whatsoever." Him: "But how can YOU say that? You are SOOOOOO spiritual and aware, and you have all these insights and you go around hugging everyone, even people you don't know. If someone is hurting, even in the supermarket, you reach out and ask if they are okay. You are kind to people everywhere. You reach out fearlessly, and you don't judge anyone. You accept people as they are and just love them." ME: "And so...?" Him: "Well, that must come from knowing WHAT God is, from having a clear definition of WHAT God is." ME: "No, that comes from EXPERIENCING what one might call God, Spirit, the Creator....more importantly it comes from being at peace with my own emptiness, alone-ness, or self...and in that now peaceful emptiness I feel the most intense love. It comes from being in love with the mystery, the magic, the unknown. I am comfortable just being. I don't have to have all the answers or fill up all the space with thoughts, concepts, ideologies, theories and so on. In fact I prefer not to...because then there is room for 'god, love, creator, etc. to enter my chapel. I am not up in my head busy with all my thoughts and words and clinging to my concepts. When I stay busy like that I have abandoned my god; I'm too busy trying to sort it all out to even feel/experience my god. God may come a knocking and I'm not even available. Without all the clutter of concepts, words, and so forth, I think, act and feel with my heart. And for

me...in that place of 'NOT-knowing-everything' lives the infinite, a grace so sweet it heals everything it touches." Him: "How can you just hang yourself out there like that?!! It's too raw and scary...unknown. We need to know what we're dealing with. I have to think about this and sort it out and find a finite answer. Then I'll feel safe and settled. Don't you want to feel safe or at least settled?" ME: "I already feel safe and settled...and completely loved, a love that touches me and hovers all around me every day, a love so tender that it brings me to tears. I am in love with the unknown, the infinite, the ALL, a love so powerful that I can't contain it. I have to share it, live it. Anything beyond that is almost irrelevant for me."

amzolt (2008-11-10 17:38:37)

You truly are a Rare Individual, Robin! I feel most folks want those defining concepts about God yet most of us are truly better without trying to apply rationality to the Spirit. I believe God is Unknowable, Ineffable. There are various mental tools when it comes to morality but, then, you seem quite happily beyond that...

Minister (2008-11-10 19:20:25)

Tell your story even if people don't like it. Maybe they will learn something even if they disapprove.

amzolt (2008-11-10 19:27:04)

Minister, Thank you for your encouraging comment!

isabella mori (2008-11-12 04:10:34)

beautiful, so well told! i agree with nadim - and with freud, who always spoke of the "thin veneer of civilization". in universal time, it's only been 15 minutes ago that we came out of the caves, and a split second since we discovered science on a large-scale base. but we're still afraid of the boogeyman. i think it's really important that people like you say it out loud. often, we need to name our fears and ignorance - from there we can move on.

amzolt (2008-11-12 15:56:35)

isabella, So glad to have your comments on this post! Deeply hope you'll stay with the series and offer your trenchant views!!!

## 1.9.6 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Two (2008-11-11 00:15)



[1]

Our last post began a story about my life and religion. It also set up a comparison between an individual life and the development of our human family. If you're visiting for the first time, scroll down to the last post to read the first part or [2]jump to it with this link.

### **The Story, Continued...**

When I'd reached my early youth, I had a better grip on the difference between God and my parents; but, that's not saying I really understood either of them.

Our ancestors entered a similar phase of development when they'd worked out a knowledge of the cycles of nature's manifestations—lightning, rain, flood, fire, cold, and other regular displays of earth's powers.

I continued to attend the church where my parents were the ministers, knowing there was an independent Source of ultimate power but still cringing under the manifestations of power my earthly keepers displayed. Mom was a sympathetic soul, though still full of power and command, and dad was a tyrant. Still, in my heart of hearts, I knew each loved me—in ways I wouldn't clearly realize for many years. The hard part was understanding why they seemed to not understand me...

Our ancestors had similar challenges. Even though they could predict when rains or cold would approach, they weren't clear, in a conscious way, of why these powers were manifesting. The way they coped was to personalize the powers as gods and develop meaningful rituals to appease those gods. Usually, there was a major god who ruled the lesser gods and elaborate rituals to cajole the favor of that supreme power.

I was still mostly behaving and being a good boy at this stage but I'd certainly developed a strong desire for personal time, not just the time spent with friends but time with myself, time to ponder...

Early humanity made a potent space available for a tribal member's personal time. They ritualized it and created ways to harness the individual's creativity for the greater good of the tribe—go

on the Vision Quest and bring the insights back to us so we may grow with you...

I didn't realize, even though my parents were ministers, that my personal pondering was my conscious mind talking to my soul. It would be many years before my growing ego consciousness would surrender to my soul and clear the way for a deep and pure religious experience.

The tribe lives for the tribe's sake. The individual lives within the tribe. Individual urges are shaped to the tribe's necessities or are eliminated...

### **To be continued...**

As in previous posts in this series, I urge you to reference an important document and a web site that explores that document:

Document: [3]One Common Faith

Exploratory Web Site: [4]Changeless Faith

*Spiritual Quote:*

"We affirm that a common set of core values is found in the teachings of the religions, and that these form the basis of a global ethic... There already exist ancient guidelines for human behavior which are found in the teachings of the religions of the world and which are the condition for a sustainable world order."

Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Oct, *Turning Point For All Nations*

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Catherine. (2008-11-11 06:13:16)

When I was a child, I thought and acted like a child. When I became an adult, I put away childish things. When you battle with your conscience and lose, you win. We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

amzolt (2008-11-11 14:13:54)

"When you battle with your conscience and lose, you win..." Pure brilliance, Catherine!!

### 1.9.7 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Three (2008-11-13 00:20)



[1]

The Story Continues...

{ [2]Part One }

{ [3]Part Two }

The battle begins; more accurately, the battles that make up my war with religion.

I'd accepted the Faith I was "born into" without question up to the point my questioning faculty shifted from the everyday level to the meta-level. I certainly had enough of the usual questions a seeking soul asks as it begins the process of working through the body—the "why is the sky blue" variety. At around seven years old, I began to question the Faith I'd been expected to embrace, silently of course...

Our early ancestors also accepted the various forms of Faith they'd acquired during their struggles

with the challenging environment of our mother planet. They apparently didn't just fashion these early forms of Faith from sheer imagination but were guided by beings more-than-human. From the best available evidence, there were very special personages from the earliest times; called Avatars, Prophets, Messengers, or Manifestations of God—Souls with Supreme fidelity to God's Will, human-appearing yet endowed with Powers most usually never suspected.

My personal war with religion began not because I disbelieved in God but because of the polar opposition of what I understood of God's Way and the ways my parents and fellow members of our church expressed their Faith. I must add that my mother was and still is my best example of a human living their Faith. Yet, the fact that she deferred to my father (far too much in my opinion and horribly confusing to my young mind) and that my father, very prone to vent his frustration with those not agreeing with his entrenched attitudes (always at home, not in the church), the fact that he was the religious leader of a community of wayward, struggling humans led to my first religious battles—fought, with much blood and gore, within my young personality.

Our ancestors had similar problems. An Avatar would appear in their midst and convey a morsel of spiritual Truth. The leaders of the tribes and cities would take that pure sustenance and clothe it in very human trappings, weaving rituals around it till it became nothing but a husk, lifeless and devoid of any healing power. I'm sure there were individuals who had internal religious wars similar to mine many thousands of years ago. One thing that's certain is the religious wars our ancestors, distant and recent, have fought with other tribes, cities, and nations within our human family.

I was known for my spirited discussions about religion, challenging anyone available to prove to me even a shred of evidence that religion was the correct way to worship God...

To be continued...

Spiritual Quote :

"The foundation of all the divine religions is one. All are based upon reality. Reality does not admit plurality, yet amongst mankind there have arisen differences concerning the Manifestations of God. Some have been Zoroastrians, some are Buddhists, some Jews, Christians, Muslims and so on. This has become a source of divergence, whereas the teachings of the holy Souls Who founded the divine religions are one in essence and reality. All these have served the world of humanity. All have summoned souls to peace and accord. All have proclaimed the virtues of humanity. All have guided souls to the attainment of perfections, but among the nations certain imitations of ancestral forms of worship have arisen. These imitations are not the foundation and essence of the divine religions. Inasmuch as they differ from the reality and the essential teachings of the Manifestations of God, dissensions have arisen, and prejudice has developed. Religious prejudice thus becomes the cause of warfare and battle."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 344

For an in-depth and rigorous discussion of the principles explored in this story, reference [4]One Common Faith and [5]Changeless Faith.

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Catherine. (2008-11-13 06:48:56)

Only when the questions become more important than the answers will the solution emerge, and when we have done our best, We should wait the result in peace.!

amzolt (2008-11-13 15:00:19)

Thank you, Cathrine!

## 1.9.8 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Four (2008-11-14 16:26)



[1]

### The Story Continues...

[2][Link to the beginning.](#)

More on my spiritual war with religion.

In the last installment, I'd said, "I was known for my spirited discussions about religion, challenging anyone available to prove to me even a shred of evidence that religion was the correct way to worship God..."

Even though I'd had a huge turn-off toward religion, I continued to search for one I could call my own, devote myself to, claim as my Truth.

I should inject a bit of clarity concerning morality, spirituality, and religion.

Having a "moral code" may keep you from reprehensible actions but it won't necessarily help you transform your consciousness or achieve the heights of spiritual awareness.

Being "spiritual" may bring some measure of heightened consciousness and may or may not have an influence on moral behavior.

Being "religious" can improve the morals, heighten spirituality, *and* induce an attitude that aids an individual in working cooperatively to build better forms of social existence.

Our ancestors had a chance to try all three modes of behavior and understanding, over and over again. They, with the help of the Avatars and Prophets down through the ages, built moral codes, devised activities to heighten spirituality, and formed religious societies. Something they also did, that worked against all three forms of social betterment, was to weave highly materialistic and basely human rituals and institutions around the pure forms bequeathed to them by the Prophets. This is what led to the divisiveness of religion against religion—the fighting against the outer forms of worship and dogmatic theologies while ignoring the eternal spiritual truths.

I did the very same thing in my individual development. I'd receive a small bit of the Truth, immediately appropriate it to my personal whims and fancies, project it on anyone willing to listen, and defend it till I'd lose the other person's respect...

I came from an American-Christian background. I've always honored and respected Jesus. I also explored other religions and found cause to honor and respect their Prophet-Founders. The predominant American religious game is to deal out a deck stacked against any religion but the one crafted by either very mortal popes or very mortal ministers. I'd grown up with two very mortal ministers (mom and dad), had them shape my early understandings of religion. How in the world to reconcile my religious birthright of the exclusivity of Jesus with the apparently equal exclusivity of the other Prophet-Founders?

The answer was found after an excruciatingly painful descent into my Dark Night of the Soul.

**To be continued...**

*Spiritual Quote :*

"What 'oppression' is more grievous than that a soul seeking the truth, and wishing to attain unto the knowledge of God, should know not where to go for it and from whom to seek it? For opinions have sorely differed, and the ways unto the attainment of God have multiplied. This 'oppression' is the essential feature of every Revelation. Unless it cometh to pass, the Sun of Truth will not be made manifest. For the break of the morn of divine guidance must needs follow the darkness of the night of error."

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, p. 31

For an in-depth and rigorous discussion of the principles explored in this story, reference [3]One Common Faith and [4]Changeless Faith.

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Catherine. (2008-11-15 05:47:38)

I don't know if God exists, but it would be better for His reputation if he didn't. Buried deep within each of us is a spark of greatness, a spark that can be fanned into flames of passion and achievement. That spark is not outside of you...it is born deep within you.!

### 1.9.9 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Five (2008-11-16 20:04)



[1]

**The Story Continues...**  
{[2]the beginning is here }  
**My Dark Night of the Soul**

I put an image of the devil over there because, even though I no longer believe in an incarnate evil power that acts against and opposes God, I do still believe that our ego consciousness, if not guided

by our higher selves, can act like and is in fact a devil—leading us into all manner of immoral, unspiritual, and irreligious activity.

Our ancestors had to face many devils—forces outside themselves that they personified, made into separate psychological entities—nature forces with minds and plans of their own. I feel they also faced the same devil we all have, potentially, within us: the ego consciousness.

Some psychological scientists feel that the ego has not always been part of a human's character, that it grew in response to the need to specialize our talents to meet increasingly complex social tasks. It still remains a mystery to sincere experts of the mind. It still is the major antagonist on any person's spiritual path.

As past posts in this series indicated, I began life in the cradle of a serious religious family and, at an early age, began to question the theology I was expected to believe. The initial painful struggle for me was clearing up the mystery about my minister parents' spiritual authority and how it fit into the Will of God. Aspects of this mystery were cleared up rapidly as my reasoning mind developed but there were emotional issues about spiritual authority that lingered well into my 50s.

There was another spiritual mystery that concerned the apparent exclusivity of the various religions' Prophet-Founders—the Christians claiming Christ was the only Way, the Muslims claiming the same exclusivity for Muhammad, and, even though less vocal about their beliefs, the Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and others seemed to have similar theological attitudes.

My response to this impossible situation was to cling fervently to my belief in one God and proceed down the road of secular scholarship to attempt to resolve the issue. I studied all manner of Self-Help approaches, dove into psychology and psychiatry, bore down into the vaults of scientific knowledge, and explored what are considered Occult arts. Along the way, in spite of my belief in God, I wove a path that entangled me in all the pitfalls of merely human learning—pride, intolerance, lack of real justice, rationalizations for purely selfish actions, and many other extremely devilish occupations.

Our ancestors traveled similar roads, repeatedly. The major difference between my personal development and the development of our human family is that I've never killed anyone for their religious beliefs...

I eventually, at 42, found my Faith, my solution to the perplexing and devil-like antipathies that have grown up between the various flavors of religion. More on this next time when,

### [3]The story continues...

#### *Spiritual Quotes :*

"Remember how Adam and the others once dwelt together in Eden. No sooner, however, did a quarrel break out between Adam and Satan than they were, one and all, banished from the Garden, and this was meant as a warning to the human race, a means of telling humankind that dissension – even with the Devil – is the way to bitter loss. This is why, in our illumined age, God teacheth that

conflicts and disputes are not allowable, not even with Satan himself.”  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 275

”Now a procession passes. The Pageant of the World. Grand nobles and kings, high priests and dignitaries of the Churches, jewelled and gorgeously dressed. They look with scorn on those who believe, saying: 'Why should we leave our ancient religions?' They look like devils of malice and oppression. Yet each is miserable. One falls, the others pass on. One is dying, the others take no heed. Another breathes his last. They do not stop by the way.

”The poor who have believed look on sadly.”  
H.M. Balyuzi, *'Abdu'l-Bahá - The Centre of the Covenant*, p. 499

For an in-depth and rigorous discussion of the principles explored in this story, reference [4]One Common Faith and [5]Changeless Faith.

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Tomas (2008-11-16 20:38:17)

Dear Alexander M Zoltai, Peace radiates from all your words and that peace awakes - comforts and greatly supports by depicting life from a bit different point than world market try to do. I just wrote on my blog: "Our life story fits a description of our beloved quotes. Just listen. "The bird of paradise alights only upon the hand that does not grasp." <http://dayfly.wordpress.com/> I'm adding your blog to these quotes now. Thank you once again.

amzolt (2008-11-16 22:26:55)

Tomas, Thank you for adding my comment to your blog but, more importantly, thank you for gracing my blog with your wisdom!!

Catherine. (2008-11-17 05:39:54)

Life isn't about the number of breaths we take, but the moments that take our breaths away, with this wonderful writings Alex, and a comment. Two possibilities exist: Either we are alone in the Universe or we are not. Both are equally terrifying.

amzolt (2008-11-17 11:50:38)

Dear Catherine, Could you expand on that idea a bit?

Catherine. (2008-11-17 22:05:24)

I do my best to come up with a new arrangement. There are times however when I just have to reach into my grab-bag of loose words and offer them while I think of a topic that might fit. It's one of those days.. My thought is whenever two people meet, there are really six people present, There is each man as he himself, each man as the other person sees him, and each man as he really is.

amzolt (2008-11-17 23:50:31)

Vast Wisdom, Catherine...

### 1.9.10 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Six (2008-11-19 00:49)



[1]

**The Story Continues...**  
{[2]the beginning is here }  
**More About My**  
**Dark Night of the Soul**

Last post, I'd said my search for spiritual answers in secular haunts led me to a lot of devilish activity. I'm not knocking all secular (non-religious) knowledge—we'd still be in the Stone Age without it.

What I'm getting at is acquiring only secular knowledge—keeping your knowledge grounded in materialistic concerns, not hitching it to a spiritual star...

"If the material details blind us to the spiritual meaning, then we should be better without them..."  
Dr. J.E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 204

Our ancestors struggled with the material world one hell of a lot more than people now living in affluent countries. Of course, there are still millions forced, through a lack of spiritual will and conviction on the part of affluent governments, to live at a level of struggle much like our distant ancestors. Humanity has gained much material knowledge but the sharing of that knowledge leaves much to be desired...

Our ancestors also struggled with the religious knowledge they acquired. Most of it was so perverted by overly materialistic priests and clergy that it was only of benefit to the money bags of the spiritual leaders. It appears that, apart from the material advancements made over the centuries, the spiritual advancement of civilization was aided by a mere handful of devoted, truly "religious" individuals.

For most of my life I was a greedy gatherer of materialistic knowledge—eager for whatever would put me ahead of the pack, secure my earthly position, and bring me the adulation of others. Having come from a serious religious background, I plunged into what the world had to offer and continually failed to attain happiness. Oh, sure, I've had my moments of joy but they were always followed by depression and dejection.

Our human family's been through the same thing—pulling themselves up to new heights of achievement only to plunge into hellacious backwaters of degraded existence. Certain countries have attained super heights of glorious prestige then sunk into forgotten holes of history.

The best way I can relate the continuing, overpowering feeling that haunted me in my misguided, ego-controlled secular exploits is to share a poem I wrote in the midst of one of the darkest times:

**Again?**  
Creeping up a  
Hill of life from a  
Valley too well-known;  
This time, this  
Time reach some  
Height not leading  
Back to have-to;  
This time, this  
Time free enough to  
See beyond these

Patterns locked in  
Self so locked in  
Dust.

Next post, I'll share what I discovered that definitely has the potential power to keep me facing the Light so the swirling greys of earthly existence don't pull me back down into the Dark as

**the story continues...**

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Man is not a pre-existent being, but a newly produced and created being, consisting of two aspects or portions, the spiritual and material, which may be likened to hell and paradise; and he does not know whether he will be in hell or paradise. For instance, man is composed of evil as well as good, of darkness as well as light, of guidance as well as misleading; the most evil character is to be found in man, while the greatest and most excellent character is also found in him. We must see that the good qualities gain victory over the bad. If so, the man will become an 'angel', but if the bad qualities conquer the good ones, then he will become a 'devil'. If the light conquers the darkness in man, of course he will be true light, and if the darkness conquers the light, he will be of the material." Compilations, *Bahá'í Scriptures*, p. 499

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[3] *Let's have a conversation !*

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3. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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Catherine. (2008-11-19 06:26:52)

Martyrdom has always been a proof of the intensity, never of the correctness of a belief. The greatest sin is to question your Divinity.

One Common Faith ~ The Story &#8211; Part Five &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-08-01 05:25:46)

[...] I eventually, at 42, found my Faith, my solution to the perplexing and devil-like antipathies that have grown up between the various flavors of religion. More on this next time when, The story continues... [...]

## 1.9.11 One Common Faith ~ The Story - Part Seven (2008-11-20 02:33)



[1]

**The End {? } of the Story...**

[2]Here's the beginning...

The last two posts, about my Dark Night of the Soul, didn't have much detail. I tried to convey the essence of my journey through the halls of worldly learning and my lack of well-being during the trek. What I didn't relate was the gritty, dirty, degrading, disheartening details. I'm sure some of you can fill in those details...

Our human family's trek through the ages has much more depravity and wrenching sorrow than I ever could have lived. There have also, thank God, been eras of soaring success and glorious progress. We—all humans—have been on a Trek of Cosmic proportion!

And, most important, for the story of humanity, all the sacred Scriptures talk about a Promised Time when the Kingdom of God will be established on this earth. Most people are unaware of this historic record and, even if educated about its existence, would not believe it possible.

In the depths of my own disbelief, I still caught glimpses of a Light—an ineffable, indescribable Hope—a Way Out of the nauseating cycle of strive-fail-strive-fail-Wail ...

I found my Answer, my Faith, when I was 42. Yes, it was a religion. But... If you've been following this story from the beginning, you realize that, when I use the word "religion", I don't mean the deplorable examples that are scattered over the earth—the shams and shells of religion that are so perverted with human failings and fantasies that God, in His Love and Wisdom, is buried under impenetrable mountains of falsehood.

Yet, God is said to be All-Powerful...

So, where is a religion that permits God to enter our lives without the impossible barriers of conventional religions?

That year is very important. That year was the latest rebirth of religion—a rebirth that has happened many times in human history.

Just like Spring overcomes the death and decay of Winter, there have been Springtimes of religious rebirth—every Prophet-Founder of the world’s major religions bringing a Fresh Spirit of Pure Spiritual Knowledge—Each, insanely rejected by the followers of the incumbent form of religion—Each, made to suffer incredibly from the spiritual blindness of humanity.

But, God is Love, right? So, God has continued to send His Messengers, no matter how many times we’ve rejected Them...

I accepted my Faith when I was 42 and I’m now 62. I certainly didn’t turn into an angel just because I saw the Light. These last 20 years have been an incredible uphill struggle for me but, of course, I had 42 years to practice being an egotistic, materialistic human...

I have more hope than I ever did but my journey now has an importance that requires more deep soul-effort than I’d ever expended—more listening to my heart, more discipline, more prayer...

The way I see it, I have one basic choice, go with the worldly flow and continue to be miserably disappointed or oppose the flow and learn to soar in the heavens of pure spiritual life.

Our human family has the same choice and also has the capability and power to make the right decision—person by person—to turn this hellacious mess into the Promised Heavenly Earth. If you don’t believe me, you haven’t been hanging out in the right spaces, you haven’t been exposed to the Truth, you’ve been stuck for too long, just like me, in the rut of what’s been, unable to see what can be ...

I’m not trying to convert you to my religion, I’m just trying to let you know there is hope, there is a way to make our earth a respectable Palace that caters to the well-being and tranquillity of All Peoples ...

**Here’s a video about the world-wide Bahá’í Community:**

[youtube=[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIhiC\\_2yh\\_A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIhiC_2yh_A)]

Here is the Statement, [3] *The Promise of World Peace*

*Spiritual Quote :*

”Your efforts must be lofty. Exert yourselves with heart and soul so that, perchance, through your efforts the light of universal peace may shine and this darkness of estrangement and enmity may be dispelled from amongst men, that all men may become as one family and consort together in love and kindness, that the East may assist the West and the West give help to the East, for all are the inhabitants of one planet, the people of one original native land and the flocks of one Shepherd.

”Consider how the Prophets Who have been sent, the great souls who have appeared and the sages who have arisen in the world have exhorted mankind to unity and love. This has been the essence

of their mission and teaching. This has been the goal of their guidance and message. The Prophets, saints, seers and philosophers have sacrificed their lives in order to establish these principles and teachings amongst men. Consider the heedlessness of the world, for notwithstanding the efforts and sufferings of the Prophets of God, the nations and peoples are still engaged in hostility and fighting. Notwithstanding the heavenly commandments to love one another, they are still shedding each other's blood. How heedless and ignorant are the people of the world! How gross the darkness which envelops them! Although they are the children of a compassionate God, they continue to live and act in opposition to His will and good pleasure. God is loving and kind to all men, and yet they show the utmost enmity and hatred toward each other. God is the Giver of life to them, and yet they constantly seek to destroy life. God blesses and protects their homes; they rage, sack and destroy each other's homes. Consider their ignorance and heedlessness!

"Your duty is of another kind, for you are informed of the mysteries of God. Your eyes are illumined; your ears are quickened with hearing. You must, therefore, look toward each other and then toward mankind with the utmost love and kindness."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 470

For an in-depth and rigorous discussion of the principles explored in this story, reference [4]One Common Faith and [5]Changeless Faith.

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[6] *Let's have a conversation !*

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3. <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/uhj/PWP/pwp-1.html>
4. <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/19281>
5. <http://www.changelessfaith.com/>
6. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Catherine. (2008-11-20 18:02:19)

The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race, posterity as well as the existing generation, those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.!

amzolt (2008-11-20 19:21:11)  
Catherine, Again, you share Sterling Wisdom!!

### 1.9.12 One Common Faith ~ The Polls (2008-11-20 16:35)



[1] You can take these polls without reading the series, One Common Faith ~ The Story, but if you'd rather read it first, [2]here's the beginning...

**You can select multiple answers**

[poll daddy poll=1123295]

[poll daddy poll=1123312]

[poll daddy poll=1123347]

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4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Alexys Fairfield (2008-11-20 17:09:15)

Hi Alex, Thanks for the invitation to take the polls. It's a good way to gauge your readers. I really wanted to answer the last poll with the last question, (patio) but I resisted. It's all in God's hand.

amzolt (2008-11-20 17:10:53)

Alexys, Hey, patios can be real spiritual places, eh?

How to get Inspiration? (2008-11-20 18:12:10)

[...] the rest of this superb post right here No Comments so far Leave a comment RSS feed for comments on this post. TrackBack URI [...]

margaret rogers (2008-11-20 21:19:50)

Whoever wrote the poll - ? Where your at right now? not good English - "you are" or you're not "your" which is possessive I believe. anyway -

amzolt (2008-11-20 21:23:52)

Margaret, It would be my sister who would put this supposed "writer" in his place... ;-)

isabella mori (2008-11-21 04:48:22)

good poll! i'd be interested in seeing the final outcome, and your thoughts about it. i kinda liked the option of "on the patio, relaxing". reminds me of one of my favourite spiritual quotes, "wear the world like a loose garment".

amzolt (2008-11-21 05:11:54)

isabella, Not sure how "final" the results will ever be—people come to various posts for many reasons—search engines, tags, etc.—but, each poll has a link at its bottom to view the current results. It will be interesting to monitor those results over time!

Catherine. (2008-11-21 06:29:40)

The state of your mind determines the state of your life. What you believe is what you get.

amzolt (2008-11-22 16:24:34)

Very pointed and clear statements, Catherine! Your observations, to me, are right on!!!

rainforestrobin (2008-11-21 16:55:45)

Hello Dear Alex. This is Robin of the LOLs! :) I enjoyed your delightful comment on my video. Bless you! I also enjoyed this poll; it was fun to take and see what other people are feeling. I keep thinking about the last question: "Where are you at right now." And I marked: Heaven. I know there is much pain and suffering in the world, some of it so dark and atrocious as to be heinous. And I say what I am about to say not ignorant to this suffering, and not from a life lived without periods of deep intense suffering, sometimes long periods of pain....But I STILL cannot help but feel/know that I live in Heaven each day. I am so in love with a force that surrounds me, a force that moves me to tears EVERY single day. I know Life as Heaven, right here, right now. Not something far away and reached when I die. I know it as the wind through pine trees and morning birds. I know it as the people who love me, and the people who are suffering and I am blessed to love and help them, I know it as the children who come magic-filled into the world, I know it as the children

who cry out for help who I am able to help, I know it as the elders I hug and touch in the supermarket because they can't read the labels, I know it as the homeless man I gave \$5 to and tears rolled down his face and he hugs me...I watch him go into MacDonald's to get a Big Mac, and feel filled with JOY. I know LIFE as Heaven. I think we humans tend to put Heaven as a place far away and unattainable, a place we only experience when we die. But I know it as a place that "is" ALWAYS, and everywhere. That is not to deny the horrible crimes and suffering in the world, I see and feel them deeply, but that doesn't negate the existence of an eternal Love or Heaven that is filled with grace and beauty beyond comprehension, beauty that when experienced makes me weep with the sheer force of it. Although I've seen and felt the horrible suffering of the world, I have also seen and felt as much or more Heaven, even in my suffering. For me Heaven exists right now, right here. Heaven exists period. And it is only a matter of human's learning to align themselves with it. And Heaven for me is a place of complete and utter LOVE, a place without judgment, a place so vast it encompasses all things and goes on loving infinitely...knows only Love, a place of such beauty that we are pierced to our core by that beauty. I am on my knees thankful that I have felt this in my lifetime. Each day no matter what is going on I try to align myself with this love and beauty. It is what gives me the inner strength to help those suffering, those in pain whether emotional or physical, it is what gives me the insight to forgive and not judge, to love and not hate, to heal and love that which I touch and that which touches me as I move into the world. Heaven is what fills me and becomes me...if I let it.

amzolt (2008-11-21 17:09:54)

Robin, Such a beautiful response!!! Reminded me of this: "O ye lovers of God! Be kind to all peoples; care for every person; do all ye can to purify the hearts and minds of men; strive ye to gladden every soul. To every meadow be a shower of grace, to every tree the water of life; be as sweet musk to the sense of humankind, and to the ailing be a fresh, restoring breeze. Be pleasing waters to all those who thirst, a careful guide to all who have lost their way; be father and mother to the orphan, be loving sons and daughters to the old, be an abundant treasure to the poor. Think ye of love and good fellowship as the delights of heaven, think ye of hostility and hatred as the torments of hell." (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 244)

Catherine. (2008-11-22 16:12:02)

A society without religion is like a vessel without a compass. If I had chosen a religion, the sun as the universal giver of life would be my God. The doctrine of the material efficacy of prayer reduces the creator to a cosmic bellhop of a not very bright or reliable kind, Religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich, if you want a thing done well do it yourself.!

### 1.9.13 Poll Results (2008-11-23 22:25)



[1] Well, the [2]One Common Faith Polls have been up for three days now and I want to report on the results, so far...

I've learned in my time with this blog that any given post can be visited for months because of the web of connections I have on the Internet. The post that's remained the most popular, [3]*Strong In The Broken Places*, was written back on May 9th...

Even though I'm going to give the results of the polls in this post, I'm sure they'll be visited over the next few months. I'll be giving updates as time goes on. You didn't take part in the polls? Oh, my! [4]Here they are...

So...

The poll about, How would you characterize yourself?, has 32 responses so far. The top three responses are:

#1: Spiritual

#2: is a tie between, Religious and Moral

#3: is a tie between, Agnostic and Atheistic

The poll with the question, How do you feel about humanity's future?, has 25 responses and the top three are:

#1: The Kingdom of God will be established on earth

#2: Improvement's possible with God's help

#3: is a tie between, Science will save us and We will save ourselves

The poll about, Where do you feel you're at, right now?, has 29 responses and the top three are:

#1: Working to establish God's Kingdom

#2: Climbing a spiritual mountain

#3: Roaming in a spiritual valley

The results are in (for now) and I'm pondering them deeply to open myself up to what the readers of this blog are feeling...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"You will see how the world is upset with internal conflict, and many lands are dyed in human blood—nay the earth is kneaded with gore. The flame of war is so ablaze that such terrible struggle finds no parallel in the war records of any of the middle or recent ages. Heads have become like grains and the war like mill stones—nay even worse. Flourishing lands are ruined, cities completely wrecked and thriving towns annihilated. Fathers have lost their sons, sons are made fatherless, and mothers have shed tears of blood over the death of their youthful sons. Children are made orphan, women are helpless, and the world of humanity is forced backward in all respects. The wailing cry of fatherless children is raised abroad, and mothers' pathetic lamentation reaches the high heaven.

"The source of all these catastrophes is racial fanaticism, patriotic fanaticism, religious fanaticism and political fanaticism. The source of these fanaticisms is ancient imitations, religious imitations, racial imitations, patriotic imitations, and political imitations. As long as following such imitations persists, the very foundation of humanity is wrecked and the world of man is in great jeopardy."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Letter to Martha Root*

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amzolt (2008-11-24 16:18:13)

Catherine, This so very true and so misunderstood by most people.....

Catherine. (2008-11-24 07:31:51)

Excellent poll,great presentation of fabulous writing,much devotion and time spend on this Alex.. The only competition you will ever have is the competition between your disciplined and undisplined mind.!

amzolt (2008-11-24 15:01:55)

Catherine, I hope the evidences of my "undisciplined mind" are few and far between ;-)

Catherine. (2008-11-24 15:55:09)

There is no religion without love,and people may talk as much as they like about their religion, but if it does not teach them to be good and kind to other animals as well as humans, it is all a sham.

#### 1.9.14 The World-Wide Gender Gap (2008-11-25 06:37)



[1] In a previous post, [2]*Path Toward Peace - Step Seven*,

the concept of *eliminating the denial of the equality of women and men* was explored. I thought it was time to take another look at the critical need for complete equality between women and men, *world-wide*. It's fulfillment is crucial to global peace...

I consulted a document entitled, [3]*Global Gender Gap Report*. It was published by [4]The World Economic Forum with the aid of Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley.

It goes into extreme detail about many interactive factors measured for 130 countries to assess their accomplishments toward closing the gender gap.

Here are the top ten countries, those doing the best job of facilitating gender equality:

Norway  
Finland  
Sweden  
Iceland  
New Zealand  
Philippines  
Denmark  
Ireland  
Netherlands  
Latvia

Here are the bottom ten countries, those doing the least to close the gap:

Bahrain  
Ethiopia  
Turkey  
Egypt  
Morocco  
Benin  
Pakistan  
Saudi Arabia  
Chad  
Yemen

And, here's part of the conclusion from the Report:

"The third edition of The Global Gender Gap Report calls attention to four essential facts. First, the Index provides a valuable snapshot of the current performance of 130 countries, representing over 90 % of the world's population. On average, over 97 % of the gap on health outcomes, 95 % of the gap on educational attainment, 62 % of the gap on economic participation and 16 % of the gap on political empowerment has been closed. *No country in the world has achieved gender equality*. The four highest ranking countries—Norway, Finland, Sweden and Iceland—have closed a little over 80 % of their gender gaps, while the lowest ranking country—Yemen—has closed only around 47 % of its gender gap."

Much work to be done, eh?

*Spiritual Quote :*

”So it will come to pass that when women participate fully and equally in the affairs of the world, when they enter confidently and capably the great arena of laws and politics, war will cease.”  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in a document from the Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Aug 26,  
*Creating Legal Institutional Structures for Gender Equality*

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2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/09/30/path-toward-peace-step-seven/>
3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/report2008.pdf>
4. <http://www.weforum.org/>
5. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
6. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Catherine. (2008-11-26 05:59:19)

No one ever is defeated until defeat has been accepted as a reality!

amzolt (2008-11-26 09:40:03)

So, from what you say, Catherine, I would say we need to teach women how to not accept defeat by men as their reality...

Robin Easton (2008-11-28 20:03:01)

This is all info that I did not know. I also just bought a ticket to Norway! lol! :) :) I really like both your comment and Catherine's comment here. I agree with both of them. And since defeat is not in my nature, nor is wallowing in pity, anger or indignation, I start to look for ways that I can bring about positive change. I know you have seen this link Alex but it might be a good to put here again: The Girl Effect: <http://www.girleffect.org/> I believe that we need to teach woman/young girls to not back down, but we also need to teach men/young boys to "see", "know" and treat women as equals. Inmtersting post my friend.  
Robin

amzolt (2008-11-28 20:51:29)

Robin, Yes! That link to Girl Effect can not be spread widely enough!! As far as men and boys, check this out: <http://www.bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/04-0301.htm>

### 1.9.15 The Numbers Make Me Thankful (2008-11-26 12:07)



[1]

Numbers make me thankful?  
Yep!

See, tomorrow is Thanksgiving in the United States and, since I spend almost every waking hour either writing or preparing to write this blog, all aspects of the blogging process are important to me; especially, how many people are reading the posts and where on the earth they are when they access the blog...

I may have been born and still live in the U.S. but I consider myself a world citizen. I try to write the blog from that perspective and I'm grateful when I see that people in other lands are reading it!

So, I decided to share the numbers I'll be thankful for tomorrow during the Thanksgiving celebration.

First, the statistics for what countries you readers are in when you visit. There are a total of 53 countries represented and that makes me exceedingly thankful!! All I'll show you here are the top ten {The numbers in my stats counter are only the last 500 visitors }:

Num	Perc.	Country Name	
279	55.80%	United States	
49	9.80%	United Kingdom	
35	7.00%	Canada	
12	2.40%	India	
10	2.00%	Israel	
9	1.80%	Netherlands	
8	1.60%	Philippines	
6	1.20%	Australia	
6	1.20%	Malaysia	
6	1.20%	Brazil	

[2]

Even though 55.8 % of you are from the United States, I'm thankful that 44.2 % are not from here! Also, even though it's only 2 % from Israel, that country is where the spiritual and administrative center of my Faith are located—gives me a warm thankfulness...

Next are the states and regions (again, only the top ten):

Num	Perc.	State/Region	Country Name	
38	7.60%	New York	United States	
32	6.40%	Washington	United States	
27	5.40%	California	United States	
23	4.60%	Florida	United States	
18	3.60%	Jakarta Raya	Indonesia	
14	2.80%	Texas	United States	
13	2.60%	Oregon	United States	
13	2.60%	Pennsylvania	United States	
11	2.20%	Ontario	Canada	
10	2.00%	London	United Kingdom	

[3]

Sure, most of the top ten are states in the U.S. but number 5 is, thankfully, Jakarta Raya!

Last are the top ten cities:

Num	Perc.	City	Region	Country Name	
24	4.80%	Redmond	Washington	United States	
18	3.60%	Buffalo	New York	United States	
12	2.40%	London	London	United Kingdom	
8	1.60%			United States	
8	1.60%	Salem	Oregon	United States	
7	1.40%	Sarasota	Florida	United States	
7	1.40%	Albuquerque	New Mexico	United States	
6	1.20%	Robards	Kentucky	United States	
5	1.00%	Birmingham	Birmingham	United Kingdom	
5	1.00%	Haifa	Hefa	Israel	

[4]

First thing I noticed is that spot 4 is a city and state in the U.S. that has no name... That may have been where I was back in the late 60s...

Number ten makes me have that warm thankfulness again since it's the actual city that has the World Center of my Faith!!

According to [5]WikiAnswers, Mexico, Japan, China, Australia, and Canada also celebrate Thanksgiving. And, according to [6]enotes: "Many groups of people around the world give thanks,

usually at a celebration following a major crop harvest.”

So, tomorrow, as I celebrate the holiday with friends from my favorite café, I’ll be thankful I live in a country that still has some of the freedoms it intended to have and I’ll savor, along with the food and friendship, the fact that my efforts in this blog are visited by members of our human family from many diverse countries...

*Spiritual Quote :*

”Today, humanity is bowed down with trouble, sorrow and grief, no one escapes; the world is wet with tears; but, thank God, the remedy is at our doors. Let us turn our hearts away from the world of matter and live in the spiritual world! It alone can give us freedom!”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 110

1. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/numbers1.gif>
2. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/country\\_stats.gif](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/country_stats.gif)
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5. [http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Names\\_of\\_other\\_countries\\_that\\_celebrate\\_thanksgiving](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Names_of_other_countries_that_celebrate_thanksgiving)
6. <http://www.enotes.com/history-fact-finder/holidays-observances/do-all-countries-celebrate-thanksgiving>

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Catherine. (2008-11-27 05:59:29)

At such moments one imagines that one stands on some spot of a small planet gazing in amazement at the cold and yet profoundly moving beauty of the eternal, the unfathomable. Life and death flow into one, and there is neither evolution nor eternity, only being.

amzolt (2008-11-27 12:31:32)

Thank you for that, Catherine!

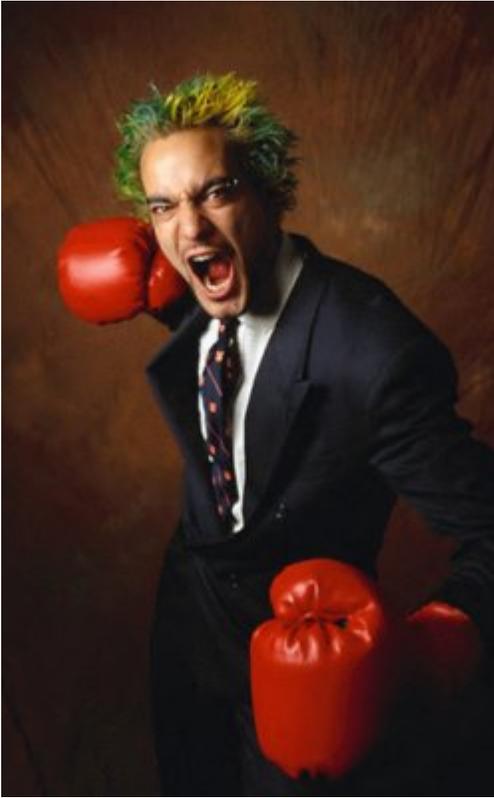
Robin Easton (2008-11-28 20:21:33)

I too consider myself a world citizen. Ever since I left home at 18 and traveled all over creation and back I’ve never felt the same. I love the vastness of ”feeling” global. I love the input, perspectives, culture, languages, etc. of other countries. I think when we can open our minds and hearts to different cultures we then open our minds and hearts to other ways of thinking, feeling, behaving, etc. We see ”other” as ”self”. Being able to do this is a big shift in perception, one the world can use more of. I have discovered that we are more alike than different. I find that very heartwarming. Hope your ”Cafe Day” went well. We just went for drive, bit of walk in the rain and a car picnic with a great view. Very relaxing to NOT do the whole traditional TG Day dinner thing. Also, I have to thank YOU for your kindness, support and caring. It means much in my life. Hugs to you, Alex, Robin

amzolt (2008-11-28 20:47:44)

Robin, You open the world to us with your comments!!

## 1.9.16 Fighting With Myself (2008-11-28 23:52)



[1] For twenty years I've been a member of a Faith that I deeply love. For twenty years I've had to fight with myself to live up to the precepts and principles of that Faith...

Why would a person who feels their Faith is powerful enough to help them with the bad side of life have to struggle so hard? Could it be that the 42 years I'd lived before I found my Faith have such a backlog of ingrained habits that it will take a supreme effort to live up to my Faith?

I've thought, for many years, that I needed to make a supreme effort and sometimes felt I was making that effort. I'm still needing a Supreme Effort...

At least I'm a better man than when I began this Faithful Journey. Still, my conscience doesn't stop stalking me...

Some may say I shouldn't be so hard on myself. Some may say that feeling bad about trying to be good is insane. Some may think I should just stop trying to live up to a Code that interferes with living in this world.

That last idea hits at the core of why I keep battling with myself—is this world the end of existence for human beings? My mind says, if it is the end, I've got no business worrying about my behavior—in the long run it doesn't matter at all.

If it isn't the end of my existence and if there is another world after this, then I need to make a Supreme Effort to get this life Right so I can Soar in the next life!

I don't believe there are a heaven and hell after this life—places of infinite joy and infinite punishment—those states exist right here on this earth. To me, the next life is a continuation of this one, both being an infinite Journey back to our Creator...

And, as far as reincarnation goes, seems to me the ultimate excuse to do whatever the hell I want since I can make it up "next time"...

So, as I continue working to live up to my principles, I'll leave you with some quotes to think about. My Faith says we all have the responsibility to investigate Truth for ourselves—see with our own eyes and hear with our own ears...

The first three quotes are not from the free [2]Ocean software I usually use; I found them on the 'Net.

Spiritual Quotes :

"Death is no more than passing from one room into another. But there's a difference for me, you know. Because in that other room I shall be able to see."

— Helen Keller (both blind and deaf from infancy)

"The primary question about life after death is not whether it is a fact, but even if it is, what problems that really solves."

— Ludwig Wittgenstein (Austrian philosopher who worked primarily in logic)

"The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time."

— Mark Twain (American Writer/Humorist)

"As to the soul of man after death, it remains in the degree of purity to which it has evolved during life in the physical body, and after it is freed from the body it remains plunged in the ocean of God's Mercy."

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 66

"What death is more wretched than to flee from the Source of everlasting life?"

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, p. 38

"You are now like a withered leaf;  
the messengers of death have come near you.  
You stand at the threshold of your departure.  
Have you made provision for your journey?"

— Buddhist, *Dhammapada - Sayings of the Buddha 2* (translator, J. Richards)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

— *King James Bible*, John 5:24

"In the way of righteousness is life: and in the pathway thereof there is no death."

— *King James Bible*, Proverbs 12:28

”But whereso any doeth all his deeds  
Renouncing self for Me, full of Me, fixed  
To serve only the Highest, night and day  
Musing on Me- him will I swiftly lift  
Forth from life’s ocean of distress and death,  
Whose soul clings fast to Me.”

— Hindu, *Bhagavad Gita* (Edwin Arnold, translator)

”Giver of vital breath, of power and vigour, he whose commandments all the Gods acknowledge -.

The Lord of death, whose shade is life immortal. What God shall we adore with our oblation?”

— Vedas, *Rig Veda* - Book 10, 2

”One said, ’The world would be a pleasant place  
If death never set foot within it’.

Another answered, ’If there were no death,  
The complicated world would be worth not a jot.  
It would be a crop raised in a desert,  
Left neglected and never threshed out.

Thou fanciest that to be death, which is life,  
Thou sowest thy seed in salt ground.

Carnal reason deceives us; do thou contradict it,  
For that fool takes what is really death to be life.

O God, show us all things in this house of deception,  
Show them all as they really are!’”

— Mathnavi of Rumi (E.H. Whinfield translator), *The Masnavi*, Vol 5

”Then contemplate (O man!) the memorials of Allah’s Mercy! – how He gives life to the earth after its death: verily the Same will give life to the men who are dead: for He has power over all things.”

— *The Qur’an* (Yusuf Ali, translator), Surah 30 verse 50

”’Life and Death are indeed changes of great moment’, answered Confucius, ’but they cannot affect his mind. Heaven and earth may collapse, but his mind will remain. Being indeed without flaw, it will not share the fate of all things. It can control the transformation of things, while preserving its source intact’.”

— *Tao*, Chuangtse (Lin Yutang, translator)

**Please leave your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

[3] *Let’s have a conversation !*

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amzolt (2008-11-29 02:03:11)

I have considered Jesus as God—I was born into a family where my parents were both Christian ministers and my two older sister became ministers. I cleave to the statement in the Bible that: "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." King James Bible, 1 John 4:14 The critical issue is, who is the "Father"?

Fighting With Myself « Our Evolution | boatknees.com (2008-11-29 01:19:37)

[...] Read the original post [...]

bigfalamike (2008-11-29 01:39:30)

In your spiritual journey have you considered Jesus as God? As the one who died for every sin you have ever done or will do. Love to dialogue with you on that topic

Catherine. (2008-11-29 05:13:06)

The first man to see through a illusion that has held men captive for centuries stands in a lonely place.In that instant flash on insight, he sees that truth which to his uninitiated appears as nonsense,madness,or heresey.The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the area,whose face is marred by dust and sweat valiant,who errs and comes short again and again,who knows the great entusiasm,the devotion and spends himself in a worthy cause,who at the best knows triumph of high achievement,and who at the worst, if he fails while daring greatly so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.!!! Within its deep infinity I saw ingatherred, and bound by love in one volume,the scattered leaves of the universe. Dante: Italian Poet.

Catherine. (2008-11-30 04:05:04)

Left unchecked you will often find yourself to be the product of other people's habitual way of thinking!

amzolt (2008-11-30 10:56:53)

You've topped even your own Wisdom with this comment, Catherine!!!

forcedgreen (2008-12-01 02:55:37)

Excellent! I love the fact that you hit all Gods and not just one. The spirituality of all quotes is the essence to which all of us should attain.

amzolt (2008-12-01 04:21:55)

Linda, Very glad you like the quotes! My belief is that all Faiths are from the same Source—given to humanity in different Ages—One God, One Faith, One Human Family...

## 1.10 December

### 1.10.1 Who Is Writing The Future ? - Part One (2008-12-02 00:36)



[1] "On May 28, 1992, Brazil's Chamber of Deputies met in special session to commemorate the centenary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh...His message of unity had clearly struck a deep chord with the Brazilian legislators."

That quote is from a document entitled, [2] *Who Is Writing the Future? Reflections on the Twentieth Century*.

The twentieth century? It's over and done with, right?

Well, if the hideous pressure on the global financial system, and the despicable lack of respect for human rights, and the impending, nay, imminent climate crisis, and various other dark and ominous conditions in our world are over and done with, then, I suppose the twentieth century will have absolutely no effect on our lives...

What's that old quote—was it the Bible—something about the sins of the father...?

So, Who is Bahá'u'lláh and why did Brazil's Chamber of Deputies single Him out for honor?

The document says, "During the course of the proceedings, speakers representing all parties in the Chamber paid tribute to a body of writings which one deputy described as 'the most colossal religious work written by the pen of a single Man', and to a conception of our planet's future which, 'transcending material frontiers', in the words of another, 'reached out to humanity as a whole, without petty differences of nationality, race, limits, or beliefs'."

Strange that government officials in Brazil should so honor Bahá'u'lláh while the government in Iran ( Bahá'u'lláh's land of birth ) was doing everything they could to stifle His ideas; in fact, had been working to rid their country of any trace of His ideas for nearly 130 years...

What are these ideas that two governments' officials could have such divergent opinions on?

Here are some of Bahá'u'lláh's ideas from [3]one of many web sites that dive deeply into His conceptions:

Individual search for truth  
There is but one God  
Equality of men and women  
Universal, quality education for all  
Elimination of prejudice of all kinds  
Religion as the foundation of Love and Unity  
Harmony between science and religion  
There is a common foundation of all religions  
Equality and brotherhood among mankind  
The need for a universal, worldwide auxiliary language  
Elimination of poverty  
Universal peace upheld by a world arbitrating body  
Protection of Cultural diversity  
Mankind must accept God's Bounty

Over 500 elected officials of Brazil's government set aside time to publicly honor the Prophet-Founder of a world religion, the Bahá'í Faith, when 89 % of the population is either Roman Catholic or Protestant. *What's going on?* And, why are Iran's leaders so averse to Bahá'u'lláh's religious ideas?

I hope to, with the help of the document, *Who Is Writing the Future? Reflections on the Twentieth Century*, answer those questions.

There will be five more posts in this series, covering the five sections of the document. If you'd like to download it and let it speak to you during my attempts to convey its message, I've provided a [4]Word .doc and [5]Adobe .pdf file for download.

*Spiritual Quote :*

"The cause of God is like unto a college. The believers are like unto the students. The college is founded for the sake of the acquirements of science, arts and literature. If the sciences are not therein and the scholars are not educated the object of the college is not achieved. The students must show the results of their study in their department and deeds; otherwise they have wasted their lives....the cause of God must be a dynamic force transforming the lives of men and not a question of meetings, committees, futile discussions, unnecessary debates and political wire-pulling."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Star of the West*, Vol. 7, No. 18, p. 178

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amzolt (2008-12-02 13:12:22)

You will never cease to amaze me with your wisdom, Catherine!

Catherine. (2008-12-02 06:55:07)

A wave of probability is coming from your past and colliding with a wave of probability from your future to create your personal Holographic universe in the NOW. If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies!

rainforestrobin (2008-12-05 20:43:33)

Wow, I couldn't even respond to this after reading it and then Catherine's comment. There wasn't much left to say. I had my socks knocked off! And she says in one or two lines what takes me a whole page...as you know so well. LOL :) :) Catherine wrote: "If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies!" Good grief, that is wonderful. I relate to that as well, Alex, because it can take courage to face our fear, hate or shame when talking to our enemies. We can no longer hide behind "us and them". We have to suddenly start dealing with all the feelings (aggression, fear, hate, etc.) that we've been dumping on "them", which really is our own "stuff" and doesn't belong dumped on someone else. It means we have to start growing up, looking at ourselves, taking responsibility for our emotions and actions and existence. It means that we have to be intimate with other people. It means that we have to let down our guard and let our closed heart open and soften. Many people find it much easier to blame and create conflict, which puts distance between their fears and themselves. Hugs to you dear friend. I'm running late here due to work. But wanted to see what you were up to. So good to see both you and Catherine. Robin

amzolt (2008-12-05 21:42:04)

Robin, If you and Catherine were ever to team up on a project, the world would certainly notice...

## 1.10.2 Who Is Writing The Future ? - Part Two (2008-12-04 00:28)



[1]

[2]Part One of this series talked about two governments and their differing responses to the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh.

The Chamber of Deputies of the Brazilian government held a special session honoring Him and His Writings. The Iranian government has been trying to eliminate every trace of His existence...

I'm being guided in my writing of this series of posts by a document from the Bahá'í International Community: [3] *Who Is Writing the Future?*.

If you'd like to have the document available while reading these posts, here are a [4]Word .doc and [5]Adobe .pdf file for download.

This post will focus on the ideas of part one of the document where the main thrust of Bahá'u'lláh's Message is introduced. One of His principles, honored or despised depending on your world-view, is that humans and humanity are primarily spiritual in nature and the evolution of civilization is predominantly a spiritual, not material, process.

So, what about the common view that we evolved from apes who, somehow, became smart enough to start using tools and ended up building malls and spaceships?

Even for someone like me, drawn to study the sciences deeply, the idea of a blind progression from apes to spaceships doesn't cut it—can't even begin to account for things like the sacrifice a mother will make for her child or the otherworldly strength of religious martyrs.

There is a Pattern and Progression in an individual life and the life of our human family that can evoke a search for Meaning that transcends what the materialists and skeptics would have you believe.

In fact, Bahá'u'lláh claims that the progressive pattern of infancy, youth, adolescence, and maturity that individuals live through is meaningfully similar to what our human family has been experiencing. He claims that the stages up to maturity have already been experienced by humanity and we are embarking on our long-envisioned maturity—the merging of humanity into a truly global and adult entity—a state of earthly being prophesied by all the major world religions.

Sure doesn't seem like humanity is growing into adulthood, eh? What about all the wars,

greed, and other nastiness? Well, in this view of humanity's growth, we're in the last stages of adolescence, facing our traumatic entrance into the realm of adult responsibilities. Remember when all you wanted to do was break the rules, set your own agenda, get what You wanted and to hell with all those other people who didn't really understand you? I know some of you may not have faced adulthood with urgent rebelliousness but many can identify with such a phase...

How much pain and suffering does it take for an adolescent to submit to the Truth and moderate their behavior—begin to see other people as more like oneself than different, reach a consciousness of unity with others? How long will it take humanity to learn these lessons and stride into its inevitable adulthood...?

*Spiritual Quote :*

"A new chapter in the life of the planet has been opened. Humanity has attained its maturity, and the race consciousness has awakened to the fact that it must put away the childish things which seemed necessary in the day of the 'survival of the fittest'. This day 'wherein the feet of the people deviate' is to be followed by a glorious to-morrow; for—'This is a new cycle of human power'. All the horizons of the world are luminous and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men and of the drawing together of all races and all classes.

"The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between the nations and by the will of God the most great peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world and all men will live as brothers." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Divine Philosophy*, p. 12

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Catherine. (2008-12-04 06:32:45)

In modern physics the universe is thus experienced as a dynamic, inseparable whole which always includes the observer in an essential way. Do not lose your knowledge that man's proper estate is an upright posture, an intransigent mind and a step that travels unlimited roads!

### 1.10.3 Who Is Writing The Future ? - Part Three (2008-12-06 21:20)



Parts One and Two of this series introduced a major Figure in world history, Bahá'u'lláh. They indicated His major conceptions of human nature as well as the idea of progressive spiritual evolution—not just of individuals but of the entire human family—stages of infancy, youth, adolescence, and adulthood—showing that humanity is now leaving its turbulent adolescence and entering the inevitable stage of maturity.

As hard as it may be to grasp the idea that humanity is approaching a sane, mature, rational, and peaceful consummation of its often tragic and certainly painful growing-up, the document that spawned these posts, [1]Who Is Writing the Future? Reflections on the Twentieth Century, gives compelling evidence of a new direction, a new mandate in human affairs. The fact that most of the evidence of this growth into human maturity occurred in the twentieth century—an evolutionarily short time—is as significant as each of the signs of impending global sanity and the much prophesied peace and tranquillity of all peoples.

I think it's extremely important to focus on what has been accomplished by humanity in its suffering struggle to establish a mature, peaceful world. Certainly, this attitude of positivity will do far more to help the process than the quite common attempt to belittle efforts that haven't yet blossomed into efficient operation—like slapping a child who's learning to walk when it falls down because it isn't doing it right yet . . .

The major learning of humanity in this phase of its growth is Unity.

Some say that we won't have unity till we have peace. Bahá'u'lláh makes it indelibly clear that peace will not be possible until unity is established. Here are two quotes from the document:

"The central spiritual issue facing all people, Bahá'u'lláh says, whatever their nation, religion, or ethnic origin, is that of laying the foundations of a global society that can reflect the oneness of human nature."

”The unification of the earth’s inhabitants is neither a remote utopian vision nor, ultimately, a matter of choice. It constitutes the next, inescapable stage in the process of social evolution, a stage toward which all the experience of past and present is impelling us.”

This is an extremely important document so I’ve also provided a [2]Word .doc and [3]Adobe .pdf file for download.

Here’s a list of some of the most important changes in humanity’s focus, begun in the twentieth century and, sad to say, too often slapped down in people’s discussions, well before humanity has had a chance to learn to walk confidently down their pathways:

The United Nations as a global peace-building organization

The wide-spread shame at the perversities of the second world war which led to a multitude of non-governmental, humanitarian organizations which consult with the U.N.

The systems of financial control, reserve funds, and trade regulations instituted after the Great Depression which may instruct current leaders in the proper steps to avoid having it happen again

Global programs aiming to establish universal education and the Internet—a tool which can accomplish that goal

Technological and scientific inventions reaching heights that have made any insane acts by people or nations instantly visible to the rest of humanity (before 1900, it was relatively easy to commit atrocious acts then argue them out of existence)

The universal awareness of the equality of women as well as the racial components of our human family, though yet to be implemented universally

The growing awareness that poverty is not a necessary feature of human life

The wide-spread, though inadequately enforced, conception of the unity of the world’s religions

And, summing-up these never-before-seen phenomena of collective human action, the document quotes Bahá’u’lláh’s prophetic utterance:

”A new life is, in this age, stirring within all the peoples of the earth; and yet none hath discovered its cause or perceived its motive.”

That statement was written over 140 years ago. There are a growing body of people discovering its cause and learning how to perceive its motive . . .

*Spiritual Quote :*

”So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth. The One true God, He Who knoweth all things, Himself testifieth to the truth of these words.”

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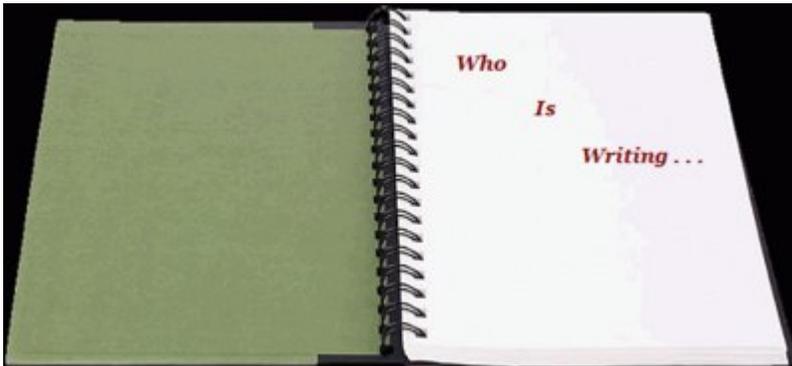
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#### 1.10.4 Who Is Writing The Future ? - Part Four (2008-12-09 00:13)



Parts One through Three of this series have introduced Bahá'u'lláh, sketched out His major conceptions of human nature and the development of humanity, then presented collective endeavors, all from the twentieth century, that have set our human family on a course toward global maturity and peace.

I said "on a course toward" because we're at the beginning of Eons of Light after Millennial Darkness...

Certainly, humanity has produced an abundance of light-giving conditions; it's just that the darkness of the animal side of our nature has held us back from the full splendor we're capable of reflecting.

The document that inspired this series of posts, [1] *Who Is Writing the Future? Reflections on the Twentieth Century*, is a landmark of rational spirituality, a call to awareness of the full potential of our human family when we live and act within a unity of consciousness.

The section of Who Is Writing The Future? that this post is focusing on is short but the actual words are very high-minded, while displaying a practicality that's sorely needed by our global community. I can't match the document for its poetic yet reasonable presentation, so, here is the original:

"To appreciate the transformations brought about by the period of history now ending [the twentieth century] is not to deny the accompanying darkness that throws the achievements into sharp relief: the deliberate extermination of millions of helpless human beings, the invention and use of new weapons of destruction capable of annihilating whole populations, the rise of ideologies that suffocated the spiritual and intellectual life of entire nations, damage to the physical environment of the planet on a scale so massive that it may take centuries to heal, and the incalculably greater damage done to generations of children taught to believe that violence, indecency, and selfishness are triumphs of personal liberty. Such are only the more obvious of a catalogue of evils, unmatched in history, whose lessons our era will leave for the education of the chastened generations who will follow us.

"Darkness, however, is not a phenomenon endowed with some form of existence, much less autonomy. It does not extinguish light nor diminish it, but marks out those areas that light has not reached or adequately illumined. So will twentieth century civilization no doubt be assessed by the historians of a more mature and dispassionate age. The ferocities of animal nature, which raged out of control through these critical years and seemed at times to threaten society's very survival, did not in fact prevent the steady unfoldment of the creative potentialities which human consciousness possesses. On the contrary. As the century advanced, growing numbers of people awakened to how empty were the allegiances and how insubstantial the fears that had held them captive only short years before.

"Peerless is this Day', Bahá'u'lláh insists, 'for it is as the eye to past ages and centuries, and as a light unto the darkness of the times.' In this perspective, the issue is not the darkness that slowed and obscured the progress achieved in the extraordinary hundred years now ending. It is, rather, how much more suffering and ruin must be experienced by our race before we wholeheartedly accept the spiritual nature that makes us a single people, and gather the courage to plan our future in the light of what has been so painfully learned."

If you'd like a copy of the full document as a download, here are a [2]Word .doc and an [3]Adobe .pdf file.

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Man is like unto this lamp, ... but spiritual splendors are like unto the light within the glass. No matter how translucent the glass may be, as long as there is no light within, it remains dark. Likewise, man, no matter how much he advances in material accomplishments, will remain like the glass without light if he is deprived of the spiritual virtues. Material virtues are like unto a perfect body, but this body is in need of the spirit. No matter how handsome and perfect the body may be, if it is deprived of the spirit and its animus, it is dead. But when that same body is affiliated with the spirit and expressing life, perfection and virtue become realized in it."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 303

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2. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/who-is-writing-the-future.doc>
3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/who-is-writing-the-future.pdf>
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Liara Covert (2008-12-10 03:15:46)

Every human being contributes to the future with thoughts, feelings and choices. The more people detach from labels related to religion, politics, orientation and perspective, the easier it becomes to get to the crux of spirit within.

amzolt (2008-12-10 08:25:26)

Liara, Thank you, Liara! Good to see you here again!!

### 1.10.5 Who Is Writing The Future ? - Part Five (2008-12-11 02:23)



The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh that have been discussed in parts One through Four of this series are challenging to say the least—challenging to current theories about how to solve our human family's crises—challenging, as the document this series is based on says, to social schemes that deny "a moral intelligence inherent in existence"—challenging to anyone who thinks human nature isn't truly spiritual at its roots...

Some of the sadly mistaken ideas that plagued the twentieth century and need eradication to enable humanity to move towards its impending maturity are: unbounded individualism, dis-unifying

political and economic structures, and a mindset that sees conflict as somehow "natural" for humans.

Yet, one of the most important principles that needs vast encouragement and global implementation is Justice. Justice alone can ensure that individuals receive their due from institutions and governments. And, deeply important, is the growth of a sense of personal justice (replacing individualistic complaining) that lets people see with their own eyes, hear with their own ears, feel with their own hearts, and think with their own minds—knowing that imitation in any of these areas is deadly...

Another crying need is the continuing entry of individuals into the arena of Service—going beyond self—enlarging the boundaries of self to include more and more members of our very human family.

These ideas and many more are the legacy left to humanity by Bahá'u'lláh. He put forward ideas that, in the context of the 1800s, were unthinkable. In the last century and a half, His conceptions and counsels have been adopted by progressive individuals, most of whom have never heard of Bahá'u'lláh.

I urge you to read the original document that's inspired me to write this series of posts, [1] *Who Is Writing the Future? Reflections on the Twentieth Century*. Also, you can download a [2] Word .doc or [3] Adobe .pdf file.

Next post will wrap up the series...

*Spiritual Quote :*

"The central purpose of the divine religions is the establishment of peace and unity among mankind. Their reality is one; therefore, their accomplishment is one and universal—whether it be through the essential or material ordinances of God. There is but one light of the material sun, one ocean, one rain, one atmosphere. Similarly, in the spiritual world there is one divine reality forming the center and altruistic basis for peace and reconciliation among various and conflicting nations and peoples." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 98

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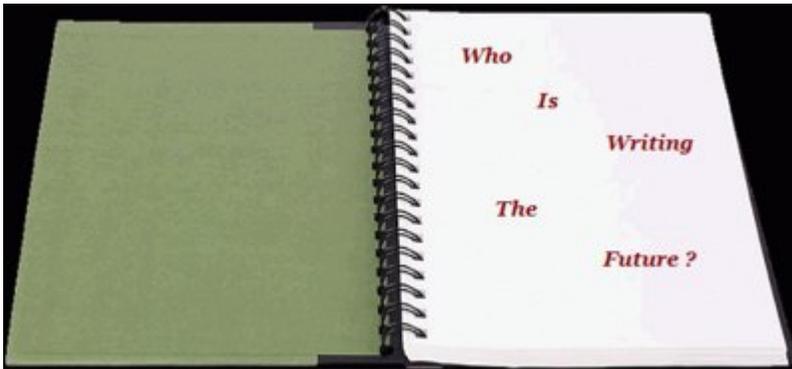
2. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/who-is-writing-the-future.doc>

3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/who-is-writing-the-future.pdf>

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## 1.10.6 Who Is Writing The Future ? - Part Six (2008-12-13 00:18)



This is the final post in this series, inspired by the document, [1] *Who Is Writing the Future? Reflections on the Twentieth Century*. In the final section of that document, these words appear:

”Viewed through Bahá’u’lláh’s eyes, the history of tribes, peoples, and nations has effectively reached its conclusion. What we are witnessing is the beginning of the history of humankind, the history of a human race conscious of its own oneness. To this turning point in the course of civilization, his writings bring a redefinition of the nature and processes of civilization and a reordering of its priorities.”

If you’ve been following along in this series, you’ve probably realized that the answer to Who is writing the future? is Bahá’u’lláh—with the strong hint that we can participate in the effort.

It may be hard to imagine that Bahá’u’lláh could, well over 100 years ago, speak to our times—provide sure counsel about how to reorder our priorities—give us a ”map” of the road our human family needs to follow as it strides into its long awaited maturity.

The road we’ve traveled has been full of crises, danger, wonder, enlightenment, and spiritual growth. Still, it’s time we leave behind the adolescent greediness of jealously independent peoples and nations and embrace the Oneness that is obvious to not only truly religious people but also reasonable scientists.

Fine... Pretty words... Wonderfully exalted ideas, but...

How?

Certainly, the education of people (especially children) so they can see that it’s not totally impossible. And, certain globally enforced laws that curb insane imbalances in wealth and poverty. There are so many initiatives that are already underway and critically necessary to prepare the ground. Still... There appear to be solid chunks of impacted soil, dark with materialism, and even rock-solid layers of corporate and governmental agendas that need breaking up before the ground can be properly plowed so the seeds of twentieth century humanitarian action can take root; not to mention the liberal application of the fertilizer of Love...

In the words of the document:

”There is nothing in Bahá’u’lláh’s writings to encourage the illusion that the changes envisioned will come about easily. Far otherwise. As the events of the twentieth century have already demonstrated, patterns of habit and attitude which have taken root over thousands of years are not abandoned either spontaneously or in response simply to education or legislative action. Whether in the life of the individual or that of society, profound change occurs more often than not in response to intense suffering and to unendurable difficulties that can be overcome in no other way. Just so great a testing experience, Bahá’u’lláh warned, is needed to weld the earth’s diverse peoples into a single people.”

Can you remember a time in your life when you were overcome with intense suffering—suffering so strong you felt you might cave in and give up the game? That is right where humanity is. Let’s hope and pray that We don’t give up the game...

Remember when the suffering was over and you found you had a new sense of internal strength? You may have also experienced the flow of renewed initiative leading to solid improvements in your life-situation. That is where humanity is headed—the Light at the end of the tunnel of humbling suffering...

Hope hides in the clouds of suffering—illumination spawning the silver lining of the future.

I’ll close this series of posts with these words from *Who Is Writing The Future?*:

”However great the turmoil, the period into which humanity is moving will open to every individual, every institution, and every community on earth unprecedented opportunities to participate in the writing of the planet’s future. ‘Soon’, is Bahá’u’lláh’s confident promise, ‘will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead.’”

If you’d like a copy of the original document, you can download a [2]Word .doc or [3]Adobe .pdf file.

*Spiritual Quote :*

”Strive then, O My brother, to apprehend this matter, that the veils may be lifted from the face of thy heart and that thou mayest be reckoned among them whom God hath graced with such penetrating vision as to behold the most subtle realities of His dominion, to fathom the mysteries of His kingdom, to perceive the signs of His transcendent Essence in this mortal world, and to attain a station wherein one seeth no distinction amongst His creatures and findeth no flaw in the creation of the heavens and the earth.”

Bahá’u’lláh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, p. 5

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### 1.10.7 A Merry (?) Christmas (2008-12-14 17:01)



Many in the world are buying Christmas presents for their kids...

When I was small, I had a few guns to play with...

Now, kids can have full virtual environments in which to practice killing...

World-wide, people are killing each other and bloggers are reporting and commenting on it. This post's intention is to wave a flag of warning about what we teach our children. Also, I want to introduce you to [1]Global Voices. In their own words: "Global Voices aggregates, curates, and amplifies the global conversation online – shining light on places and people other media often ignore."

Here's a recent post from the site:

[2]Palestine: Terrorist Dolls Not the Best Stocking Stuffer

Thursday, [3]December [4]11th, 2008 @ 13:47 UTC

by [5]Maya Norton

This post is also available in:

mg:[6] [7]Palestina: Saribakoly Mpampihorohoro... mk:[8] [9]Палестина: Терористички кукли...  
bn:[10] [11]: ...

“What could be more enjoyable for your kids this year than a doll resembling an Al-Qaeda terrorist?”  
[12]asks Palestinian-American blogger Nawal of Bloggin’ Banat.

“It comes fully accessorized too (which is awesome cause that’ll save you money during this financial crisis). It comes with hand grenades, a pistol, an assault rifle and the all too important rocket launcher (awesome, huh?). And just so you know, there’s a Nazi major figure also. You know, just to even out the indignation.”

Humorous and appalling... The doll is made by [13]BrickArms of Redmond, Washington (USA).

The Spiritual Quote below is addressed to mothers but I want to say a word to fathers:

My dad abused me with his tongue but his father physically beat him. I found this out when I was in my 30s and it helped me release the hate I had for my dad—helped begin a process I’m still engaged in—freeing myself from the influence my father had on me, well before I could use my mind to counter it—to struggle to stop repeating his less than humane mistakes.

May we all give our children the gifts of love, compassion, understanding, and tolerance . . .

*Spiritual Quote :*

”Let the mothers consider that whatever concerneth the education of children is of the first importance. Let them put forth every effort in this regard, for when the bough is green and tender it will grow in whatever way ye train it. Therefore is it incumbent upon the mothers to rear their little ones even as a gardener tendeth his young plants. Let them strive by day and by night to establish within their children faith and certitude, the fear of God, the love of the Beloved of the worlds, and all good qualities and traits. Whensoever a mother seeth that her child hath done well, let her praise and applaud him and cheer his heart; and if the slightest undesirable trait should manifest itself, let her counsel the child and punish him, and use means based on reason, even a slight verbal chastisement should this be necessary. It is not, however, permissible to strike a child, or vilify him, for the child’s character will be totally perverted if he be subjected to blows or verbal abuse.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ’Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 125

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3. <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2008/12>
4. <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2008/12/11>
5. <http://globalvoicesonline.org/author/maya-norton/>
6. <http://mg.globalvoicesonline.org/2008/12/11/1429/>
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13. <http://brickarms.com/default.aspx>
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amzolt (2008-12-15 17:30:07)

Thank you, so much, Evita, for your perceptive and feeling-full ideas! My favorite part of your comment was: "I realized over the past few years too that it again like all other things in life comes down to consciousness. 90 % of the world lives in a cloud of unconscious thoughts doing what the other does. "

Wilma (2008-12-15 21:21:10)

This is blogging at its best. As Evita says, it is all about making our unconscious thoughts conscious and then observing what we are doing. In the ringing cedar series it is described how the current toys make children dumb and encapsulated in our own grown up issues, like this doll. We are best to not give children toys but to let them roam in nature as that is where they can find the real toys. A beautiful flower, a tree to climb in, a slope to roll from and that is where their minds are being developed and they learn to think for themselves and question what is going on. A toy is limiting the child's imagination big time. I love the fact that our world is being totally turned up side down with great books AND blogs. This is a real contribution. Thanks Alex.

amzolt (2008-12-15 21:45:30)

Wilma! I just Love this: "We are best to not give children toys but to let them roam in nature as that is where they can find the real toys." Hope you can hook-up with Robin Easton (she comments here, too) 'cause she would Whoop for joy over comments like this!!!

Alexys Fairfield (2008-12-15 22:46:38)

Hi Alex, We live in a distorted world. We sell Barbie to little girls who think that a 19 inch waist is attainable and we sell guns to little boys to shoot down any dreams they have. We have to embrace that which makes us uncomfortable and turn it back into love. Who says we have to let distortion dictate our views or our ability to love.

amzolt (2008-12-15 22:59:06)

Alexys, Your Wisdom Shines through your comment: "Who says we have to let distortion dictate our views or our ability to love."

Imelda / Greenishlady (2008-12-14 19:42:06)

Hello, Alexander. What a world, when a doll like that is being made! I'd hope that was just some sick joke rather than a real toy, but know it could just as well be real. You stopped by and asked was the poem I featured my own. Yes, it is. Fresh today! Thanks for your interest.

Evita (2008-12-15 16:17:05)

Wow Alex this post really hit a soft spot with me because when I saw that picture immediately I thought of what as a society we really are teaching our kids - our future generations. Many people may say "oh its just for fun" - but how is teaching our children violence just for fun? How is desensitizing them to another's pain and suffering just for fun? Personally if I had a child (son especially) I would never ever buy them any toy that in any way shape or form depicted violence. Do not get me wrong I am not judging those that do, I am just stating what I see is right for me. I realized over the past few years too that it again like all other things in life comes down to consciousness. 90 % of the world lives in a cloud of unconscious thoughts doing what the other does. It is only when we snap out of it, do we see the madness that we are infringing upon ourselves.

amzolt (2008-12-14 20:13:00)

Imelda, So glad you responded! So glad you're weathering your spiritual storms... You poem is truly, inspirationally Lovely: <http://greenishlady.blogspot.com/2008/12/sunday-scribbling-i-knew-in-stantly.html>  
Sad to say the toy is real...

Maya Norton (2008-12-16 13:59:33)

Thanks for picking up my article, Alex, and giving a shout out to Global Voices. It is a wonderful organization to be part of. Maya Norton \* Blogger, The New Jew: Blogging Jewish Philanthropy (<http://TheNewJew.wordpress.com>) \* Israel Author, Global Voices Online (<http://globalvoicesonline.org>)

amzolt (2008-12-16 14:11:16)

You're more than welcome, Maya! Looking forward to reading more of your posts on Global Voices – <http://globalvoicesonline.org/author/maya-norton/>

rainforestrobin (2008-12-17 02:56:59)

Well, Wilma said it all for me. I agree with her 100 %. Fortunately I was blessed to have parents that gave me the most precious gift of all when they took all six of their kids into Nature. We never had the usual games, dolls, guns, etc at Christmas. We often were given craft or creative things, art supplies, etc. Or things that we could use in Nature. I don't think I ever owned a Barbie doll, in fact I think I only had 3 dolls given to me as a kid. So I know that it makes a huge difference. I was also blessed with parents that taught role reversal in terms of chores. The boys did laundry and dish just like the girls and the girls swept out the garage or helped dad work in the basement or helped shovel snow just like the boys. I think it is really important to look at the messages we are sending our kids through the gifts we give them. It is a powerful opportunity to shape lives. Thank you dear Alex for inviting us all to be more aware. And also, thank you Wilma for sharing something that is very dear to my heart. Hugs to you both, Robin

rainforestrobin (2008-12-17 02:58:59)

Well, Wilma said it all for me. I agree with her 100 %. Fortunately I was blessed to have parents that gave me the most precious gift of all when they took all six of their kids into Nature. We never had the usual games, dolls, guns, etc at Christmas. We often were given craft or creative things, art supplies, etc. Or things that we could use in Nature. I don't think I ever owned a Barbie doll, in fact I think I only had 3 dolls given to me as a kid. So I know that it makes a huge difference. I was also blessed with parents that taught role reversal in terms of chores. The boys did laundry and dish just like the girls and the girls swept out the garage or helped dad work in the basement or helped shovel snow just like the boys. I think it is really important to look at the messages we are sending our kids through the gifts we give them. It is a powerful opportunity to shape lives. Thank you dear Alex for inviting us all to be more aware. And also, thank you Wilma for sharing something that is very dear to my heart. Hugs to you both, Robin

amzolt (2008-12-17 03:04:49)

Robin, If I believed in reincarnation, I'd say you got the karma out of the way in past lives and are working on the dharma now... I praise your parents!! I honor you... You and Wilma should get together with Catherine and Do something!!!

rainforestrobin (2008-12-17 04:13:34)

Alex, you are such a dear. I love this comment of yours. I do know this, that yes, I am dreaming/creating my bliss and every day I move into it more...I become it. I've actually never said that anyone until right now. I've thought it many times, but your comment here brought it to the fore. Thank you for that gift. You're the best! Robin

amzolt (2008-12-17 04:25:30)

Well, Robin... I said it on your blog and I must say it here—since you are a bliss-creator—I'm publishing your "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" video on my blog on Christmas Day... Hey, you other folks reading this, go watch this video: <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/?p=947>

### 1.10.8 Being Nice To Our Mother... (2008-12-16 20:24)



Do you like to breathe? Would you rather not be poisoned by your drinking water? Will your great-grandchildren still be able to see the Sun?

Humans are amazing! Give them a world to play in and they'll work as hard as they can to make it unliveable...

Some recent news clips:

From The New York Times:: [1]Amid a Hopeful Mood, U.N. Talks Set Countries on Path Toward a Global Climate Treaty

From The Daily Telegraph, UK: [2]Climate summit ends in acrimony

From OneWorld.Net: [3]Activists Demand 'Change' at Climate Conference [video]

From BBC News: [4]Australians condemn climate plan

O.K., so the Big-Rollers are worried because they're having problems continuing to milk the moderately-affluent. The poor are getting poorer. Human slaughter is rampant. Corruption is eating us alive...

So, imagine all those problems are resolved to everybody's satisfaction—I know, it would take a huge change of a massive number of hearts but just imagine it:

Rich and poor are equalizing their holdings, no one is murdering thousands, and politicians

are learning trustworthiness...

And... most of us are dying from the backlash of a ferociously mad Mother Earth...

Here's some sobering information ( from *GreenFacts* ):

[5]What are the likely consequences of climate change?

- [6]Has climate change already started to affect us?
- [7]How potentially could climate change affect us?
- [8]What other major impacts could climate change possibly have?
- [9]What should be done?

And, some [10]fascinating videos about how bad it really is...

*Spiritual Quote :*

"A little over a hundred years ago, in a series of letters to the world leaders of the day, Bahá'u'lláh spoke of humankind as entering on a period of history that would entail the radical restructuring of the life of the planet. Challenges never before contemplated would, He said, soon overwhelm the resources of even the most advanced nations. They could be addressed only by a world federal system whose central organ would be a representative world parliament empowered to create a code of universally agreed upon and enforceable international law. 'The earth is but one country,' Bahá'u'lláh asserted, 'and mankind its citizens'.

"As the magnitude, complexity, and urgency of environmental problems have gradually forced themselves on public attention, the logic of this prescription has become daily more apparent. The available international legislative machinery and processes are proving inadequate, primarily because they are based on laws governing nation-states. To the Bahá'í International Community it seems clear that, unless creative new steps in the restructuring of the international order can be taken, environmental degradation alone, and its long-term implications for social and economic development, will lead inexorably to a disaster of appalling dimension."

Bahá'í International Community, 1991 Aug 13, *International Legislation for Environment Development*

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  10. <http://www.unep.org/themes/climatechange/poznan/FLVs/movie1.swf>
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- 

### 1.10.9 We All Have Rights, unless . . . (2008-12-17 21:55)



People just love to shout about their personal "rights". Groups love to petition about "our rights". Organizations love to write official papers about "human rights".

So, why do so many people not have their rights respected?

And, which rights are Right ?

Not to mention, who decides what rights belong to which people?

Take a moment to consider these recent news clips:

**From OneWorld.Net:** [1]Anger in Kosovo as UN 'Muzzles' Democracy Leader

**From Times Online, UK:** [2]Call for access to education for all members of the Iranian Baha'i community

**From GlobalVoices:** [3]"08 Charter" (blueprint for the democracy prospect in China) Signers Arrested and Questioned by Police

**From Bahá'í World News Service:** [4]Faith groups sign human rights statement

Some people effectively have no rights...

Some people spend almost all their time screaming about having their rights trampled on...

Some folks stay calm, put up with those who trample on their rights, and continue to work, quietly but effectively, to ensure the rights of all the members of our human family...

I have no "point" to make in this post; just want to stir things up.

So, I'll urge you to let yourself be stirred up by 12-year-old Severn Suzuki speaking at the UN Earth Summit in 1992:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Sb6RmRMbBY>]

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Ultimately...the emergence of a peaceful and just social order animated by moral principle is contingent upon a fundamental redefinition of all human relationships—among individuals themselves, between human society and the natural world, between the individual and the community, and between individual citizens and their governing institutions. In particular, outmoded notions of power and authority need to be recast. A basic reconceptualization of social reality is thus envisioned, a reality that in spirit and practice reflects the principle of the oneness of humankind. To accept that 'the body of humankind is one and indivisible' is to recognize that every human being is 'born into the world as a trust of the whole'."

Bahá'í International Community, 2001 May 28-31, *Overcoming Corruption in Public Institutions*

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2. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/letters/article5314700.ece>

3.

[http:](http://globalvoicesonline.org/2008/12/15/china-08-charter-signers-arrested-and-questioned-by-police/)

[//globalvoicesonline.org/2008/12/15/china-08-charter-signers-arrested-and-questioned-by-police/](http://globalvoicesonline.org/2008/12/15/china-08-charter-signers-arrested-and-questioned-by-police/)

4. <http://news.bahai.org/story/679>

5. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

6. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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benafia (2008-12-19 03:26:04)

Your spiritual quote was a good one, pertaining to a new definition of the perception of rights. Many claims of rights do not come with responsibilities to the context our lives exist in, as if interrelationships can be ignored for some privilege to do something. It is seductive to the surface oriented self, to go and do what one wishes without concern for other environments impacted by my actions, just so I can fulfill some fantasy I was sold of enjoyment. Living that way moves me further away from consciousness of my connectedness to all life. Some "rights" or privileges serve to diminish my perception of life; of my own life and the Whole of It. Ideas like The Golden Rule and the Categorical Imperative do not fit well with individualist based paradigms of mass consumption. As long as we approach the world (and Being) as if it were all one great big shopping mall, where enough money serves as the respect (status stand in) I need to have what I want, those rights might just be written on a subconscious suicide note. We are seeing materialism and cultural competition push the nations on earth into an increasingly overloaded and leaky ship of fate. It is up to each one; our intrinsic right to comprehend how I fit into the world of Life, to notice how it all makes up this one thing called existence. Nothing of It is separate in any overview. The "blue dot" seen from space from a receding spacecraft, is our spacecraft, our lifecraft. A similar extended concept is likely for existence itself. I need find how my own life fits into these homes of my being, instead of being sent down a dead end street of fantasy over what I want to maintain happiness. The right to truly be happy does not come with a price tag. But it does come with the extension of my own love into the world of Life around me.

amzolt (2008-12-19 04:25:41)

benafia, Your whole comment was edifying and perceptive yet, your statement about responsibilities being mated to rights is a critical understanding that, it appears, will only be learned through much suffering...

### 1.10.10 Citizen Media (2008-12-19 23:45)



Calling all World Citizens!

Are you letting the rest of our human family know what's really going on where you live?

Well, actually, I'm only able to call on all English-speaking World Citizens. It's a shame I can only afford a blog platform that costs nothing and, therefore, can't install translation software...

I included a post about the [1]problems of World Citizens having clear communications in my recent series, [2]*Path Toward Peace*, but I trust there are those of you reading this who can translate for other World Citizens you know...

I was prompted to write this post today by the following news story:

**From OneWorld.Net:** [3]Obama Urged to Reform Media, Protect Internet

"As President-elect Barack Obama prepares to name a new leader of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and a chief technology officer at the White House, more than 100 advocates of a free and open media – including some of the most well-known musicians, bloggers, and policy analysts in the country – are urging him to remain true to campaign pledges to diversify media ownership; renew public media; and promote fast, affordable, and open Internet access."

I felt this story, about a newly-elected President of the United States who's received such acclaim world-wide, was a good lead-in to a series of papers I discovered recently that assess the state of Citizen Media and its interaction with the mainstream sources of what's actually happening in our world.

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jWEjVkJXnkI  
&eurl=http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/node/4904 &feature=player\_embedded]

That video is from the [4]Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University and they've published twelve fascinating papers on the topic of Digital Media.

I've uploaded (so you can download ) the Adobe .pdf of the **Overview:** [5]*News and Information as Digital Media Come of Age*.

You may feel you can't take on the task of reporting events to the world but one example I can cite is this blogger, me , who's on a small military pension, living in a small apartment, only able to use software that's free, yet, still sending this report out to the world...

Also, [6]CNN has recently started a site where they say, "...the stories submitted by users are not edited, fact-checked or screened before they post."

Then, there are the many other efforts to aid Citizen Journalists as represented in [7]this search page from Google.

Plus, there's the beginner's tutorial on [8]Global Citizen Media (available in three other languages besides English) from [9]RisingVoices.

We often feel we can only take care of our own lives in this crisis-ridden world, yet, telling the rest of the world about your struggles to live your life would be a fine beginning as a Citizen Journalist!

*Spiritual Quote :*

"People need to think of themselves as world citizens and understand their personal responsibility... Campaigns to raise public awareness of the challenges of world citizenship must make use of the full range of media and the arts, including television, video, film, radio, electronic networks, books, magazines, posters, flyers, theater and music. These campaigns should enlist the advertising and entertainment industries, the media—both traditional and non-traditional—the entire UN system, all member states, NGOs, and popular personalities. They should reach out to the home, the work place, public areas and schools."

Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Jun 14, *World Citizenship: A Global Ethic for Sustainable Development*

**Please leave *Your* thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

*Let's have a conversation !*

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/10/03/path-toward-peace-step-nine/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/path-toward-peace/>
3. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/359166-obama-urged-reform-media-protect-internet>
4. <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/>
5. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/overview\\_mr.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/overview_mr.pdf)
6. <http://www.ireport.com/index.jspa>
7. <http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=gmail&q=citizen%20journalism>
8. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/introduction-to-citizen-media-en.pdf>
9. <http://rising.globalvoicesonline.org/guides/>
10. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
11. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-12-20 02:19:39)

Thank you for your comment and appraisal of my blog. I encourage you to bring your ideas here and comment on future posts but your blog is a bit to political for me to create a link in the blogroll... Do please visit again and share your thinking!

franklynchusa (2008-12-19 23:55:32)

I enjoy and respect your blog. Would you consider exchanging blogroll links? I don't care about whether links and comments agree or disagree with my views as long as they are witty or intelligent, and your blog is both!! The only important thing is that we all have intelligent discussions about how to lift up America for our best possible future. Our future is what we make it, and idiot Congress and moron elected officials have proven by example that if we do nothing, we have no future. It helps to have some entertainment, satire and laughs along the journey. My blog address is <http://franklynchusa.wordpress.com> Simply name it " franklynchusa " If you have time and room, My ideological website is worth a visit. It contains my 2008 Presidential campaign that introduced the issues adopted by the other candidates, with a Top Ten List that America needs, is <http://www.franklynch.org> Kindly please name it either just " franklynch.org " or " Frank Lynch the Futurist " With passion for our future, Frank Lynch the Futurist Email frank at franklynch dot org

### 1.10.11 Who Are The Poor ? (2008-12-20 16:27)



Are you poor? Do you know someone who is?

Most of humanity is poor...

Even the richest people on earth run the risk of being poor in spirit.

I want you to contrast your memory of the largest, most exciting event you've ever seen (especially if it was in an affluent country)—full of cheering crowds, ecstatic children, thunderous music, and fantastic displays; contrast that with the following video—produced all over the world and performed by some of the poor majority—then, tell yourself which event is more uplifting to your soul:

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DD4LdU6zUSI  
&eurl=http://www.doubletake.tv/content/playing-change &feature=player\_embedded]Produced by  
[1]Playing for Change

I can't help but feel that things like the Superbowl or the Rose Parade or the extravaganza of the recent U. S. Presidential Campaign not only don't help my soul but probably darken it just a bit...

Our souls need to truly connect with other souls, not through massive productions that worship money and privilege but through events that let us truly participate, even if only to sing along with the video...

*Spiritual Quote :*

"They who are possessed of riches...must have the utmost regard for the poor, for great is the honor destined by God for those poor who are steadfast in patience. By My life! There is no honor, except what God may please to bestow, that can compare to this honor. Great is the blessedness awaiting the poor that endure patiently and conceal their sufferings, and well is it with the rich who bestow their riches on the needy and prefer them before themselves."  
Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 202

**Please leave *Your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.***

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1. <http://www.playingforchange.com/pop.html>
2. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
3. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Alexys Fairfield (2008-12-20 21:04:59)

Alex, You have done it again. I am so moved by that video that I almost couldn't see the end of it because I had to wipe tears from my eyes. It is without a doubt a sobering statement that we all need to stand by each other and just because someone is down and out doesn't mean that they don't deserve love, compassion or tenderness. The whole extravagance of the presidential campaign is a bit much, but don't let that darken your Soul. Let it give you more impetus to put more love into the world like you have today my friend. You are a wealthy man. A loving man. A giving man. A good man. Let that dictate your actions. Thank you for all that you have contributed to this world. Happy Holidays and may all of your dreams be fulfilled and your life be filled with peace and love.

amzolt (2008-12-20 20:28:10)

Bruce, I absolutely love this sentence: "We must work so all can have a rewarding life, which in turn rewards life."

Bruce Eggum (2008-12-20 20:13:22)

Yes Alex your posts are seen, beyond what is here. If we are to remain human we must have compassion and understanding. We must work so all can have a rewarding life, which in turn rewards life. Thanks, Bruce

amzolt (2008-12-20 21:08:30)

Ah, Alexys the Angel... You honor me with your words and my soul casts them back to you... My tears with the video start when the women in Africa start singing...

Elaine (2008-12-20 21:57:55)

We who are among the poor salute you.

amzolt (2008-12-20 22:02:39)

Elaine, If the poor like you salute the poor like me, we may just end up with all the poor being so spirit-rich this ol' world will finally listen to Baha'u'llah...

margaret rogers (2008-12-20 22:21:40)

The video is awesome! - surprised it hasn't gotten on to the wider screen yet. Solomon said "whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard." Pro 21:13 - we will always have the poor with us - to give us a choice to serve. It would be interesting to know Alex, of times throughout your life when you were poor that someone reached out to you to show you kindness. Any stories to tell?

amzolt (2008-12-20 22:46:00)

Margaret, I've never mentioned this in the blog but every reply to a comment I make is also sent to the person's email—I am writing to you, dear sister, as well as making a public comment on my blog... You wrote: "It would be interesting to know Alex, of times throughout your life when you were poor that someone reached out to you to show you kindness. Any stories to tell?" First, were my parents, always willing to help me even when my actions were reprehensible. Then, you and Janet, my angelic sisters—giving till it hurt... Many friends—I will never be able to repay all their kindnesses... Those of my own Faith—stalwart supporters in my darkest hours... Those of other Faiths—understanding and helping out of their love for God... And, I'm sure there were those behind the scenes, those I'll never know helped me while I'm on this earth—yet, in the Sweet By-and-By, when we meet on that beautiful Shore, I will thank them...

Marley (2008-12-21 00:38:47)

Alex, Thank you for bringing us together on this subject. "Nothing's worth anything unless it's shared." – my father's last earthly words Marley <http://psalmspeak.wordpress.com/>

amzolt (2008-12-21 00:43:26)

Marley, I can't imagine any finer last words...

On Holiday Spirit: Having a conversation about poverty and homelessness | Baha'i Views (2008-12-21 18:57:29)

[...] Are you poor? Do you know someone who is? [...]

Barney (2008-12-21 20:12:31)

Alex, thank you for a thought-provoking and moving post. Poverty is one of the biggest impediments (perhaps the biggest impediment of all) to human dignity and human flourishing - which are also what human rights are about.

amzolt (2008-12-21 22:36:29)

Barney, Honored to have your perceptive comment on the blog! It's the season to pour out our love on the poor in spirit, eh?

amzolt (2008-12-23 18:55:38)

Mohamed, Thanks for your encouraging comment!!!

Cooking Lady (2008-12-22 14:20:30)

I am financially poor. And so much so that I am in jeopardy of losing my home, if not were for my in-laws. But I have more than most. I have a stable loving marriage. More than I can say for most. My children respect me...most of the time. But all in all I am a wealthy woman.

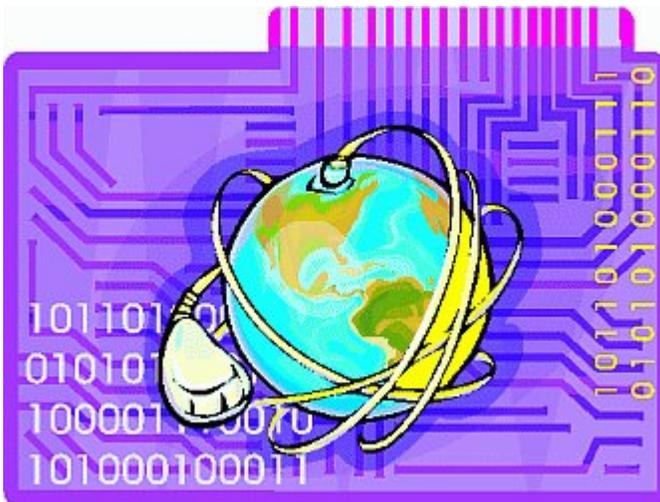
amzolt (2008-12-22 14:34:35)

Cooking Lady, It's good your in-laws are "on your side"... Especially wonderful you have a stable, loving marriage!!! The real wealth is what we pile up for our Real lives—the Next World...

Mohamed Taher (2008-12-23 18:19:54)

Great reflection on the realities. Keep up.

### 1.10.12 The Best Blogs . . . (2008-12-22 18:14)



Miguel's blog was actually being read by people outside his village! He could hardly believe it but wasn't going to complain—he'd worked hard to learn how to blog and felt his message was worth reading—the oppression of his people...

Within a year, his blog was being more than just noticed; it was being quoted on other blogs and seemed to be reaching people who had some influence that just might aid his Cause...

Shortly after his blog's first birthday, Miguel was asked to contribute to an international online journal about oppression of indigenous peoples. Miguel was very happy with his plight even though he had to take more care when he walked in the town near his village—word was reaching the authorities . . .

That little snippet of a story was created by me but inspired by real stories I've read about the "reach" of apparently humble blogs—about the surging energy of thousands of [1]citizen journalists.

I've recently discovered a major source of journalism that honors bloggers, worldwide. Here's a short statement from [2]Deutsche Welle who sponsors the BOBs—Best of the Blogs—Awards:

"Welcome to the BOBs, the world's largest international awards for Weblogs, podcasts and videoblogs. Since its inception four years ago, the BOBs have grown to include 11 languages. The winners of each year's awards are decided by both an international jury of bloggers and through online voting."

Here are just a few of the top winners:

Generación Y Best Weblog

Author: Yoani Sanchez Language: Spanish Date: 2008-09-03 More: [3]Details

[4]Comments: 93 ★★★★★

The Cuban blogger Yoani Sanchez has been transformed over the past year into an international personality. In Generation Y, she gives voice to a whole generation of Cubans and provides the world with a window into Cuba through her clear and poetic writing.

Voices of Africa Best Videoblog

Author: Various Language: English Date: 2008-09-25 More: [5]Details Voices of Africa is a project to equip citizen journalists in Africa with mobile phones and/or portable digital recorders so they can report on the events happening around them. The local [6]more...

Ohod Best Weblog Arabic

Author: Ahmad Language: Arabic Date: 2008-09-30 More: [7]Details [8]Comments: 4 ★★★★★

Ahmad provides an introduction to independent culture in Egypt, the Arab world and elsewhere. His short commentaries on social issues and reflections are pieces of Arabic literature.

刘晓原的BLOG Best Weblog Chinese

Author: 刘晓原 Language: Chinese Date: 2008-09-24 More: [9]Details [10]Comments: 112 ★★★★★

Liu Xiaoyuan is a self-educated lawyer. He got his official license to work as a lawyer in 2000. He has been writing his blog for the 3 years and helps people protect themselves in their [11]more...

*Spiritual Quote* : "In cycles gone by, though harmony was established, yet, owing to the absence of means, the unity of all mankind could not have been achieved. Continents remained widely divided, nay even among the peoples of one and the same continent association and interchange of thought were wellnigh impossible. Consequently intercourse, understanding and unity amongst all the peoples and kindreds of the earth were unattainable. In this day, however, means of communication have multiplied, and the five continents of the earth have virtually merged into one. And for everyone it is now easy to travel to any land, to associate and exchange views with its peoples, and to become familiar, through publications, with the conditions, the religious beliefs and the thoughts of all men. In like manner all the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent. For none is self-sufficiency any longer possible..." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 31

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2. <http://www.thebobs.com/index.php?l=en&s=1154893190771544ZWFAYZBB>
3. <http://www.thebobs.com/index.php?w=1220475256622233SXDOOBEL>
4. <http://www.thebobs.com/index.php?w=1220475256622233SXDOOBEL-ALL&p=1>
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10. <http://www.thebobs.com/index.php?w=1222232496836624XUGLTIND-ALL&p=1>
11. <http://www.thebobs.com/index.php?w=1222232496836624XUGLTIND>
12. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
13. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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amzolt (2008-12-23 18:57:20)

Mohamed, I appreciate your awareness of the realities and virtualities of the global village...

Mohamed Taher (2008-12-23 18:23:56)

I envy the expression: "Miguel's blog was actually being read by people outside his village!" In fact, most of us these days live outside his village of geo-spatial (albeit, we virtually imagine to be living in a global village). Keep up.

### 1.10.13 A Bahá'í's Christmas Present . . . (2008-12-24 17:10)



Judy almost wanted to threaten to stay in her room all Christmas day; that is, unless her father let her friend Naquito celebrate the holiday with them...

She went and hugged her father, gave him a butterfly kiss on his wrinkled forehead, and whispered, "Please...?"

"Judy, your friend is a wonderful person but she isn't a Christian, she wouldn't feel comfortable here while we're celebrating the birth of Jesus."

"Dad, you don't get it. Naquito loves Christ as much as you do. She just feels He wasn't the only Messenger of God that ever came to earth."

Judy waited for the expected defense...

"Well, little one, that isn't a very Christian attitude is it?"

"Oh, Daddy, I love you so much but Jesus loves Everybody and Naquito loves Him. If Christmas isn't about love what's it about?"

Judy swirled out of my imagination and this fictional religious exchange ended with Naquito sharing Christmas with Judy and her family. Judy's father even ended up having more than one joyous giggle-session with Naquito...

And, even though I'm not a Christian, I respect and honor Christ so much that I wanted to give all my readers a Christmas present, a joyous, loving, maybe even giggly present.

Here's a video from my super friend, Robin Easton, about her experience of Christmas and Daddy and... well... Watch and feel the Love!

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6ApcpeSVCg  
&url=http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/ &feature=player\_embedded]

And, here's Robin's [1]Wonderful Blog.

*Spiritual Quote :*

"...the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh—if we would faithfully appraise it—can never, and in no aspect of its teachings, be at variance, much less conflict, with the purpose animating, or the authority invested in, the Faith of Jesus Christ. This glowing tribute which Bahá'u'lláh Himself has been moved to pay to the Author of the Christian Religion stands as sufficient testimony to the truth of this central principle of Bahá'í belief: '...The deepest wisdom which the sages have uttered, the profoundest learning which any mind hath unfolded, the arts which the ablest hands have produced, the influence exerted by the most potent of rulers, are but manifestations of the quickening power released by His transcendent, His all-pervasive and resplendent Spirit. We testify that when He came into the world, He shed the splendor of His glory upon all created things. Through Him the leper recovered from the leprosy of perversity and ignorance. Through Him the unchaste and wayward were healed. Through His power, born of Almighty God, the eyes of the blind were opened, and the soul of the sinner sanctified... He it is Who purified the world. Blessed is the man who, with a face beaming with light, hath turned towards Him.'"

Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, p. 185

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Robin Easton (2008-12-24 19:42:53)

Dear dear Alex, I am so shocked and honored by this. Before I even saw the video here I loved the story of the little girl, her dad and her non-Christian friend. Such a POTENT message in your words: "Oh, Daddy, I love you so much but Jesus loves Everybody and Naquito loves Him. If Christmas isn't about love what's it about?" Yes, the key is LOVE. We can often become caught up in the technicalities of our "supposed" differences and miss the bigger truth, which I believe is Love. Love that can heal and bind us all, and

yet allow our differences and each our uniqueness. I think your message here is one that is overlooked as "simple" or too often cast aside. And yet, I believe it to be one of the most powerful messages in the world today. It is one I choose to live my life by all year long. I find it an easy truth for me, one that creates great peace in my life. Thank you my good friend for this joyous gift. It's made my whole day. I really am touched by ALL of it. Have a wonderful holiday season no matter how you celebrate it. You've brought a lot of joy and inspiration into my life. Hugs and warm wishes, Robin

Alexys Fairfield (2008-12-24 19:05:39)

Hi Alex, Have a wonderful Christmas. Let love find you marveling in the blessings of life. Thank you for being an angel. Peace my friend.

Liara Covert (2008-12-29 14:09:09)

amzolt, life experience has taught me the things that would seem to divide us are far less meaningful than the invisible, imperceptible energy that connects us.

amzolt (2008-12-24 20:37:13)

Alexys, "...marveling in the blessings of life." This is a poem, in truth!

amzolt (2008-12-24 20:43:36)

Robin, Since Love is Light, "...your message here is one that is overlooked as 'simple' or too often cast aside.", must mean that the perception of seeming simpleness and the casting aside occur in the Dark. So... "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (King James Bible, Matthew 5:16)

Liara Covert (2008-12-27 14:38:28)

Over my lifetime thus far, I feel fortunate to have made friends and acquaintances of many religious orientations. The common thread is love. Each person senses what it is and feels connected by it. This is timeless, renewing light.

amzolt (2008-12-27 16:13:16)

Liara, Love as "...timeless, renewing light". How inspiringly beautiful!!

amzolt (2008-12-29 14:17:10)

Dear Liara, I feel moved to share one of my favorite spiritual quotes: "Have full assurance that love is the mystery of the appearance of God; that love is the divine aspect of God; that love is spiritual grace; that love is the light of the Kingdom; that love is as the breath of the Holy Spirit in the spirit of man. Love is the cause of the manifestation of truth in the material world. Love is the essential bond of union which exists between God and all things in their ultimate reality. Love is the source of the greatest happiness of the material and the spiritual worlds. Love is the light by which man is guided in the midst of darkness. Love is the communication between truth and man in the realm of consciousness. Love is the means of growth for all who are enlightened. "Love is the highest law in this great universe of God. Love is the law of order between simple essences, whereby they are apportioned and united into compound substances in this world of matter. Love is the essential and magnetic power that organizes the planets and the stars which shine in infinite space. Love supplies the impulse to that intense and unceasing meditation which reveals the hidden mysteries of the universe. "Love is the highest honor for all the nations of men. To that people in whom

God causes love to appear the Supreme Concourse, the angels of heaven, and the hosts of the kingdom of the Glorious One make salutation. When the hearts of a people are void of this Divine power – of the love of God – they will descend to the lowest estate of mortals, they will wander in the desert of error, they will fall into the slough of despair and there is no deliverance for them. They become like worms which delight in groveling in the earth. "O friends of God! be ye manifestations of the love of God and lamps of guidance in all horizons, shining by the light of love and harmony." 'Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i Scriptures, p. 435

#### 1.10.14 How Valuable Is Your Life ? (2008-12-26 16:33)



Susan just wanted to die...

Her parents had done it, just last year—smashed to a pulp in their car.

David had left her—"I'm really sorry about your parents but you're mind just isn't right, Susan. Grief is one thing; but, this is just too weird."

She'd been talking to her parents in her sleep—sometimes when she was awake...

She stood at the end of the tunnel that ran under the road in the park and started screaming.

Unnoticed, just to her left, sat an old man, back to a tree. He looked up in his stupor and shouted, "Hey, Twinkles, nothing's that bad."

Susan's scream strangled itself and she whirled on the man—"Why did you call me Twinkles!?"

"Cause it's your name . . ." The man promptly passed out.

Susan began a slow twirl that sank toward the ground as her mind revealed her mother and father, floating in nothingness, smiling and saying the name they'd called her when she was a child—Twinkles  
. . .

Just a story? Ever heard one like it?

Right when I was ready to write a post about the Next World and our connection to it, and as mysteriously as the old man calling Susan Twinkles, a fellow-blogger posted a friend's powerful short essay on just that topic. It first appeared, as a guest post, in [1]Bahá'í Perspectives then, the writer posted it to her own blog, [2]Two Points for Honesty. Here it is:



Nava Kavelin

### **The Prelude**

"It is not an easy task to present minds obsessed with the conception of this world and its affairs as complete in itself rather than as an ante-room to a larger, freer life, a scene in which the dominant note [is] Eternity."

Howard Colby Ives

What would it look like if we lived our lives at every moment aware of the fact that this world and everything in it was merely a prelude to a world much greater than this. Rather than allowing that knowledge to dull us into nonchalance or trick us into thinking the prelude was inconsequential, we would live knowing that the prelude was absolutely crucial in dictating what was to come.

The prelude would define the rest of the play—the body and the characters, the scene titles, and even the very last period on the very last page of the final act.

How might we live if we understood that the prelude was not more important than the rest of the play, but was absolutely essential to its unfolding.

And what if we knew that this play told the greatest love story of all time. Greater than Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, Bella and Edward, Leili and Majnun...greater than the love felt by the most adoring, devoted, sacrificial father for his favorite daughter...and that the prelude's purpose was to set forces in motion which would allow for the lover and the beloved to meet in the chamber of eternity.

The meeting of the two was inevitable. But the prelude would determine how quickly it would happen. The prelude would determine how long the lover would sigh in longing for her beloved. How long she would feel consumed by the flame of separation from the one for whom every cell in her body existed, every beat of her heart resounded, nay, the reason why every atom in the universe was. For

these two to meet, to love, to be near.

What if you knew that you were the lover in the prelude. And that every decision you made, every thought, every action or inaction, bore direct influence on how near you would be to the greatest, most radiant, most resplendent, kind, loving, wonderful, unimaginably glorious being.

That every kind act, every selfless thought, every step taken to help ease someone else's burden, to help improve the quality of another's life, to help those other lovers living the prelude with you would draw you nearer to this object of adoration—and what if you knew that your time in the prelude was very, very fleeting, especially as compared with the dominant note of eternity, which the rest of the book would unfold—would you waste a single moment on anger? On jealousy? On lethargy or inactivity?

How much time would you devote to leisure? To pleasure pursuits that distracted you, perhaps even furthered you away from, the path that led to this all-glorious one?

If we lived every moment of our lives consciously aware that we were created to know and to love God, to worship and adore Him in our actions towards His other creatures, that in serving our fellow man, we drew nearer unto Him, that whether or not we felt it now, when we exited the ante room and entered the chamber of eternity, we would be totally aware of and consumed by our love for Him and that if we were remote from Him we would feel sorrow and regret more intense than any hellish brimstone or scalding fire could impose on us ...and that our nearness or remoteness from Him would be in direct proportion to how we had spent our time in the ante room, or how we had penned our story in the prelude—I wonder how differently we would behave. How different our entire atmosphere would be. One directly affects the other, after all, and both help shape the kind of eternity that awaits us. An eternity which we are already a part of, which is always as near to us as the air we inhale and exhale at every moment.

"...This most great, this fathomless and surging Ocean is near, astonishingly near, unto you. Behold it is closer to you than your life-vein! Swift as the twinkling of an eye ye can, if ye but wish it, reach and partake of this imperishable favor, this God-given grace, this incorruptible gift, this most potent and unspeakably glorious bounty."

Bahá'u'lláh

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Love is the one means that ensureth true felicity both in this world and the next. Love is the light that guideth in darkness, the living link that uniteth God with man, that assureth the progress of every illumined soul. Love is the most great law that ruleth this mighty and heavenly cycle, the unique power that bindeth together the divers elements of this material world, the supreme magnetic force that directeth the movements of the spheres in the celestial realms. Love revealeth with unfailling and limitless power the mysteries latent in the universe. Love is the spirit of life unto the adorned body of mankind, the establisher of true civilization in this mortal world, and the shedder of imperishable glory upon every high-aiming race and nation."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 27

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Liara Covert (2008-12-27 14:36:17)

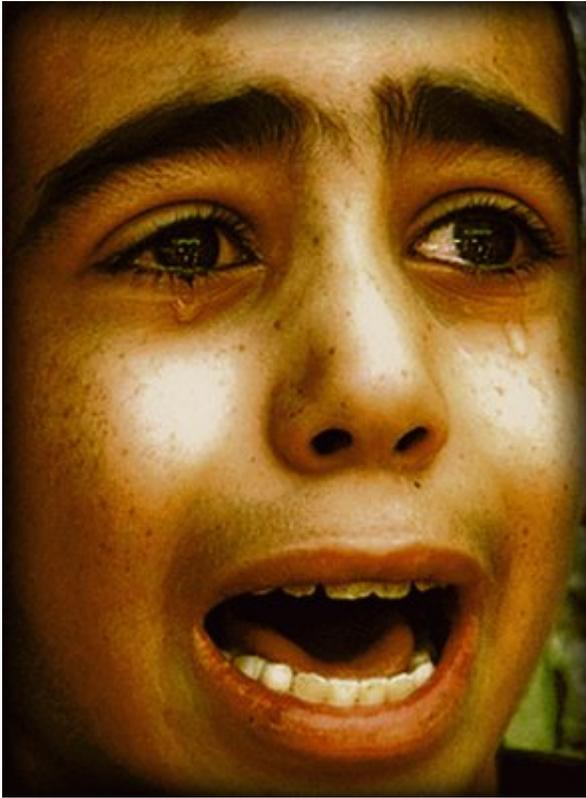
The process of raising personal awareness is meaningful, no matter what stage you are at. Love comes to mean different things to different people. The truth is in the experience. Elements of this profound truth are lost or hidden in human interpretation and any efforts to translate experience into words. Happy Holidays!

amzolt (2008-12-27 16:14:54)

Liara, And, the Very Happiest of Holidays to You, Too!!

### 1.10.15 Can We Trust The News ? (2008-12-28 16:23)

[1]Image Credit



Ananiah didn't want to believe it: innocent people were dying and his country's newspapers were claiming the bombing was only against military targets.

How could they miss what he could see with his own eyes? Right across the border from his favorite tree, right in that village, mothers and kids his age were lying in a pool of blood, hands and legs and heads severed from their bodies...

He couldn't stop the tears, couldn't stop his body shaking with rage. What could he do about it? Why were the newspapers lying about it? What did those people down there do to end up like that?!

Ananiah changed that day. His trust in his country evaporated. His anger at grownups began to swell into hatred. His faith in God was injured...

I created that short scene, created it out of the truth of a situation happening all over the world—lies so huge that no one should believe them.

How do we get news that tells the real story? How can we arm ourselves with the Truth?

Here are some sources that work hard to uncover the facts:

[2]**OneWorld.Net**: "OneWorld aims to be the place global citizens turn to for news and views from around the world not covered in mainstream media; we are also a key hub that Americans use to find and interact with like-minded individuals and organizations from around the world."

[3]**GlobalVoices:** "Today, Global Voices is thriving, vital component of the global media environment, helping individuals and media professionals around the world gain access to the diverse voices coming from citizen media."

[4]**Inter Press Service:** "Information is an agent of change. Since its inception, back in 1964, IPS has believed in the role of information as a precondition for lifting communities out of poverty and marginalization. This belief is reflected in our historic mission: "giving a voice to the voiceless"—acting as a communication channel that privileges the voices and the concerns of the poorest and creates a climate of understanding, accountability and participation around development, promoting a new international information order between the South and the North."

[5]**The Real News Network:** "We won't blindly follow wire services or official press releases that attempt to set the news agenda. We will cover the big stories of the day, but we will broaden the definition of what's important. The Real News will investigate, report and debate stories that help us understand the critical issues of our time."

[6]**Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty:** "RFE/RL's mission is to provide uncensored news and information in countries where a free press is either banned by the government or not fully established."

Spiritual Quote (written over 100 years ago):

"In this Day the secrets of the earth are laid bare before the eyes of men. The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing."  
Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 39

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6. <http://www.rferl.org/>
7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Barney (2008-12-28 17:27:07)

Good post, Alex. Thank you for pointing us to some more reliable news sources.

amzolt (2008-12-28 17:36:14)

Barney, Very glad to have your encouraging comment!

tikno (2008-12-28 23:17:50)

This post is very interesting. Many media has been contaminated by the factors of political, group interest, business / marketing strategy. Need be careful observation to trust the independent news. Happy New Year to you and family.

amzolt (2008-12-29 02:42:50)

tikno, Thanks for that encouraging comment! I checked out your blog and will add it to my RSS Reader. Blessings to you for the loss of your brother... I love this proverb: "Parent is like your head, brother/sister is like your arm, and wife/husband is like your clothes"

Liara Covert (2008-12-29 14:13:49)

The media "news" is someone's view of what is important. Each person has the option to accept what other people say is gospel or, to create their own version of "news." Information is unlimited and continuously flowing in many directions. We each have choices to ride the positive or negative waves. We also have choices to permit our mood and outlook to be affected by what is going on outside ourselves or, not.

amzolt (2008-12-29 14:18:45)

Liara, Very true, my dear, very true...

Robert Goldman (2009-01-21 16:47:37)

Hamas's use of human shields (a violation) and use of schools, hospitals, mosques etc as weapons dumps. the use of UN and red cressant ambulances as APC all points to folks getting hurt. if the kids are not in school they are on the streets. the parents don't make them go to classes and they don't stop them from playing sandbag for some hamas shooter. i worked in Gaza for 2 1/2 years. i saw how Hamas took over the city by force and fear. but again i can'tr watch the citizens of my country suck up any more rocket attacks at the hands of HAMAS..... and regarding hamas. the people voted for them as their government. (some were forced to vote or die) and this govt. opens a war with Israel.... who is to blame? we left them the farms of the settlements so they could do something with them but they lay fallow and un attended except for the tunnel rats trying to get under the israeli border so they can snatch another soldier... wanna see what i mean? just read my post on my page

Robert Goldman (2009-01-21 16:50:13)

as for new coverage, it doesn't take an actor to see the scripted reading by the select few that got their stories out in gaza.. you also see how the questions were never answered directly. and you see CNN and SKY pandering to terrorists

amzolt (2009-01-21 17:06:48)

Robert, I try, myself, to always consult non-mainstream news sources along with the usual culprits and then use my reason to ferret out a blog post... Also, can you supply a links to your posts? I click on your name and it only got me to your Facebook page and I saw no posts...

Robert Goldman (2009-01-21 17:24:21)

<http://merkavank3.wordpress.com/>

amzolt (2009-01-21 17:27:45)

Thanks for the link, Robert! I love that header image!!!

### 1.10.16 The Truth About Women (2008-12-30 21:30)



**Peter and Leon were at the café discussing women:**

Peter: "Can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em."

Leon: "The second part is completely true, the first is conditional."

Peter: "Whataya mean conditional?"

Leon: "Well, it's conditioned on your attitude toward them."

Peter: "Bullshit... Doesn't matter what I do, they're still impossible to live with."

Leon: "Yet, you do live with them."

Peter: "What's your point?"

Leon: "Point? Kinda obvious, eh?"

Peter: "Is this one of your psychological tricks?"

Leon: "No, just the truth—men are born from women, men live with women, men oppress women, and... women continue to bear it all, with a lot more strength than the men have."

Peter: "More strength?"

Leon: "Obviously."

Peter: "Might be obvious to you but the whole subject confuses the hell out of me..."

Leon: "So, you admit you misunderstand them. Do you realize you also underestimate them?"

Peter: "Misunderstand, maybe; frustrated, for sure; underestimate? I don't see where you're headed with all this, I just want a solution."

Leon: "Solution, Peter? First, you have to practice three powerful virtues: humility—to soften your willfulness; honesty—to inform your conscience; then, Love—to give them a reason to reveal themselves to you."

Peter: "Dude, you're outta your mind..."

Yep, Leon was out of his mind and into his heart . . .

Here are some recent sources of information about how men are treating women:

**From Time World:** [1]The Best Way to Curb Forced Marriages

**From the Washington Post:** [2]For Kurdish Girls, a Painful Ancient Ritual

**From the Washington Post:** [3]A Private Feud Turns Into a National Issue

**From Rising Voices:** [4]Nari Jibon: End Violence Against Women

**From the Guardian, UK:** [5]Saudi girl, eight, married off to 58-year-old is denied divorce

**From OneWorld.Net:** [6]Giving Birth in a Congolese Refugee Tent

**From The Bahá'í International Community:** [7]Beyond Legal Reforms: Culture and Capacity in the Eradication of Violence Against Women and Girls

**From Inter Press Service:** [8]Q &A: Failure to Translate Women's Legal Rights into Action

*Spiritual Quote :*

"...among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the equality of women and men. The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 302

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3. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/25/AR2008122500817.html>
4. <http://rising.globalvoicesonline.org/blog/2008/12/26/nari-jibon-end-violence-against-women/>
5. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/dec/23/saudi-arabia-human-rights>
6. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/359190-giving-birth-a-congolese-refugee-tent>
7. <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/06-0702.htm>
8. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=45148>
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amzolt (2009-01-01 20:57:37)

Dear Robin, Angel of the Rainforest, Thank you for gracing these comments with your perceptiveness and heart-won Wisdom!

Robin Easton (2009-01-01 20:51:13)

"Solution, Peter? First, you have to practice three powerful virtues: humility—to soften your willfulness; honesty—to inform your conscience; then, Love—to give them a reason to reveal themselves to you." This is very wise Alex and beautifully written. I have heard similar discussions between men...fortunately not the men I know and are friends. I have been blessed to know some very humble and honest men...men who fought for women's rights. I particularly related to the line "out of his mind and into his heart". I think this is a wonderful insight for both men and women. When I lived in the rainforest I finally let go of thinking with my mind and started to think with my heart. It was a little scary at first as I just couldn't grasp that I could completely trust my heart and that it "KNEW"! Now, I think with my heart in all things. I applaud all the good men in the world who are starting to learn that part of "who they are" is tied to women...and

vice versa. We are not as separate or different as we often like to believe (or are conditioned to believe).

amzolt (2009-01-04 19:27:14)

Marley, Your comment is as poetic as your life and your work! [ other readers should go to Marley's site:  
<http://psalmspeak.blogspot.com/> ]

Marley (2009-01-04 19:23:42)

I'm grateful each gender has the same eyes to see and heart to love. I'm also grateful we have some complementary characteristics as well. Yet another proof of the existence of an awesome God!



# Chapter 2

## 2009

### 2.1 January

#### 2.1.1 Insanity ! (2009-01-01 20:28)



The man was strong, confident, and well-equipped.

The boy was weak, terrified, and destitute.

The man moved his finger and unleashed death.

The boy moved his eyes and saw his world erupt in flame.

The man flew his plane back to base and celebrated with his comrades.

The boy's soul ascended to his True Home. He greeted his parents and sisters and began to pray for those left behind . . .

So much of our lives boil down to what we focus on—Light or Dark, Spirit or Body.

So much of our world is enmeshed in the materialistic claws of the gods of war.

So many of our human family are dispossessed and hopeless.

The Dark Ones are far from God through willful blindness.

The Ones carrying the Light are far from God only because their souls are still hovering near their bodies . . .

Please share your comments about this insane situation enveloping our human family!

Also, [1]watch this video about some present-day Darkness and Light, Body and Spirit, Hell and Heaven . . .

*Spiritual Quote :*

”O God, my God! Thou seest how black darkness is enshrouding all regions, how all countries are burning with the flame of dissension, and the fire of war and carnage is blazing throughout the East and the West. Blood is flowing, corpses bestrew the ground, and severed heads are fallen on the dust of the battlefield.

”O Lord! Have pity on these ignorant ones, and look upon them with the eye of forgiveness and pardon. Extinguish this fire, so that these dense clouds which obscure the horizon may be scattered, the Sun of Reality shine forth with the rays of conciliation, this intense gloom be dispelled and the resplendent light of peace shed its radiance upon all countries.

”O Lord! Draw up the people from the abyss of the ocean of hatred and enmity, and deliver them from the impenetrable darkness. Unite their hearts, and brighten their eyes with the light of peace and reconciliation. Deliver them from the depths of war and bloodshed, and free them from the darkness of error. Remove the veil from their eyes, and enlighten their hearts with the light of guidance. Treat them with Thy tender mercy and compassion, and deal not with them according to Thy justice and wrath which cause the limbs of the mighty to quake.

”O Lord! Wars have persisted. Distress and anxiety have waxed great, and every flourishing region is laid waste.

”O Lord! Hearts are heavy, and souls are in anguish. Have mercy on these poor souls, and do not leave them to the excesses of their own desires.

”O Lord! Make manifest in Thy lands humble and submissive souls, their faces illumined with the rays of guidance, severed from the world, extolling Thy Name, uttering Thy praise, and diffusing the fragrance of Thy holiness amongst mankind.

"O Lord! Strengthen their backs, gird up their loins, and enrapture their hearts with the most mighty signs of Thy love.

"O Lord! Verily, they are weak, and Thou art the Powerful and the Mighty; they are impotent, and Thou art the Helper and the Merciful.

"O Lord! The ocean of rebellion is surging, and these tempests will not be stilled save through Thy boundless grace which hath embraced all regions.

"O Lord! Verily, the people are in the abyss of passion, and naught can save them but Thine infinite bounties.

"O Lord! Dispel the darkness of these corrupt desires, and illumine the hearts with the lamp of Thy love through which all countries will ere long be enlightened. Confirm, moreover, Thy loved ones, those who, leaving their homelands, their families and their children, have, for the love of Thy Beauty, traveled to foreign countries to diffuse Thy fragrances and promulgate Thy Teachings. Be Thou their companion in their loneliness, their helper in a strange land, the remover of their sorrows, their comforter in calamity. Be Thou a refreshing draught for their thirst, a healing medicine for their ills and a balm for the burning ardor of their hearts.

"Verily, Thou art the Most Generous, the Lord of grace abounding, and, verily, Thou art the Compassionate and the Merciful."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Prayers*, p. 182

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Mike dean (2009-01-02 18:51:35)

Day after day we hear such accidents happen, first day hype is created in the media & the second day the accident becomes a story, third day people forget it ,but insanity continues. People should think before acting foolishly. those who behave madly should be punished , so that they do not do such a crime again.

anzolt (2009-01-02 18:57:15)

Thanks for your comment, Mike!

Robert Goldman (2009-01-21 16:52:12)

The boy is trained in the art of death and war, he has been trained since the age of 7 or 8. he learned to use an m-16 and an AK-47. he also knows the RPG very well he is a child soldier and he is hamas trained with UN money..

anzolt (2009-01-21 17:08:45)

Robert, I'm sure there as such boys as you describe... The one in this post is much more innocent than that.

## 2.1.2 Politics or People ? (2009-01-03 17:33)

[1]Image Credit



Imagine : your family has been slaughtered...

Imagine : the government calls it "collateral damage"...

Imagine : you live where thugs have taken charge...

Imagine : you're now considered a thug...

Imagine : people in government are truly loving, just, and fair...

That last one's pretty hard to imagine, eh?

So many people taking about the Gaza massacre; so little being done...

Some recent cases of verbiage [ vúrbee ij ] noun, Definition: 1. excess of words: an excess of words that add little or nothing to the meaning.

Political word-dance:

[2]"...asked today if the Israeli response was proportionate to the provocation of the Hamas rocket and mortar attacks, the White House declined to offer a view. 'I'm not going to take a position on proportionality, because I'm not even sure if I could define what that is', said Gordon Johndroe, the lead White House spokesman on this issue."

From President Bush: [3]

"In response to these attacks on their people, the leaders of Israel have launched military operations on Hamas positions in Gaza. As a part of their strategy, Hamas terrorists often hide within the civilian population, which puts innocent Palestinians at risk. Regrettably, Palestinian civilians have been killed in recent days."

A religious (?) view:

[4]"The Rabbinical Council of America, an umbrella group of Orthodox rabbis, said 'Israel has every right and obligation to respond as it has.'"

And, quite incredibly:

[5]"U.S. stocks rallied Friday to lock in solid weekly gains..."

### **Now, some news from the ground:**

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5osk2toY1E &feature=channel]

Also, some news from the interplay of the people suffering from the war:

[6]"Gaza City and the Israeli city of Sderot are separated by just a few kilometres. A year ago, even while the people of Gaza were living in severe conditions under Israeli blockade, and Sderot was an ongoing target for rocket attacks coming out of the Gaza Strip, a blog was started by two men, one in each place. Since then they have been documenting their experiences and giving us their perspective on events, including those of the last week."

And, [7]an amazing site that brings the last quote to vivid life!

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Behold the disturbances which, for many a long year, have afflicted the earth, and the perturbation that hath seized its peoples. It hath either been ravaged by war, or tormented by sudden and unforeseen calamities. Though the world is encompassed with misery and distress, yet no man hath paused to reflect what the cause or source of that may be. Whenever the True Counsellor uttered a word in admonishment, lo, they all denounced Him as a mover of mischief and rejected His claim."

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 218

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6. <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2009/01/02/gaza-and-sderot-the-day-after-the-war-we-need-a-new-beginning/>

7. <http://gaza-sderot.arte.tv/en/#/time/95>

8. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

9. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Wilma (2009-01-04 22:20:55)

To make war the enemy needs to be made into illegitimate beings. To see for real that real people are involved make so called enemies, people like you and me, no longer illegitimate beings. Politics can make the people they are at war with illegitimate. We can stop that by seeing real people and voting for 'no more'.

kennedy121 (2009-01-03 17:39:53)

"And, quite incredibly: "U.S. stocks rallied Friday to lock in solid weekly gains..." As Naomi Klein posits in her theory 'The Shock Doctrine', in the current neoliberal capitalist order, opportunity arises from crisis for those who wish to make money. Great blog.

amzolt (2009-01-03 17:46:38)

kennedy, Thanks for your pointed comment! Added your blog to my RSS reader...

Anne (2009-01-03 18:01:58)

Thanks for the link to the Gaza Sderot blog. It puts real faces and real lives behind the news stories we hear. How tragic, it's heartbreaking (especially the photo at the top with the man carrying his child). These are people we can relate to, their concerns and pain and hopes are just the same as ours, but they are living under horrible conditions.

amzolt (2009-01-03 18:15:51)

Anne, Thank you for your comment! We all must focus on the people—the common, suffering people. And,

pray for the politicians, too...

amzolt (2009-01-05 00:19:13)

Wilma, Thank you for your perceptive and humane comment!

Aree (2009-01-04 02:28:09)

very good post.

amzolt (2009-01-04 13:40:52)

Aree, Thank you for the encouraging comment!

### 2.1.3 To Save Our Lives . . . (2009-01-05 12:00)

[1]Image Credit



No flash of fiction from me today—no bit of story from my imagination to introduce the message of the post.

There will be a story, a factual story told in a letter, written in the early 1900s by a man imprisoned for forty years because of his spiritual beliefs.

Take this post as a Supreme Gift, from me to you, from all of us to the rest of our human family . . .

*Spiritual Quote :*

"O ye lovers of truth, ye servants of humankind! Out of the flowering of your thoughts and hopes, fragrant emanations have come my way, wherefore an inner sense of obligation compelleth me to pen these words.

"Ye observe how the world is divided against itself, how many a land is red with blood and its very dust is caked with human gore. The fires of conflict have blazed so high that never in early times, not in the Middle Ages, not in recent centuries hath there ever been such a hideous war, a war that is even as millstones, taking for grain the skulls of men. Nay, even worse, for flourishing countries have been reduced to rubble, cities have been levelled with the ground, and many a once

prosperous village hath been turned into ruin. Fathers have lost their sons, and sons their fathers. Mothers have wept away their hearts over dead children. Children have been orphaned, women left to wander, vagrants without a home. From every aspect, humankind hath sunken low. Loud are the piercing cries of fatherless children; loud the mothers' anguished voices, reaching to the skies.

"And the breeding-ground of all these tragedies is prejudice: prejudice of race and nation, of religion, of political opinion; and the root cause of prejudice is blind imitation of the past—imitation in religion, in racial attitudes, in national bias, in politics. So long as this aping of the past persisteth, just so long will the foundations of the social order be blown to the four winds, just so long will humanity be continually exposed to direst peril.

"Now, in such an illumined age as ours, when realities previously unknown to man have been laid bare, and the secrets of created things have been disclosed, and the Morn of Truth hath broken and lit up the world—is it admissible that men should be waging a frightful war that is bringing humanity down to ruin? No, by the Lord God!

"Christ Jesus summoned all mankind to amity and peace. Unto Peter He said: 'Put up thy sword into the sheath.' [1 John 18:11 ] Such was the bidding and counsel of the Lord Christ; and yet today the Christians one and all have drawn their swords from out the scabbard. How wide is the discrepancy between such acts and the clear Gospel text!

"Sixty years ago Bahá'u'lláh rose up, even as the Day-Star, over Persia. He declared that the skies of the world were dark, that this darkness boded evil, and that terrible wars would come. From the prison at 'Akká, He addressed the German Emperor in the clearest of terms, telling him that a great war was on the way and that his city of Berlin would break forth in lamentation and wailing. Likewise did He write to the Turkish sovereign, although He was that Sultan's victim and a captive in his prison—that is, He was being held prisoner in the Fortress at 'Akká—and clearly stated that Constantinople would be overtaken by a sudden and radical change, so great that the women and children of that city would mourn and cry aloud. In brief, He addressed such words to all the monarchs and the presidents, and everything came to pass, exactly as He had foretold.

"There have issued, from His mighty Pen, various teachings for the prevention of war, and these have been scattered far and wide.

"The first is the independent investigation of truth; for blind imitation of the past will stunt the mind. But once every soul inquireth into truth, society will be freed from the darkness of continually repeating the past.

"His second principle is the oneness of mankind: that all men are the sheep of God, and God is their loving Shepherd, caring most tenderly for all without favouring one or another. 'No difference canst thou see in the creation of the God of mercy' [Qur'án 67:3 ]; all are His servants, all implore His grace.

"His third teaching is that religion is a mighty stronghold, but that it must engender love, not malevolence and hate. Should it lead to malice, spite, and hate, it is of no value at all. For religion is a remedy, and if the remedy bring on disease, then put it aside. Again, as to religious, racial, national and political bias: all these prejudices strike at the very root of human life; one and

all they beget bloodshed, and the ruination of the world. So long as these prejudices survive, there will be continuous and fearsome wars.

”To remedy this condition there must be universal peace. To bring this about, a Supreme Tribunal must be established, representative of all governments and peoples; questions both national and international must be referred thereto, and all must carry out the decrees of this Tribunal. Should any government or people disobey, let the whole world arise against that government or people.

”Yet another of the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh is the equality of men and women and their equal sharing in all rights. And there are many similar principles. It hath now become evident that these teachings are the very life and soul of the world.

”Ye who are servants of the human race, strive ye with all your heart to deliver mankind out of this darkness and these prejudices that belong to the human condition and the world of nature, so that humanity may find its way into the light of the world of God.

”Praise be to Him, ye are acquainted with the various laws, institutions and principles of the world; today nothing short of these divine teachings can assure peace and tranquillity to mankind. But for these teachings, this darkness shall never vanish, these chronic diseases shall never be healed; nay, they shall grow fiercer from day to day. The Balkans will remain discontented. Its restlessness will increase. The vanquished Powers will continue to agitate. They will resort to every measure that may rekindle the flame of war. Movements, newly-born and world-wide in their range, will exert their utmost effort for the advancement of their designs. The Movement of the Left will acquire great importance. Its influence will spread.

”Strive ye, therefore, with the help of God, with illumined minds and hearts and a strength born of heaven, to become a bestowal from God to man, and to call into being for all humankind, comfort and peace.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ’Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 246

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1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guernica\\_\(painting\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guernica_(painting))

2. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

3. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

## 2.1.4 Why Are Children Being Slaughtered ? (2009-01-06 03:33)

[1]Image Credit



No commentary from me today; just the news . . .

**From the New York Times:** [2]Warnings Not Enough for Gaza Families "The Samouni family knew they were in danger. They had been calling the Red Cross for two days, they said, begging to be taken out of Zeitoun, a poor area in eastern Gaza City that is considered a stronghold of Hamas.

"No rescuers came. Instead, Israeli soldiers entered their building late Sunday night and told them to evacuate to another building. They did. But at 6 a.m. on Monday, when a missile fired by an Israeli warplane struck the relatives' house in which they had taken shelter, there was nowhere to run.

"Eleven members of the extended Samouni family were killed and 26 wounded, according to witnesses and hospital officials, with five children age 4 and under among the dead."

**From:** [3]ArchivesAlgeriennes

"As a father of five children, my heart breaks every time I hear or read about the brutal death of any child, kids dead Palestinian or Israeli, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, or of any background. A child represents innocence, joy, and mercy.

"When Israel imposes, for more than three years, a complete siege on the Gaza population of 1.5 million and turns it into a large ghetto or prison, it certainly harms children.

"When HAMAS responds to that siege by sending primitive home-made rockets into Israel, it surely endangers children.

"When Israel carries out collective punishment on the Palestinians by dropping tons of huge missiles and bombs into densely populated residential areas, it most definitely kills children. So far, close to 30 children have died as a result of these bombs and hundreds more have been maimed and disabled.

"Every time an Israeli child is harmed, the whole world mourns, and rightly so. The whole world is informed of that child's name, his or her parents' agony, and the tragic circumstances that caused this death.

"However, when a Palestinian child is harmed, no one in the world seems to care. No one is told of his or her name. No one is informed about the pain of the parents, siblings, and grand parents who loved him or her. The Zionist propaganda machine has succeeded in dehumanizing Palestinians. Palestinians are portrayed as terrorists, murderers, radicals, or sub-humans. That way, it becomes much easier not to care about such a people, no matter how many of them are turned into refugees, how many of their homes are demolished, how much of their land is confiscated, how many of them are imprisoned, and how many of them are killed or wounded.

"The Palestinian people, the indigenous people of historic Palestine (today's Israel and Palestine) are, like all people, a nation that wants freedom on its own land. And they have continuously shown the world their willingness to sacrifice everything they have to live with freedom and dignity.

"And, yes, dead Palestinian children (as well as living ones) have names and their parents love them too."

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAnQOqooXvU>]

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Even now war is raging furiously in some places, the blood of innocent people is being shed, children are made captive, women are left without support, and homes are being destroyed. Therefore, the greatest need in the world today is international peace. The time is ripe. It is time for the abolition of warfare, the unification of nations and governments. It is the time for love. It is time for cementing together the East and the West."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 376

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1. <http://www.thepeoplesvoice.org/cgi-bin/blogs/voices.php/2008/08/02/p27428>

2. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/06/world/middleeast/06scene.html>

3. <http://www.youtube.com/user/ArchivesAlgeriennes>

4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

5. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

Liara Covert (2009-01-07 15:19:22)

In order to focus on strengthening the healing process, it is powerful to focus on healing thoughts. To dwell on what you do not want does not nurture the energy vibrations you would prefer.

Ruth (2009-01-12 02:04:55)

I recently came across your blog and have been reading along. I thought I would leave my first comment. I don't know what to say except that I have enjoyed reading. Nice blog. I will keep visiting this blog very often. Ruth <http://www.infrared-sauna-spot.info>

Kikolani - Poetry | Photography | Blogging Tips (2009-01-22 00:36:00)

It is sad that certain children seem more important than others. For instance, so many children die all over the world, but if a celebrity's child died, it would make international news. Any child's loss is tragic. Kristi

amzolt (2009-01-22 00:38:24)

Yes, Kristi!! I feel humanity is slowly seeing the truth that children are, in fact, our Future...

### 2.1.5 International Law Being Broken ? (2009-01-07 18:47)



**Judy and Maria talking at the café:**

J: So what the hell gives them the right?

M: They're protecting their citizens from rockets.

J: While they kill other civilians with bombs and missiles and mortars and tank shells?

M: Yeah, doesn't seem fair—out of proportion...

J: We need some kind of international protection, to stop small terrorists' violence and powerful countries' insanities.

M: As far as I know there are international laws; just not enough international responsibility  
...

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDmLrOUKnpE>

&eurl=http://therealnews.com/t/index.php?option=com\_content &task=view &id=31 &Itemid=74 &jumival=3064 &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote :*

"...we believe it is impossible to implement human 'rights' without a sense of collective responsibility. Indeed, if the whole of humanity is one interconnected body, then an injury to any member is an injury to the body as a whole. Thus it behooves every individual member of the human family to take action whenever and wherever human rights violations occur.

"Some links between human rights and responsibilities are already generally accepted. Legal rights guaranteed by the existing human rights instruments are implicitly balanced by responsibilities, and states are obligated to respect human rights under international law. Likewise, the notion of responsibility is widely acknowledged in its narrow criminal and tort law sense. Yet in the Bahá'í perspective, the concept of 'responsibility' in the context of human rights encompasses the responsibility devolving upon every person, as a divinely-created being, to recognize the essential oneness of the human race and to promote the human rights of others with this motivation.

"Thus, it seems to us essential to broaden the conceptual framework for addressing human rights problems from an adversarial paradigm—pitting the government against the individual citizen—to a cooperative one, where we consider relations among all human beings as members of one community. In this context, everyone has an essential role to play in implementing fundamental human rights. When individuals assume responsibility for ensuring each other's human rights the foundation for unity will be firmly established.

"In addition, recognition of such a responsibility to promote human rights can empower ordinary people and give them a new sense of purpose and dignity. As stated in the Bahá'í writings:

"And the honour and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. Is any larger bounty conceivable than this, that an individual, looking within himself, should find that by the confirming grace of God he has become the cause of peace and well-being, of happiness and advantage to his fellow men? No, by the one true God, there is no greater bliss, no more complete delight." ('Abdu'l-Bahá, *Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp. 2-3.)

Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Dec 03, *Right and Responsibility to Promote Human Rights*

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1. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

### 2.1.6 Dangerous (?) Youth . . . (2009-01-10 01:19)



What makes a youth go bad?

Why do youth so often seem to act in a contrary way?

What can make youth want to be supportive of productive change?

How can we harness the vast energy of youth in the most important causes of our time?

Why are the youth in Greece so mad?

**From Fox News:** [1]Renewed Riots Break Out in Greece as Protesters Clash With Police

**From Le Monde Diplomatique:** [2]Mass uprising of Greece's youth

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cknzlqQvDzs>]

*Spiritual Quote :*

"Man must walk in many paths and be subjected to various processes in his evolution upward. Physically he is not born in full stature but passes through consecutive stages of fetus, infant, childhood, youth, maturity and old age. Suppose he had the power to remain young throughout his life. He then would not understand the meaning of old age and could not believe it existed. If he could not realize the condition of old age, he would not know that he was young. He would not know the difference between young and old without experiencing the old. Unless you have passed through the state of infancy, how would you know this was an infant beside you? If there were no wrong, how would you recognize the right? If it were not for sin, how would you appreciate virtue? If evil deeds were unknown, how could you commend good actions? If sickness did not exist, how would you understand health? Evil is nonexistent; it is the absence of good. Sickness is the loss of health;

poverty, the lack of riches. When wealth disappears, you are poor; you look within the treasure box but find nothing there. Without knowledge there is ignorance; therefore, ignorance is simply the lack of knowledge. Death is the absence of life. Therefore, on the one hand, we have existence; on the other, nonexistence, negation or absence of existence.

”Briefly, the journey of the soul is necessary. The pathway of life is the road which leads to divine knowledge and attainment. Without training and guidance the soul could never progress beyond the conditions of its lower nature, which is ignorant and defective.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 295

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1. <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,478588,00.html>
2. <http://mondediplo.com/2009/01/06greece>
3. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
4. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

## 2.1.7 Unity ■> Peace (2009-01-11 17:50)



### **Jim and Melissa at the café:**

M: They should just continue bombing the hell out of them...

J: And that's going to solve things?

M: It gets rid of the terrorists.

J: It's also getting rid of innocent people.

M: There's no other way to stop them.

J: What if you had a son and he was in Gaza and the bombs were falling on him?

M: I'd never let a son of mine be in a situation like that.

J: So, there's a beginning to a solution that doesn't need violence—women taking charge and using love to fight war.

M: Hmmm... Never thought of it that way...

Just a story? Seem like a weak argument? Still think the bombs are the solution?

Try spending some time on [1]Sixty Years, Sixty Voices, a site that chronicles the experience of 30 Palestinian and 30 Israeli women who've been involved in the conflicts and hold the conviction that focused female action can stem the tide of violence...

“The foundations for lasting peace in the Middle East are embedded in the voices of these Israeli

and Palestinian women. They know war and they know peace, they know weakness and strength and they know the human heart. In a torn land they find a common ground built out of wisdom, experience, and because they have walked the walk. Here they stand and speak out, if we listen there is hope.” - MARIANE PEARL

**Just one of the many videos from the site:**

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQ6obsB5Pc8>  
&eurl=<http://www.60voices.org/watch-the-videos/> &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote :*

”The highest of created beings fighting to obtain the lowest form of matter, earth! Land belongs not to one people, but to all people. This earth is not man’s home, but his tomb. It is for their tombs these men are fighting. There is nothing so horrible in this world as the tomb, the abode of the decaying bodies of men.

”However great the conqueror, however many countries he may reduce to slavery, he is unable to retain any part of these devastated lands but one tiny portion—his tomb! If more land is required for the improvement of the condition of the people, for the spread of civilization (for the substitution of just laws for brutal customs) – surely it would be possible to acquire peaceably the necessary extension of territory.

”But war is made for the satisfaction of men’s ambition; for the sake of worldly gain to the few, terrible misery is brought to numberless homes, breaking the hearts of hundreds of men and women!

”How many widows mourn their husbands, how many stories of savage cruelty do we hear! How many little orphaned children are crying for their dead fathers, how many women are weeping for their slain sons!

”There is nothing so heart-breaking and terrible as an outburst of human savagery!

”I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content.

”Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and happiness.

”When soldiers of the world draw their swords to kill, soldiers of God clasp each other’s hands! So may all the savagery of man disappear by the Mercy of God, working through the pure in heart and the sincere of soul. Do not think the peace of the world an ideal impossible to attain!

”Nothing is impossible to the Divine Benevolence of God.

"If you desire with all your heart, friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men.

"Do not despair! Work steadily. Sincerity and love will conquer hate. How many seemingly impossible events are coming to pass in these days! Set your faces steadily towards the Light of the World. Show love to all; 'Love is the breath of the Holy Spirit in the heart of Man'. Take courage! God never forsakes His children who strive and work and pray! Let your hearts be filled with the strenuous desire that tranquillity and harmony may encircle all this warring world. So will success crown your efforts, and with the universal brotherhood will come the Kingdom of God in peace and goodwill."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 28

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1. <http://www.60voices.org/hear-their-voices/>

2. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

3. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Robin Easton (2009-01-13 19:55:39)

This is a powerful realization. I have said this for several years...that women need to become more proactive, no longer let repression or conditioning keep them silent. I also loved this video and went to the site. It is fantastic and such a great find Alex. Just wonderful. I really enjoyed this!!! :)

amzolt (2009-01-13 20:52:01)

Robin, You, of all women, are blessed with the insights the post revealed. Further, all women, when they turn to their hearts, are the peace bringers of the world!!!

Leanne (2009-01-26 21:47:54)

Wow. I just got enormous goose bumps reading about the 60 years, 60 voices. I'm so heartened to hear about this. Why do we never hear about these women in any of the coverage of the bombing?

amzolt (2009-01-26 22:14:59)

Leanne, "Why do we never hear about these women in any of the coverage of the bombing?" From my perspective, it's because the normal, "mainstream" coverage cow-tows to the government. I scan many alternative news sites for this blog.....

## 2.1.8 One Perpetual Faith (2009-01-13 20:42)

Due to recent world crises and the important information it contains, this post will stay up till Sunday, 18 January.



**Emory and Suzanne at the café:**

E: World Religion Day? Come on, get serious.

S: I am serious, Emory, I want you to come to the gathering.

E: Sorry, I don't think religion has anything that will help with the problems going on in the world right now.

S: Why not?

E: Well, for one, they're all fighting each other. How can rabid religionists help establish peace?

S: I'm talking about real religion, the kind that induces love and unity.

E: Where does that exist?

S: Come to the gathering and you just might be surprised...

E: Who else will be there?

S: Tom, Elaine, and Pete; Christian, Jew, and Muslim...

E: Well, it might be fun watching them argue themselves into a frenzy.

S: I'll bet they all get along and that you learn something that can help in your work for peace.

E: I'll take that bet. In a way..... I actually hope I lose...

Emory will go to the gathering for World Religion Day and he will lose his bet. He'll also learn that the core of all true religions are the same and all guide humanity to the road of peace and tranquility.

There's a statement made in the Writings of my Faith that, if religion doesn't lead to love and unity, a person is better off without religion...

In light of that statement, I want to introduce you to a major document that was sent to the world's religious leaders, essentially telling them to reaffirm the core beliefs of their Faiths and get down to work helping their followers practice what real religion preaches. [1]This link will let you read and download the document.

Also, in the time remaining before January 18th, you may want to [2]learn more about World Religion Day and various activities that are being planned.

### **Here's a video from the site:**

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpFvuGZteKo  
&eurl=http://www.worldreligionday.org/index.php?option=com\_content &view=article &id=24  
&Itemid=18 &feature=player\_embedded]

#### *Spiritual Quote:*

"O ye steadfast loved ones! The grace of God is beating down upon mankind, even as the rains in spring, and the rays of the manifest Light have made this earth to be the envy of heaven. But alas, the blind are deprived of this bounty, the heedless are closed off from it, the withered despair of it, the faded are dying away—so that even as flooding waters, this endless stream of grace passeth back into its primal source in a hidden sea. Only a few receive this grace and take their share of it...

"We trust that in a time to come the slumberers will waken, and the heedless will be made aware, and the excluded will become initiates in the mysteries. Now must the friends work on with heart and soul and put forth a mighty effort, until the ramparts of dissension are toppled down and the glories of the oneness of humanity lead all to unity.

"Today the one overriding need is unity and harmony among the beloved of the Lord, for they should have among them but one heart and soul and should, so far as in them lieth, unitedly withstand the hostility of all the peoples of the world; they must bring to an end the benighted prejudices of all nations and religions and must make known to every member of the human race that all are the leaves of one branch, the fruits of one bough.

"Until such time, however, as the friends establish perfect unity among themselves, how can they summon others to harmony and peace?"

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 277

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1. [http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/letter\\_april2002\\_english.pdf](http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/letter_april2002_english.pdf)

2. <http://www.worldreligionday.org/>

3. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

4. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Kikolani - Poetry | Photography | Blogging Tips (2009-01-22 00:24:31)

I think it would be great if every religion could see what they have in common. Instead of fighting to try to make others see it their way, realize that each way, although unique, leads to the path. Kristi

amzolt (2009-01-22 00:29:53)

Kristi, A big hearty Amen to that, dear heart!!

### 2.1.9 Greed, Violence, and Truth (2009-01-18 15:57)



[1]Image Credit

[2]Use this link to read all our posts about the Gaza Conflict

I'm going to do something that some may find insensitive or in poor taste.

As the Gaza conflict may, or may not, be winding down and as the American presidency transitions office-holders, I want to bring to sharp clarity that there are numerous political entities involved in a many wars that have killed hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians—possibly more than any time in human history.

As I see it, we are headed for an international transition from totally sovereign nations who can decide to initiate war to a global form of governance in which nations willingly agree to leave each other alone so their citizens can live fruitful lives. Naturally, this will only come after the violence against civilians reaches a possibly much higher level—severe pain teaching the rule of love...

Also, it's fairly obvious that the world financial crisis came from materialistic agendas which have proven their falsity and that the greed behind such agendas is a strong inducer of violence.

Following are two videos. One being crushingly sad, the other seeming to be light comedy. I see the sad one as an unyielding Teacher and the comedy as a wise Professor—hot tears and stinging laughter being natural human responses to global disaster.

I don't want to offend, I want to uncover the Truth...

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UxJWdCwOpc  
&eurl=http://news.google.com/news?hl=en &ned= &q=gaza &btnG=Search+News  
&feature=player\_embedded]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-  
Ptzml1qQvZE &eurl=http://www.inteldaily.com/news/138/ARTICLE/9326/2009-01-18.ht ml &fea-  
ture=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

”[This]...issue concerns the nature of the catastrophic events associated with this period in history. The general messages of the Guardian to the world-wide Bahá'í community make clear reference in several places to a 'retributive calamity' which will purify the human race and knit its components into a unified whole. One of the most detailed passages from the writings of the Guardian is the following:

'The violent derangement of the world's equilibrium; the trembling that will seize the limbs of mankind; the radical transformation of human society; the rolling up of the present-day Order; the fundamental changes affecting the structure of government; the weakening of the pillars of religion; the rise of dictatorships; the spread of tyranny; the fall of monarchies; the decline of ecclesiastical institutions; the increase of anarchy and chaos; the extension and consolidation of the Movement of the Left; the fanning into flame of the smouldering fire of racial strife; the development of infernal engines of war; the burning of cities; the contamination of the atmosphere of the earth—these stand out as the signs and portents that must either herald or accompany the retributive calamity which, as decreed by Him Who is the Judge and Redeemer of mankind, must, sooner or later, afflict a society

which, for the most part, and for over a century, has turned a deaf ear to the Voice of God's Messenger in this day—a calamity which must purge the human race of the dross of its age-long corruptions, and weld its component parts into a firmly-knit world-embracing Fellowship...' (Taken from "Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957" by Shoghi Effendi, page 103)"

International Teaching Centre, 1984 Jul 01, *Concerns about Retributive Calamity*

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1. <http://www.eatbees.com/blog/2008/03/05/involuntarily/>
2. <http://amzoltai.wordpress.com/2009/01/13/posts-about-the-gaza-conflict/>
3. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Kikolani - Poetry | Photography | Blogging Tips (2009-01-22 00:21:32)

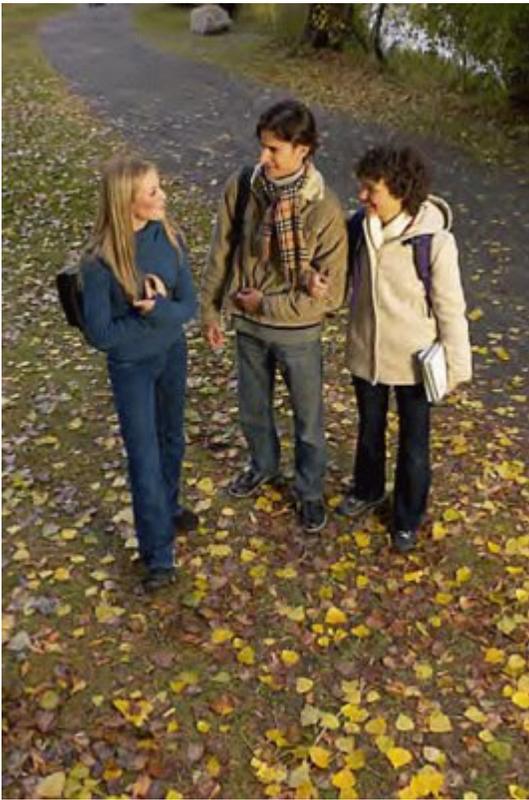
I didn't find the first video offensive. Although sad, I think it is good that the journalist didn't just sit there and report the story. He not only did something to help the family, but also broadcast it in a way to show how the casualties of fighting are not just numbers and statistics - they are people. Kristi

amzolt (2009-01-22 00:28:43)

Kikolani, Glad you appreciate the humanity of that journalist! My statement about offending was the polarity of the two very different videos....

## **2.1.10 Gaza and Its Civilians (2009-01-21 04:53)**

[1]Read All Our Gaza Posts Here



Miriam, Hamid, and Rebecca at the Park

Rebecca: O.K., we all have our quotes, let's sit down and see if we have enough for the report.

They walk to the pavilion and get out their papers and books.

Rebecca: You start, Hamid.

Hamid: Well, I chose an article from the New York Times called, [2]Many Civilian Targets, but One Core Question Among Gazans: Why?. Here are the three I ended up with:

“They hit my future with a rocket,” said Muhammad Baroud, one of the students at the Islamic University in Gaza City. “This is a university. What does it have to do with war?”

—

For Mr. Baroud and his friends, the bombing of the science lab building, which happened in the early days of the Israeli offensive, was a frontal attack on their future. The university is prestigious, and they said they worked hard to get there. It is one of the best medical schools in the region, and Israel recognizes its degrees.

“Are we going to study in a tent?” asked Mr. Baroud's friend, Ahmed.

—

And,  
582

The issue, in part, is about the very nature of Hamas. Gazans say that there is a range of relationships people have with the group, starting with sympathizer and ending with rocket launcher or suicide bomber. Just because someone likes Hamas does not mean that that person is necessarily working for the group, Gazans say.

Rebecca: Are there quotes in the article from the Israelis?

Hamid: Yes, do you think we need some of those?

Miriam: I think so...

Rebecca: Yes.

Hamid: Will do.

Rebecca: Miriam, what do you have?

Miriam: I chose an article from the BBC News called, [3]Gazans confront shattered lives, and I chose different segments from the article woven into one quote:

...for some Gazans even attempting to return home is virtually unimaginable. Amira al-Girim, 15, lies in a hospital bed with her leg in traction. She was found alone, bleeding in a house, about four days after she saw her father killed by an Israeli tank shell in front of her. Her brother and sister died - she thinks in an air strike - as they ran to get help....By the time she was found - she is not sure if it was three or four days later - she hardly knew her own name. But she remembers details.... She says she slept in the street for two days, but then found her way into another house. She had struggled some 500m with a badly broken, bleeding leg, in search of shelter as fighting raged nearby. ABC producer Sami Ziyara, who found Amira with his colleague Imad, said doctors told him she had only a few hours left to live at the point they found her in Imad's house.

Miriam: That's it...

Hamid: Powerful...

Rebecca: I think you found something we really need in the report. Is there a picture of her?

Miriam: Yes, here...



Hamid: Poor, poor girl.....

Miriam: Rebecca, what do you have?

Rebecca: Well... You guys may think I've flipped but I chose a quote of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, from page 19 in a book called [4]'Abdu'l-Bahá in London. It was written in 1911. It's a spiritual quotation but I think we can use it at the end of the report to drive our points home:

The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers.

In the days of old an instinct for warfare was developed in the struggle with wild animals; this is no longer necessary; nay, rather, co-operation and mutual understanding are seen to produce the greatest welfare of mankind. Enmity is now the result of prejudice only.

---

*They went to Miriam's home, finished the report, and sent an email copy to their teacher...  
They got an A...*

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3. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/7836596.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7836596.stm)
4. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/abdul-baha-in-london.doc>
5. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
6. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

Robert Goldman (2009-01-21 15:09:32)  
I'm Israeli;-)

amzolt (2009-01-21 16:18:05)

Awesome, Robert! Would love more extensive comments from you on any of my Gaza posts:  
<http://amzoltai.wordpress.com/2009/01/13/posts-about-the-gaza-conflict/>

Robert Goldman (2009-01-21 05:23:54)

while watching vids of the flattening of the uni in Gaza. I wondered why there were so many secondary explosions. not the typical gas line or electric stuff but large amounts of explosives..... such a place of learning to have rocket fuel stored in the lab?

amzolt (2009-01-21 06:00:55)

Robert, I think that's why Rebecca asked Hamid to find some quotes by Israelis.....

rainforestrobin (2009-01-22 19:11:20)

Dear Alex, this thoughtful post brought tears to my eyes. I so value your desire to know, see and be aware of what is taking place in other parts of the world. I value your concerned and caring heart. We who live so far removed from this nightmare-destruction often forget what so much of the pain the world is going through. I hear people say here in the USA (especially in my area) how they want to focus on the positive and reading things like this only drags them down. For me that implies a victim mind set. I feel there is a distinction here: I can understand that it does no one any good that they take in so much negative "news" that they dive into immobilizing depression. Which I saw in someone I knew; they watched the nightly "news"....and then complained about the state of the world, stayed up all night horrified, crying and in shock...and then did nothing about it. First off, watching the news 7 days a week for hours on end doesn't necessarily give us a realistic idea of what is happening in the world. Nor does it necessarily do us any good...or the world any good. Moreover, neither does the other extreme of burying our heads in new-age woo woo and saying, we just have to chant ommmmm, focus on the positive and we will change the world. In other words using that as way to shut out what is going on in the world. There is a middle ground.... We can pick all pray, not over load our emotions with the horrors shown on nightly news, AND pick a "cause" that we feel passionately about and "DO" something to help end suffering for our fellow humans. Action, no matter how small (local or far reaching), can help us connect to the world in the most positive way. We also step away from victim-hood and stand in bold proactivism. Hence, we then have positive thinking "in action". As opposed to only using positive thinking to push away realities we don't want to know about. OR as opposed to the other extreme of JUST "watching" news and sinking into depression and complaining about the state of the world....but never doing anything about ANYTHING. As I said it is so easy for many people who live far from such terror, loss, and devastation to REALLY grasp the suffering of innocent people, people who are just like us. It is a luxury to be somewhat (or completely) insulated from real events of the world. We can bury ourselves in our TVs, computers, restaurants, cars, consumerism and never really grasp with out whole bodies what people the world over are going through, children, moms, dads, grandparents with lives as real as my own. Thank you dear Alex for offering me the opportunity to sort through these thoughts. You and Robert over at "In Search of Meaning" have inspired me more than anyone else to put my "positive thinking into ACTION". I have become a global thinker/feeler. I let in what I see, but I do not allow myself the unnecessary "luxury" of wallowing in depression over the world's suffering. Instead I choose to stand strong, get involved, reach out and help where I can. The world needs each of us. Please forgive the length. I can only say you inspired me. Hugs, Robin

amzolt (2009-01-22 19:45:39)

No need, Dear Robin, for forgiveness about the length of your comment—you, in turn, inspire me and my readers... Thanks for casting the image of the "two extremes"—mainstream-media-obsession and "positive-thinking-escape" !!! I'm sure you've noticed that I stay tuned-in to the world—it hurts but I must—then bring the world to others while providing a spiritual perspective (and, at times a spiritual solution...). So, so glad you grace this blog with your presence, feelings, and thoughts.....

Robin Easton (2009-01-22 21:01:51)

Oh Alex, Thank you. You worded in one line what took me a dozens of lines to express. You said: "Thanks for casting the image of the "two extremes"—mainstream-media-obsession and "positive-thinking-escape" !!!" Exactly!!! :) I was finding my way as went. So thank you for letting me do that here and for seeing so clearly where I was headed with it all. Very exciting. Please forgive all my typos. When I get on a roll it comes out so fast that I make more of them. Even when I reread I still miss them as I am wrapped up in the post and resulting thoughts. :) I forgot to mention that I love this line: "The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion." I experience this as my truth. So beautiful. Thank you my friend!!

amzolt (2009-01-22 22:01:54)

Robin, So happy you resonated with that spiritual quote! Typos? The bane of my existence!! ;-)

Robert Goldman (2009-01-23 10:31:55)

Robin Getting involved is the hardest part. as you see on these forums most just sit back and cut and paste, say do this and do that. boycott them. boycott that. etc. it's an adnausim treadmill of posters who really don't have a clue to as what is really going on. Alex is one of the few that actiully asks questions and is willing to hear all sides so that he can actually see for himself . what I would tell you all is to come on over and have a look for yourselves at what is real and what is not.. I'd like you all to see that on a daily basis and even during the war there were Israeli ambulances going into the strip and taking out wounded non combatants, i'd like to show you all that there is a unit in the IDF that is committed to maintaining comms with the regular folks in the strip and during the worst fighting kept those lines open so to help those in need. I'd also like to show you all that no matter what I say there will be those that scream "BULLSHIT" even though I would take them to visit these folks in the Israeli hospitals. OK it's friday and I'm going off track? maybe.. but well here it's very black and white. here we do the dying, here we all bleed.. it's not a story. it's life

### **2.1.11 Hate, Love, and Religion (2009-01-22 23:45)**

[1]More posts on the Gaza situation here...



**Jill & Olivia at the Café**  
*after two months of not seeing each other*

J: So, you signed-up, eh?

O: I became a member, yes...

J: It's a real religion?

O: Yeah, a world religion.

J: I can't imagine you in some organization that tells you what you can and can't do.

O: Well, there are spiritual laws but there's nothing that isn't just good common sense—well, common sense without a materialistic focus—maybe, good spiritual common sense...

J: hmmm... What's the hardest thing about following all those laws?

O: Funny you should ask; well, not funny for you but just yesterday I had my first real spiritual test...

J: Do tell!

O: Well... it was about the situation in Gaza. I was talking to an Israeli and a Palestinian and they both kept referring to each other as monsters and terrorists and I got pretty worked up and almost started an argument but I remembered that I should treat everyone with kindness so I

asked them if they thought any Palestinians and Israelis were good people...

J: Yeah... So?

O: They both got real quiet and then got up and walked off.

J: How was that a test?

O: 'Cause, while they were ranting about how evil the Palestinians and Israelis were, I was getting pretty mad and when I remembered a quote from the Scripture, "...should they be unjust toward you show justice towards them...", I calmed right down and asked about the possibility of good Palestinians and Israelis.

J: I still don't understand the test part...

O: I wanted to slap them for what they'd been saying, pretty war-like for me, but I decided to be fair to them, benefit of the doubt and all, and asked about the possibility of good people on both sides. If I'd slapped them, even with my words, we would have been "at war"; but, maybe what I said will make them think and be more fair to each other...

*Jill and Olivia talked for two more hours and explored some of Olivia's new Scripture...*

Here's what they talked about:

*Spiritual Quote:*

"O ye beloved of the Lord! In this sacred Dispensation, conflict and contention are in no wise permitted. Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace. It is incumbent upon everyone to show the utmost love, rectitude of conduct, straightforwardness and sincere kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, be they friends or strangers. So intense must be the spirit of love and loving kindness, that the stranger may find himself a friend, the enemy a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them. For universality is of God and all limitations earthly. Thus man must strive that his reality may manifest virtues and perfections, the light whereof may shine upon everyone. The light of the sun shineth upon all the world and the merciful showers of Divine Providence fall upon all peoples. The vivifying breeze reviveth every living creature and all beings endued with life obtain their share and portion at His heavenly board. In like manner, the affections and loving kindness of the servants of the One True God must be bountifully and universally extended to all mankind. Regarding this, restrictions and limitations are in no wise permitted.

"Wherefore, O my loving friends! Consort with all the peoples, kindreds and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindness, good-will and friendliness, that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstasy of the grace of Baha [Light, Splendor], that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancor may vanish from the world and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of the world may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you show your fidelity unto them, should they be unjust toward you show justice towards them, should they keep aloof from you attract them to yourselves, should

they show their enmity be friendly towards them, should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls, should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful.”

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Will and Testament, p. 14

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anotherworldcitizen (2009-01-23 03:50:02)

The Gaza situation has been a real life test for me. People so frequently have been willing to bash one or the other side with hateful and warlike rhetoric. I'll be in a situation where the direction of the conversation makes me really uncomfortable and its been hard to try to steer it to a higher realm of discourse in a natural way with grace. I don't want the people talking to think I am judging them or think they are bad or anything. It definitely takes tact and diplomacy.

amzolt (2009-01-23 12:53:27)

Not judging, tact, diplomacy, and grace... Oh, yes! All of them virtues that make us loving humans and enable truly rational interaction with plenty of room for Love!!

## 2.1.12 The Polls ~ Reprise (2009-01-23 21:15)



[1]

You can take these polls without reading the series, *One Common Faith The Story*, but if you'd rather read it first, [2]here it is...

**You can select multiple answers**

[polldaddy poll=1123295]

[polldaddy poll=1123312]

[polldaddy poll=1123347]

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tobeme (2009-01-23 22:57:56)

These were good questions. Of course surveys tend to box you in and limit you to pick pre-selected answers. I have more to say, however I just got a call and have to go. Have a great weekend.

amzolt (2009-01-23 23:34:27)

Thanks for the encouraging comment! There is an "other" fill-in-the-blank on the polls.....

### 2.1.13 Gaza, Israel, and Justice (2009-01-26 01:45)



[1]You can read all our Gaza posts here

#### **Aaron and Julia at the Café**

A: You're totally mad !

J: Why, thank you, sir. It's been said that to be crazy in an insane world is healthy...

A: The world sure is acting insane but a world government? Let's just make the elite class even stronger and all become slaves.

J: I'm not talking about a dictatorial government; more like one that the whole human family elects. Just look at Gaza and Israel and the United States and Egypt and a few others. All those people in all those governments talking about justice and the citizens still suffer. The balance of world powers is off and trying to regain equilibrium by violence or embargoes or political fiat won't ever make the scales come even.

A: Big dreams sweetie but nobody will ever be ethical enough to run a world government and the people won't ever be smart enough to participate in a global election process.

*Aaron and Julia talked for another hour and didn't come to an agreement...*

Outside my imaginary café people are saying very similar things and it's fairly obvious the balance of global power is off-kilter and the citizens of many countries are steaming mad.

Consider the following news items:

**From Al Jazeera:** [2]Fear and trauma in Gaza's schools - An article about the adjustments in Gaza's youthful population

**From Bloomberg:** [3]Americans Sympathetic Toward Israel on Gaza in Poll - Opinion from the other side of the Big Pond

**From The New York Times:** [4]The Bullets in My In-Box - A reporter discusses how he tries to maintain a balance within a highly polarized situation

The Gaza Conflict is just the latest in what seems to be an upward spiral of violent conflict and contention. It seems clear to me that the current systems of governance are not bringing us closer to global, or even local, peace.

What if there could be an organization of human affairs that included all, enslaved none, and truly set the human spirit free?

The Bahá'ís say they're working toward that dream and that their Universal House of Justice (which happens to be in the country of Israel) is the most important human step yet taken to lead to global peace.

By way of introduction to my Spiritual Quote for this post, I'll let a Bahá'í poet have her say:

Look to Haifa, all Israel;  
Look to Israel, Haifa, from Mount Carmel.

Look to Israel, all people;  
Look to all people, Israel, from The Universal House of Justice on the holy mountain.

Look to the House of Justice, all lands and earth;  
Look, lands homeless, hopeless, to the hope of justice in the house of man.

Susan Marie Le Mar, [5]PsalmSpeak

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The physical unification of the planet in our time and the awakening aspirations of the mass of its inhabitants have at last produced the conditions that permit achievement of the ideal, although in a manner far different from that imagined by imperial dreamers of the past. To this effort the

governments of the world have contributed the founding of the United Nations Organization, with all its great blessings, all its regrettable shortcomings.

”Somewhere ahead lie the further great changes that will eventually impel acceptance of the principle of world government itself. The United Nations does not possess such a mandate, nor is there anything in the current discourse of political leaders that seriously envisions so radical a restructuring of the administration of the affairs of the planet. That it will come about in due course Bahá’u’lláh has made unmistakably clear. That yet greater suffering and disillusionment will be required to impel humanity to this great leap forward appears, alas, equally clear. Its establishment will require national governments and other centres of power to surrender to international determination, unconditionally and irreversibly, the full measure of overriding authority implicit in the word ‘government’.

”This is the context in which Bahá’ís must strive to appreciate the unique victory that the Cause won in 1963, and which has consolidated itself over the years since then. A full understanding of its meaning is beyond the reach of the present and perhaps of the next several generations of believers. To the extent that a Bahá’í does grasp it, he or she will hold nothing back in a determination to serve its unfolding purpose.

”The process leading to the election of the Universal House of Justice—made possible by the successful completion of the three initial stages of the Master’s Divine Plan under the leadership of Shoghi Effendi—very likely constituted history’s first global democratic election. Each of the successive elections since then has been carried out by an ever broader and more diverse body of the community’s chosen delegates, a development that has now reached the point that it incontestably represents the will of a cross-section of the entire human race. There is nothing in existence—nothing indeed envisioned by any group of people—that in any way resembles this achievement.

”When one considers, further, the spiritual atmosphere that pervades Bahá’í elections and the principled conduct called for in even their simplest operations, one is humbled by a much greater awareness. In the raising up of the supreme governing institution of our Faith, one is witnessing a striving to the utmost of human capacity to win the good pleasure of God, a united and ardent determination that nothing whatever, in either cultural conditioning or the promptings of personal desire, should be allowed to stain the purity of this ultimate collective act.”

Commissioned by The Universal House of Justice, *Century of Light*, p. 92

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  5. <http://psalmspeak.blogspot.com/2009/01/psalm-21.html>
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- 

#### 2.1.14 Social Media, Youth, and Risk (2009-01-29 02:37)



##### Jeremy and his mom, Susan, in their living-room

J: Whadaya mean, you want my passwords?

S: How old are you?

J: Mom, you know how old I am; you were there at my birth, remember?

S: Yes, dear, I certainly remember but, at your ripe old age of 13, I don't think you have the social wisdom you need to make completely independent decisions on the Internet.

J: You want to censor what I say to my online friends?

S: No, I want to collaborate with you; I want to share your experience and use my experience in the world to help you make safe decisions.

J: You're starting to sound like a politician...

S: Jeremy, I really mean what I'm saying. I trust your judgement as long as you're fully informed. You just haven't lived long enough to know all the traps people can set.

J: So, I can post what I want—you just wanna see it and maybe talk some things over?

S: You got it, sweetie.

J: Well... We can try it out for awhile but, if you start cramping my style, I'm gonna change my passwords.

S: O.K., I hope we don't have to go that far. I'll try to be as fair as I can.

J: Mom, I'm not doing anything wrong, ya know, and what about when I'm chatting...

S: I know you're the most virtuous son in the world, but there're plenty of people with less virtue who can seem to be saints. Your chat activity is something we'll have to have deeper consultation about...

J: Whew! You really are becoming a politician...

Jeremy gave his mother his passwords and Susan learned that she had a very responsible son...

Our imaginary Susan and Jeremy have a rather remarkable relationship but there are parents who treat their children with respect as they try to protect them.

There have been some recent reports published about social media and the risk they may pose for young users.

The one getting most of the attention now is called, [1]Enhancing Child Safety and Online Technologies, and comes out of a group at Harvard.

One of the most interesting findings was:

"With all three types of threats (sexual solicitation, online harassment, and problematic content), some minors are more likely to be at risk than others. Generally speaking, the characteristics of youth who report online victimization are similar to those of youth reporting offline victimization and those who are vulnerable in one online context are often vulnerable in multiple contexts. In the same way, those identified as 'high risk' (i.e., experienced sexual abuse, physical abuse, or parental conflict) were twice as likely to receive online solicitations and a variety of psychosocial factors (such as substance use, sexual aggression, and poor bonds with caregivers) were correlated with online victimization."

The report is heavy with detailed analyses of various technologies to protect youth yet does admit that technology is not the only answer.

An article from Agence France-Presse, [2]Technology alone 'won't assure youth safety on Internet', which references the Harvard study, says:

”Risk for children appears more correlated to his or her ‘psychosocial’ profile than a particular Internet technology platform...”

They go on to identify the sponsors of the Harvard study:

”Task force members included Google, Microsoft, Yahoo, Facebook, MySpace, Symantec and Second Life creator Linden Labs.”

I’m sure you can see some positive as well as negative influences being brought to bear by organizations who have a financial interest in social media. Still, the bottom-line can be a significant pressure to pay attention to bad press, not to mention bad outcomes of online interactions.

An article from The Washington Times, [3]Social networking benefits validated, references a different study that “...looked at more than 5,000 hours of online observation and found that the digital world is creating new opportunities for young people to grapple with social norms, explore interests, develop technical skills and work on new forms of self-expression.”

And, to reconsider the role technologies might play, an Australian study, [4]Developments in Internet Filtering Technologies and Other Measures for Promoting Online Safety, is referenced in an article from ON LINE opinion, [5]Filtering won’t deliver for Aussie kids. They say: “Although it is accepted that children do face some risks online, these risks are more complex than government rhetoric sometimes indicates. Several studies, including the government’s own research, indicate that so-called ‘content risks’—the risks associated with viewing unwanted content—come a distant third to ‘communication risks’ and ‘e-security risks.’” Which to me says that filtering content does nothing to protect youth from potential harmful effects in the actual communicating they do online.

Protecting our younger online citizens is very important but doing it in a way that doesn’t hamper their “style” is at least equally important. It’s been shown that social media is empowering youth to take up Causes and they’re showing a remarkable ability to initiate positive change. [6]The Free Child Project has quite a collection of links that will show the value of not only protecting our kids from predators but also protecting their inalienable right to interact and do their best to use their unquenchable energy to help our suffering ol’ globe...

*Spiritual Quote:*

This quote was directed to Bahá’í youth but you can replace Bahá’í with any other Faith and the quote still maintains its value...

”For any person, whether Bahá’í or not, his youthful years are those in which he will make many decisions which will set the course of his life. In these years he is most likely to choose his life’s work, complete his education, begin to earn his own living, marry, and start to raise his own family. Most important of all, it is during this period that the mind is most questing and that the spiritual values that will guide the person’s future behaviour are adopted. These factors present Bahá’í youth with their greatest opportunities, their greatest challenge, and their greatest tests—opportunities to truly apprehend the Teachings of their Faith and to give them to their contemporaries, challenges to overcome the pressures of the world and to provide leadership for their and succeeding generations, and tests enabling them to exemplify in their lives the high moral standards set forth in the Bahá’í

Writings. Indeed the Guardian wrote of the Bahá'í youth that it is they 'who can contribute so decisively to the virility, the purity, and the driving force of the life of the Bahá'í community, and upon whom must depend the future orientation of its destiny, and the complete unfoldment of the potentialities with which God has endowed it'.

From a letter of The Universal House of Justice to *Bahá'í Youth in every Land*, June 10, 1966

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3. <http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jan/28/social-networking-benefits-validated/>
4. [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_311304](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_311304)
5. <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=8445>
6. [http://www.freechild.org/youth\\_activism\\_2.htm](http://www.freechild.org/youth_activism_2.htm)
7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
8. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Barney (2009-01-29 09:20:44)

This is a great post, Alex. You've tackled a really serious problem in a way that helps us transcend some of the fruitless rhetoric that passes for informed discussion. The quotation from the Universal House of Justice is most apt. Thank you so much for posting this.

anzolt (2009-01-29 12:24:24)

Barney, Your comments are always welcome—refreshing dew for the morning of my online efforts...

frankie Escala (2009-01-29 14:42:17)

Brilliant post. More people need to be aware of the dangers online.

anzolt (2009-01-29 15:47:44)

Yes, frankie, more people really do need to know and then do what matters most—not necessarily tech-solve but moral awareness...

rainforestrobin (2009-01-29 17:00:30)

This is a very important issue. Internet: a huge step beyond just knowing what our kids watch on TV. I had someone comment on one of my social networks and the comment was of concern to me. So I followed the link and it took me to an under aged teen (not yet 18 – age listed in profile) and this person's site was just a blast of darkness, blatant sex, every swear word you could imagine all over the page. And I thought, "Wow, where are his parents? Do they know this is what he is doing, seeing, thinking, etc." I felt sad knowing that

somewhere he fell through the cracks, sad because – at least on the surface – he thinks this is what ALL the world is about....AND that it's cool and normal. I'm not a prude: I've lived too much for that. But it's not about being a prude; it's about the fact that it is NOT what all the world is about. And yet, since many youth are growing up almost solely exposed to this stuff, they THINK it is the world. If no one in their lives intervenes and shows them differently, then it IS the world to them, and it is what they BECOME.

amzolt (2009-01-29 18:07:43)

Dear Robin, Gratifying to read your comment! My concern for the "psychosocial" group of kids the post mentions and that you paint a vivid portrait of has moved me to begin planning a group for middle-schoolers to, in a very fun and engaging way, give them, not "instruction" in morals but, the opportunity to discover the natural virtues that are already latent in their souls.....

stoney (2009-02-03 00:10:11)

Wow - right on! powerful blog. I believe that childhood has become way to complex for our children. The creative opportunities available online need to be balanced with a good game of "kick the can" or "hopscotch" every now and then.

amzolt (2009-02-03 01:19:19)

stoney, You got it straight! Back to the games that involve youth in real life !!!

## 2.2 February

### 2.2.1 The Future = Our Youth (2009-02-01 18:00)



It's sad to contemplate but too many people's attitude toward youth is to keep them "seen but not heard". Anyone who hasn't tried to really listen to a young person won't be able to see any value in encouraging youth to take a prominent role in shaping the future.

In preparation for today's post, I first considered news items that showed programs to help youth increase their social awareness and improve their ability to be productive citizens.

An article from the Tri-County Times in Michigan, [1]Enforcing good behavior of students at school, looked promising but seemed to me to sound too much like the sales training classes I used to attend...

Then, there was the article from the Mercury News , [2]Project helps Los Gatos middle school students thrive. Promising information but only about one school in the United States...

I considered doing rather complete coverage of a program, [3]The Virtues Project (ideas I'm preparing to use in a Junior Youth group in the community I live in), but, blogs being what they are—entities in their own right that can often "decide" what they want and abruptly change the blogger's mind—, I continued surfing and eventually came back to a site that I'd referenced in my [4]previous post: [5]The FreeChild Project.

I began exploring the many links provided on programs that not only let youth be seen but also Heard. One of them led me to a page that [6]"...showcases a collection of organizations that will provide you with a solid introduction to the world of youth leadership and community involvement."

Now I was on to something!!

I ended up on a page from [7]Idealist.Org that showcased the following remarkable kids. They each have founded an organization that provides a valuable social service:

Kristen Thomas, teenager, Alexandra "Alex" Scott, 4 years old, Annie Wignall, 11 years old, Carolyn Rubenstein, 13 years old, Ilana Rothbein, 17 years old, Cody Clark, 12 years old, Craig Kielburger, 12 years old, Emily Douglas, 9 years old, Melissa Poe, 9 years old, Mischa Zimmermann, 13 years old, Jon Wagner-Holtz, 11 years old, Janine Licare Andrews and Aislin Livingstone, 9 years old and 7 years old, Ryan Hreljac, 6 years old, Joel Holland, 15 years old, Richard Ludlow, 17 years old, Matthew Cortland and Tina Liu, 18 and 17 years old, Jennifer Corriero and Michael Furdyk, 19 and 17 years old, Brynn MacDonald, Jason Crowe, Nadia Campbell, 18 years old, Jennifer Staple, 18 years old, Kimmie Weeks, Teenager, Ocean Robbins and Ryan Eliason, 16 and 19 years old, Lindsay and Brittany Logsdon

"Seen but not Heard?" Heavens forbid!

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The cause of universal education deserves the utmost support, for no nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens. Such an education should promote the consciousness of both the oneness of humanity and the integral connection between humankind and the world of nature. By nurturing a sense of world citizenship, education can prepare the youth of the world for the organic changes in the structure of society which the principle of oneness implies.

Bahá'í International Community, 1992 June 06, *Earth Charter*

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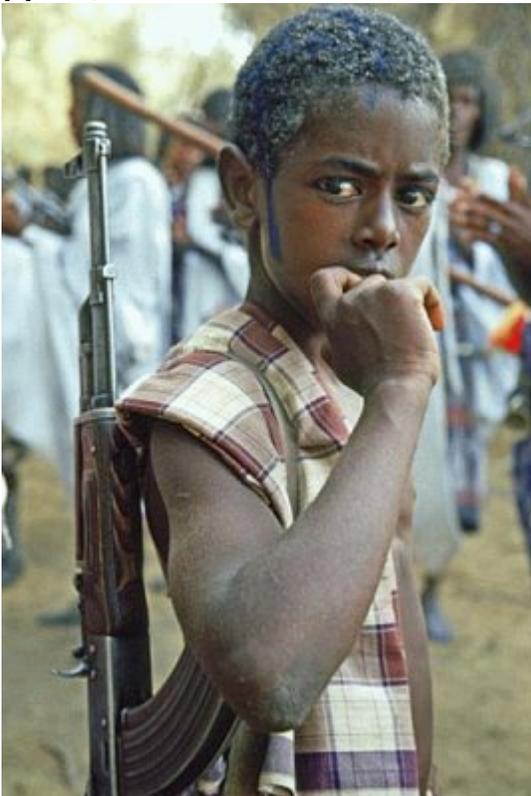
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1. <http://www.tctimes.com/articles/2009/02/01/education/doc498375474af68985610308.txt>
2. [http://www.mercurynews.com/valley/ci\\_11584127?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.mercurynews.com/valley/ci_11584127?nclick_check=1)
3. <http://www.virtuesproject.com/media.html>
4. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/01/29/social-media-youth-and-risk/>
5. [http://www.freechild.org/youth\\_activism\\_2.htm](http://www.freechild.org/youth_activism_2.htm)
6. <http://www.idealists.org/kt/activism.html>
7. <http://www.idealists.org/kt/youthorgs.html>
8. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
9. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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## 2.2.2 Child Soldiers (2009-02-04 01:32)

[1]Image Credit



Imagine a child deciding to join an army because it's the only choice that will assure food every day...

Imagine a male child being abducted to fight a war or a female child being abducted to be a  
600

sex slave for the male child-soldiers...

Now, Imagine more than 300,000 such children...

This is an extremely sobering fact about our human family.

In 1959, 50 years ago, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations published a [2]Declaration of the Rights of the Child and yet, today, we can read in a report from the [3]U. S. Department of State:

"Some children have been forced to commit atrocities against their families and communities. Child soldiers are often killed or wounded, with survivors often suffering multiple traumas and psychological scarring. Their personal development is often irreparably damaged. Returning child soldiers are often rejected by their home communities."

Imagine a country in which [4]"...shooting video, owning a video, speaking in a video, sharing a video, or even shouting out in glee after watching television, can earn you years in jail."

That country is Burma...

Imagine a web site that uses video to not only bring international crimes to the public's attention but is noted for having its videos become central to the arrest of a warlord in Africa that is alleged to have used child soldiers in his conflicts.

That site is [5]The Hub, "The global platform for human rights media and action: See It - Film It - Change It."

The warlord is Thomas Lubanga Dyilo and his trial is the first for the [6]International Criminal Court, "... the first permanent, treaty based, international criminal court established to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community."

Often, in my scanning the news for current issues and crises of our global human family, I'm totally devastated by what I find...

This is one of those occasions.....

All I can add to this report is:

*A Spiritual Quote:*

"O Thou kind Lord! These lovely children are the handiwork of the fingers of Thy might and the wondrous signs of Thy greatness. O God! Protect these children, graciously assist them to be educated and enable them to render service to the world of humanity. O God! These children are pearls, cause them to be nurtured within the shell of Thy loving-kindness.

"Thou art the Bountiful, the All-Loving."

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Compilations, *Baha'i Prayers*, p. 34

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1. <http://www.soschildrensvillages.org.uk/sponsor-a-child/africa-child-sponsorship/sudan.htm>

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7. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

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Alexys Fairfield (2009-02-04 02:47:31)

Hi Alex, Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I had no idea - no idea from what I see on the local news. It IS sobering to think that those children don't have a choice to be children in their environment. It makes me think how fortunate we are in this country, but it still doesn't change the fact that children in other countries can't grow up and experience the joy of living.

amzolt (2009-02-04 02:50:16)

Alexys, Your supreme sensitivity to Love and Unity would stand you in good stead to share this information...

Robin Easton (2009-02-05 23:29:12)

Dear Alex, I have watched documentaries on this issue and wept. One of the films interviewed some of the children, of the children's own desire to speak out and shed burdens, all the kids were in shock. Anyway, I thought a couple of things. I looked around to see where I could possibly help, even in a small way. And then I thought how it is crucial for people in countries that are radiatively free of strife, war, torture, starvation, etc. to "get their act together" and appreciate what they do have, start simplifying their lives and sharing their resources with those who have less. I am ashamed at the consumerism here in America and the money spent just to have a brand new SUV that is HUGE, gas guzzling, and only driven in the city. What is the point? And the endless need for more clothes, more new nick knacks and things and more things just to feed an addiction while millions starve. And the food I see thrown out in restaurants would feed the world. I am NOT saying that we have to suffer because others are suffering. No, I don't believe that, but there is SO MUCH we could use more wisely and share. We rarely need as much as we think we do. A \$200 dollar blouse could feel so many in developing countries. Alex, I tell you shamelessly that I shop as much as I can at secondhand stores. People I know are too "embarrassed" to do so. What they may not

realize is that it recycles, gives jobs to people who can't work except through an org like Goodwill, AND the money is used to help those in need. It's a win win situation all around. There is so MUCH change that we can do right here at home that would affect the whole world. I see spouses fighting over the most ridiculous petty things when people in the world are suffering like these kids. We humans can lose site and become seriously myopic. Parents have enormous power to start educating their children from a very young age, educating them to share and care for others. Children are amazing when they really see another person suffering. They WANT to end the pain by helping, sharing, etc. And yes, we must also pray. Always my friend.

benafia (2009-02-05 23:40:17)

We cannot know what we are not being exposed to. The seemingly alienate perspective in the major media, suffers from its own denial of connection, while worshiping competitive sale strategies for survival as the bottom line of interest. Much abuse of our fellow beings occurs because of our willing or not, ignorance. Thanks for bringing the issues up that you do here. Anyone who does lose their childhood before they are grown into adults, should be thought of; That in some small measure, love and our union in compassion will allow some common space for inquisitive joy to return to their life. Thanks again for your blog.

amzolt (2009-02-05 23:42:42)

My dear friend, Robin, Second-hand shopping is actually a creative form of being a responsible citizen. There are not just less expensive items available, but a wider range of types of items than most other single stores sell—a treasure trove of multiple kinds of stuff! The ideas of being sensitive to and responsible about our whole human family are definitely heard by me! In any family, what hurts one member hurts all members—would that people could see that much of their stress comes from the imbalances in our human family—imagine starving just one member of your biological family; the stress would certainly affect everyone—it's exactly the same in our global family; most of us just chose to not attribute the stressors appropriately... Children and Education should be the WatchWords of our Time!!! If our children are educated in ways that support and empower their latent virtues and strengths, they Will work their butts off to end the suffering of others....

amzolt (2009-02-05 23:45:47)

benafia, You make much sense and share much wisdom!! We must share what's wrong with our human family. This is why I scour alternative news sites—to find the injustice and report it....

Robin Easton (2009-02-06 00:06:42)

Dear Alex, I beamed that you "KNOW" the treasure trove of secondhand stores. Aaaaah! We are kindred. :) We are anyway, but now we are really really kindred! Lol! :) Also, I LOVE your analogy of the human family compared to the biological family. When I thought about this and let myself imagine it and FEEL it in my body I could feel the drakness, horror and just plain and simple stress from sitting at the table eating while one memeber of my family was starving. Then I thought about it in relation to our Human Family and how we are all walking around feeling this stress in our bodies and psyches every day. Because I know we are all connected as One. How could we NOT feel it? You have made a powerful comparison here. One that is intensely felt and one that is not easily forgotten. Good for YOU!!! It would be worth writing an entire post around this analogy. I so loved what you wrote here about children. Oh yes! Just so beautiful and true. Another potential and powerful post. Thank you my friend. Robin

anzolt (2009-02-06 00:55:31)

Robin, OK, so the world IS working... My responding to your heartfelt response to my post has let you give me two Powerful themes for posts or series of posts!!!

Jak (2009-02-06 12:59:28)

Thank you for this thorough and useful explanation

rainforestrobin (2009-02-06 20:02:37)

Dear Alex, I chuckled over "OK, so the world IS working..." :) I am SOOOOO pleased that you are going to do a further post on these ideas we talked about. I think it a highly potent analogy. Good for you. I look forward to seeing what you share. Thank you my friend. Wonderful!

anzolt (2009-02-06 20:26:52)

Robin, Thanks for Your Inspiration!!!

### 2.2.3 My Rant About A Rant... (2009-02-06 18:47)



#### **Josh and Marie at the Café:**

M: Been listenin' to Ryder and Baxter on KROQ about Christian Bale?

J: Ah... No.

M: Too awesome! They got this remix of him blasting some guy on the crew of Terminator: Salvation.

J: Remix?

M: Yeah, they took Bale's rant and mixed it with music and it's kinda like a musical ode to the word F \_ \_k !!

J: How... interesting... Gotta go, Marie...

Some people...

Some ideas...

Sometimes I feel like exploding...

So much wrong and some people invest in being more wrong with some crazed idea of social acceptability...

[1]The Movie.

[2]The actor and his story.

[3]The Remix of the Rant. {Caution: liberal use of the word, "F \_ \_k" }

While all this ranting about a rant in an industry that has become a rant of itself is happening, other things are going on that for various perverted reasons are receiving almost no attention. Here's a very sad example:

**[4]More soldiers committed suicide in January  
than killed by Al Qaeda**

*Spiritual Quote:*

"This same force [...capacities to love, to forgive, to create, to dare greatly, to overcome prejudice, to sacrifice for the common good and to discipline the impulses of animal instinct ], that operated with such effect in ages past, remains an inextinguishable feature of human consciousness. Against all odds, and with little in the way of meaningful encouragement, it continues to sustain the struggle for survival of uncounted millions, and to raise up in all lands heroes and saints whose lives are the most persuasive vindication of the principles contained in the scriptures of their respective faiths. As the course of civilization demonstrates, religion is also capable of profoundly influencing the structure of social relationships. Indeed, it would be difficult to think of any fundamental advance in civilization that did not derive its moral thrust from this perennial source. Is it conceivable, then, that passage to the culminating stage in the millennia-long process of the organization of the planet can be accomplished in a spiritual vacuum? If the perverse ideologies let loose on our world during the century

just past contributed nothing else, they demonstrated conclusively that the need cannot be met by alternatives that lie within the power of human invention.”

The Universal House of Justice, 2002 April, *To the World's Religious Leaders*, p. 3

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2. <http://movies.yahoo.com/news/movies.eonline.com/98799->
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTihSJQHt48>
4. [http://www.nydailynews.com/news/us\\_world/2009/02/05/2009-02-05\\_more\\_soldiers\\_committed\\_suicide\\_in\\_janua.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/us_world/2009/02/05/2009-02-05_more_soldiers_committed_suicide_in_janua.html)
5. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
6. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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earthtoholly (2009-02-08 16:26:22)

Hi Alex, Thanks for visiting and commenting... I know, it is very sad that probably more people heard about, and took interest in a silly, sensationalized rant than a sad happening such as with the soldiers. Very sad...

amzolt (2009-02-08 17:13:27)

Holly, And, thank You for visiting here and leaving your sentiments for all to see...

## 2.2.4 Why Can't The "Experts" Fix The Economy ? (2009-02-08 17:08)



Did a quick search of Google News for the words "economic meltdown " and this story jumped out at me:

[1]Women must be included in solving global economic meltdown, UN says  
UN News Centre - Feb 6, 2009 "Governments must give women a key role in making decisions aimed at resolving the current global economic crisis..."

A link at the bottom of that article led to:

[2]Women hold key to breaking out of global food crisis "Not only do women suffer the most from global problems, such as the current crisis arising from the surge in food prices, but they can also contribute the most to its solutions, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro said..."

Together, these articles seem to point toward a solution to multiple global crises that's being avoided: Bottom-up and woman-centric...

I did a search on the word "Davos ", where a privileged group of mostly males recently admitted their inability to see a solution for the global crisis, and I found an op-ed that also pointed toward women:

**From the New York Times:** [3]Mistresses of the Universe "Banks around the world desperately want bailouts of billions of dollars, but they also have another need they're unaware of: women, women and women."

I'll leave it to the people with more stamina than I have to work out the details necessary to

achieve gender equality in the arena of dealing with global crises...

What I can and will do is to consider women, consult with women, and work with women; and, while doing that, stay as open as possible to learning more about sensitivity, intuition, and compassion.

There are Great Problems that have infected our human family and even with Great Solutions being applied we will still see much more unrest and possibly even Great Revolutions before Peace and Tranquility become the Norm:

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=  
=ZkmEs4lRu0o &eurl=http://therealnews.com/t/index.php?option=com\_content &task=view  
&id=31 &Itemid=74 &jumival=3256 &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quotes:*

”Regarding the economic prejudice, it is apparent that whenever the ties between nations become strengthened and the exchange of commodities accelerated, and any economic principle is established in one country, it will ultimately affect the other countries and universal benefits will result. Then why this prejudice?”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith*, p. 288

”Bahá’u’lláh set forth principles of guidance and teaching for economic readjustment. Regulations were revealed by Him which insure the welfare of the commonwealth. As the rich man enjoys his life surrounded by ease and luxuries, so the poor man must likewise have a home and be provided with sustenance and comforts commensurate with his needs. This readjustment of the social economic is of the greatest importance inasmuch as it insures the stability of the world of humanity; and until it is effected, happiness and prosperity are impossible.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í World Faith*, p. 240

”The rich will enjoy the privilege of this new economic condition as well as the poor, for owing to certain provisions and restrictions they will not be able to accumulate so much as to be burdened by its management, while the poor will be relieved from the stress of want and misery. The rich will enjoy his palace, and the poor will have his comfortable cottage.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 132

”Strive, therefore, to create love in the hearts in order that they may become glowing and radiant. When that love is shining, it will permeate other hearts even as this electric light illumines its surroundings. When the love of God is established, everything else will be realized. This is the true foundation of all economics. Reflect upon it. Endeavor to become the cause of the attraction of souls rather than to enforce minds. Manifest true economics to the people. Show what love is, what kindness is, what true severance is and generosity. This is the important thing for you to do. Act in accordance with the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh.... Now is the time for you to live in accordance with His words. Let your deeds be the real translation of their meaning. Economic questions will not attract hearts. The love of God alone will attract them. Economic questions are most interesting; but the power which moves, controls and attracts the hearts of men is the love of God.”

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3. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/08/opinion/08kristof.html?em>
4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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On Blogs By Baha'is: A sweet tsunami of new postings | Baha'i Views (2009-02-09 06:39:49)

[...] <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/02/08/why-cant-the-experts-fix-the-economy/> I ended the previous post wondering what it is like to experience my soul. I hinted that there is something about our inner experience, something with which we are all very familiar, which might just be the end of a piece of string that is tied to our soul, the experience of soul in consciousness if you like. [...]

Wilma (2009-02-10 03:45:18)

Expert think at the level the problem is created. If they could take some time out, they might eventually find what Einstein found out; you cannot solve a problem at the level it is created. Time out, accessing love from within, maybe that will help teh experts.

amzolt (2009-02-10 04:06:50)

Pure Wisdom, Wilma !!!

Tomas (2009-02-11 08:08:31)

Thank you for the post. I am rewriting your words (Let your deeds be the real translation of their meaning. Economic questions will not attract hearts. The love of God alone will attract them. Economic questions are most interesting; but the power which moves, controls and attracts the hearts of men is the love of God.) to my diary now. Though my personal deeds can't heal the global economic, yet the love of God gifts the balance of mind to me and helps to accept the reality we are facing now. That makes me feel myself responsible for what I am doing in the concrete. In other words, your post (all your posts) awoke me - helped to see my <http://artmirror.blogspot.com/> in the new light. Thank you for that challenge.

amzolt (2009-02-11 14:59:46)

Tomas, Your praise of my post is welcomed; yet, when I compare my feeble efforts with words to your matchless creation with images, you are the true Artist !

## 2.2.5 Our Human Family ~ Unity In Diversity (2009-02-11 18:10)



First, a few news items about our Human Family:

**From the Washington Times:** [1]Film casts a chill on family's future "Already, 90 countries or localities have subpar fertility rates (i.e., below the 2.1 children per woman replacement level), according to the CIA's World Factbook. Thirty-six have rates less than 1.5."

**From Business World:** [2]The free market and morality "...the economic inequality between the north and the south had become more and more an inner threat to the cohesion of the human family, 'a danger that was no less real than that proceeding from the weapons arsenals with which the East and the West oppose one another'."

**From the Guardsman:** [3]Inauguration 2009: 'Remaking America' "We need to recognize that the human family isn't about differences or trying to make everyone be the same, but about just trying again to be more positive. "

**From the Mindanao Examiner:** [4]Inter-generational by Fr Roy Cimagala "We cannot help but deepen our respective generational specializations of interest, in all their social and cultural varieties. I suppose this is how things go. We even have to foster the legitimate differences. But we need to learn how to form one organic whole, since in the end we all are one human family."

If the photo that leads this post "offended" you or made you "uncomfortable" you have a long road to travel toward the realization that our Human Family truly is an organic whole.

This single realization—the Oneness of Humanity—is the golden key to the resolution of all our global ills. Trace the causes of any of the increasingly menacing crises in our world and you will find one or another form of prejudice by one part of the human family against another part of that same family.

Who would willingly sit down at their family meal and forcibly restrain their children from eating the food, over time watching them starve to death?

This is happening in our global family...

Who would go out and earn a lucrative livelihood then come home and refuse to spend any of that money on certain members of their family?

This is happening in our global family...

Who would bring a dangerous means of producing energy into their home, placing it in an area where they never go but other members of the family must go?

This is happening in our global family...

Who would have children then make sure they receive no education?

This is happening in our global family...

I could go on with examples that seem horrific when considering a single family yet are not being sufficiently protested against or dealt with (even being hidden) by the most affluent members of our Human Family; but, I won't go on to construct a laundry list of ills—I'll instead utter a cry for a thorough washing of the Laundry...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...when this human body-politic reaches a state of absolute unity, the effulgence of the eternal Sun will make its fullest light and heat manifest. Therefore we must not make distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived. Our duty lies in educating souls so that the Sun of the bestowals of God shall become resplendent in them, and this is possible through the power of the oneness of humanity. The more love is expressed among mankind and the stronger the power of unity, the greater will be this reflection and revelation, for the greatest bestowal of God is love. Love is the source of all the bestowals of God. Until love takes possession of the heart no other divine bounty can be revealed in it."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 218

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5. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
6. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Marley (2009-02-13 16:35:53)

I love this picture! It filled my heart.

amzolt (2009-02-13 16:41:00)

Marley, Yes ! And, of all things, I went to the database of free pics I use, entered the word family, and didn't expect much beyond the Western/White variety.....

Liara Covert (2009-02-14 14:46:20)

That Elizabeth Gilbert video about creative genius you sent me is truly sensational. This article reminds us that we each have a life's work that we are individually and also collectively accepting and working through. Artistry does not always have to lead to anguish. We each create a psychological construct to protect us from emotional risks. And yet, when people choose not to feel, they forget to live. A person can choose to feel and release what does not serve them. This article about the future of the family inspires reflection. Each person creates a sense of family with genetic family and friends who are sometimes considered the family we choose for ourselves. How we think about family shapes who we are. All ideas come from inside.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-14 15:15:44)

Dear Liara, Thank you for your perceptive and compassionate comment! I'm including the link to that video so other readers can profit from it: [http://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth\\_gilbert\\_on\\_genius.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_gilbert_on_genius.html)  
Love your sentiments about "Family"...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-28 23:05:16)

Thanks you for the encouraging comment!! You may want to look for "Translate this blog" on the right, next to the blue "Free Box"!!!

RaiulBaztepo (2009-03-28 22:59:36)

Hello! Very Interesting post! Thank you for such interesting resource! PS: Sorry for my bad english, I've just started to learn this language ;) See you! Your, Raiul Baztepo

PiterKokoniz (2009-04-07 23:27:12)

Hi !! :) My name is Piter Kokoniz. Just want to tell, that I like your blog very much! And want to ask you: will you continue to post in this blog in future? Sorry for my bad english:) Thank you! Piter Kokoniz, from Latvia

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-08 01:59:19)

Yes! I will continue posting to this blog regularly!!

## 2.2.6 Repression . . . (2009-02-14 14:47)



These are dangerous people?

...a developmental psychologist.  
...a once-successful factory owner.  
...an industrialist.  
...an agricultural engineer.  
...a teacher and school principal.  
...a former social worker.  
...an optometrist.

What do they have in common?

They're members of the same Faith, they've been in prison for many months, and they're going to trial next week with no access to legal counsel.

The charges?

"...espionage for Israel, insulting religious sanctities, and propaganda against the Islamic republic".

What country is this occurring in?

Iran.

Statements by U.S. Government and NGOs

[1]State Department condemns Iranian government's charges against Baha'is  
February 13, 2009

[2]USCIRF calls for justice for Baha'i prisoners in Iran  
Statement from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

[3]Congressional Record - February 11, 2009

Representative Frank R. Wolf expressed concern over the upcoming trial of the seven Baha'i leaders

[4]Amnesty International Urgent Action

Amnesty International has launched an urgent action update exclusively devoted to the latest news about the Baha'i leaders in Iran.

[5]Institute condemns charges and upcoming trial against the Baha'i leaders in Iran  
The Institute for Religion and Public Policy issued this statement on February 12, 2009

[6]Baha'i "Spying" Case Strikes New Blow Against Religious Freedom in Iran  
Freedom House strongly condemns the Iranian government's decision to try 7 Baha'is next week  
Media Coverage  
February 12, 2009

[7]World Briefing - Middle East - Iran - 7 Bahais to Face Trial  
The New York Times

[8]Baha'i Leaders In Iran Charged With Spying For Israel  
RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, Czech Republic

[9]Iran Announces Trial of Baha'i Leadership  
7thSpace Interactive

[10]Baha'i Leaders In Iran Charged With Spying For Israel  
Payvand, Iran  
February 11, 2009[11]

Iran to try Bahais for spying for Israel  
Agence France Presse - AFP

[12]Iran charges 7 members of Baha'i faith with spying for Israel  
Ha'aretz, Israel

[13]Iran vows to try 7 Baha'i leaders as spies  
Times Colonist, Canada

[14]Obama's Two Iran Tests  
Michael Rubin in the corner of The National Review Online

[15]Iran to try Bahais for spying for Israel  
Human Rights Tribune, Switzerland

[16]Iran to try seven Baha'is for "spying" for Israel  
IranVNC, DC

[17]The official response from the  
Bahá'í International Community

Religious Freedom? Human Rights? Equity and Justice?  
All these will be on trial with these seven persecuted people . . .

*Spiritual Quote:*

### **Statement to the forty-fourth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights**

Agenda item 23: Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief

Geneva, Switzerland

17 February 1988

"All religions teach that we should love one another; that we should seek out our own shortcomings before we presume to condemn the faults of others; that we must not consider ourselves superior to our neighbors."

If all people were to follow these norms, as described in the passage we have just quoted from the Bahá'í writings, religious intolerance would cease to be a blot on human affairs. The ideals of the 1981 Declaration would become a reality for the suffering victims of religious persecution.

The Bahá'í International Community believes that binding international norms protecting human rights are of great importance. We are therefore following with great interest the recent discussions in the Sub-Commission and the Commission on the possible elaboration of a binding international instrument dealing with freedom of religion or belief, inspired by the recommendations contained in Mrs. Odio Benito's excellent study. We are convinced, however, that in this delicate process it is important not to lose sight of the standards already spelled out in the 1981 Declaration. As the Commission's Special Rapporteur, Dr. Ribeiro, indicated in his report presented last year, these standards can be understood as moral guidelines to those states which voted in favor of the Declaration in 1981.

We also believe that it is useful to focus attention on contemporary manifestations of religious intolerance. We have therefore studied with interest Dr. Ribeiro's latest report, hope that his mandate will once again be renewed by the Commission, and wish to underline the importance of forging a broad and non-partisan consensus on the elimination of religious intolerance.

While Dr. Ribeiro has chosen to focus on allegations of violations of religious freedom in seven countries, it is important to bear in mind that many countries suffer from the pernicious influence of religious intolerance. Efforts to implement the 1981 Declaration, and to formulate an eventual convention, must be guided by an appreciation for the universal nature of the problem.

In the Bahá'í view, a crucial means for implementing the 1981 Declaration is the development of tolerance among individuals and the abolition of religious exclusivity and fanaticism. Dr. Ribeiro has rightly pointed out that intransigent attitudes, the claim of religious believers to an absolute and exclusive hold on truth, and the denial of the right of everyone to be different are root causes of religious discrimination.

Indeed, human beings have a tendency to view their own beliefs as right, and all others as wrong. They have, we suggest, erroneously interpreted the tenets of their own faiths as advocating such exclusivity, and sometimes as giving them the right to persecute others under the banner of upholding their version of truth. The Bahá'í writings admonish humankind to abandon such intolerant attitudes and replace them with mutual respect and forbearance.

How can religious dogmatism be banished from human minds and hearts? In the first place, we believe that all the world's major religions have proceeded from the same Source, worshipped alike by Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jew and Moslem, as well as members of other religions. The core teachings of every religion—for example, the teaching to love one's neighbor—are essentially the same, and we submit that they reflect one universal truth.

Understanding of this point will enable each individual, whatever his or her religion, to view other religions with due respect. This perspective fosters tolerance among people of various beliefs, despite the differences that may exist in their outward religious practices. For this reason, we welcome Dr. Ribeiro's suggestion that interreligious dialogue should be fostered and that such

discussions should aim at "emphasizing the similarities among various religions and beliefs rather than their differences."

While believing, as part of our faith, that all the great religions are united in the fundamental principles that they espouse, the Bahá'í writings advocate the moral obligation of everyone to search for truth independently. Religions and beliefs must never be forced on people. Instead, the Bahá'í writings indicate that each individual should utilize his own powers of intellect, reason and spirit to search for truth.

The principle of independent search after truth can help to heal the wounds inflicted by intolerance in at least two important ways. On the one hand, it induces each individual to act humbly towards others, instead of with an air of superiority, and to respect their right to choose beliefs of their own as a result of their own quest for truth.

On the other hand, we believe that, if people are permitted to question the dogmas handed down over generations, and to seek truth using their own faculties of perception, they will develop a genuine appreciation for religious tolerance.

We therefore welcome initiatives designed to increase respect for different beliefs and understanding among religions. This is why, for example, the Bahá'í International Community has actively participated, along with other non-governmental organizations, in making plans for a Second International Conference on Tolerance for Diversity of Religion or Belief, scheduled to be held in Warsaw, Poland in 1989.

Bahá'í International Community, 1987 Mar 03, *Eliminating Religious Intolerance*

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bwerner (2009-02-15 08:25:45)

Hi, in history religion was always the cause of division between humans, religion is an ideology, that is a way of seeing and perceiving things. Since humans will not be aware of the universality of spirituality they will never be in peace with their neighbours.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-15 11:12:30)

bwerner, I agree that history shows division of human against human on religious grounds but I have more hope for the future—when we can see that the "spirituality" behind all true "religions" is in truth the Same, religious violence will cease...

Bob (2009-02-15 18:28:05)

We can and should build millions of elementary schools all over the earth and insure that every child receives at least an elementary education. These schools should teach a universal language so that everyone can understand and communicate with each other. Religions is an inherent attribute of human nature and should be taught in all the world's schools. A text book would include chapters about all the world's religions, written from the perspective of each religion. UNESCO would be the most appropriate organization to execute such an international teaching program. Thanks Bob

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-15 19:00:08)

Bob, Pure Wisdom !!!

Liara Covert (2009-02-15 21:21:30)

Danger is a perception. As you grow in consciousness, you move beyond self-created limitation.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-15 22:20:21)

Liara, Might I offer the opinion that not all perceptions are "self-created limitations"...

Liara Covert (2009-02-15 23:14:31)

The ego guards against anything that does not preserve its own self-delusion. That is, anger or any other emotional defense make sense to ego. If a person experiences the desire to defend a position, then its useful to do nothing. To step back and notice internal impulses is to notice you are not diminished, but expanded in non-reaction. When you do not opt to strengthen a personal position, you no longer identify with form or self-image. True power lies beyond form. If you do not choose to react, you echo the Tao Te Ching which

teaches how a being is restored to wholeness.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-15 23:29:38)

Liara, Could you explain in more detail how your comment explains why perceptions are, in your estimation, always self-limiting—if that is what the current comment is intended to do.....?

Liara Covert (2009-02-16 16:29:58)

One dictionary defines perception as a means to apprehend information based on your senses and impressions of the mind. As the human mind interprets experiences based on what you have seen, been told or experienced, then your mind anticipates based on what it has perceived, on what it believes it is perceiving or what has been described as having been perceived. This is a sample comfort zone. The concept of danger is something each person understands based on what he has seen, heard, experienced or imagined in some other way. One perspective is that the mind creates a mental image of danger limited by such parameters. In such a case, only the process of peeling away the layers of created detail would you arrive at the formless state of nothingness where danger does not exist.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-16 16:48:47)

Liara, Thanks for that more detailed explanation of your reasoning...

The World Is Watching&#8230; &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-23 20:49:49)  
[...] Repression [...]

## 2.2.7 Religious Persecution (2009-02-17 00:02)



[1]Our last post brought attention to the plight of seven

Bahá'ís in Iran—arrested and held for eight months with no access to legal counsel and scheduled for trial this week on charges of “...espionage for Israel, insulting religious sanctities, and propaganda against the Islamic republic”.

Similarly baseless charges are being leveled against [2]Christians, [3]Jews, [4]Sufis, and many others.

There has been global and swift reaction to this gross example of religious persecution of the Bahá'ís from [5]governments, [6]groups, and [7]individuals.

From a Resolution of the U.S. Congress to strong individual coverage of the situation, people are rallying to aid their fellow humans.

One reason the Bahá'ís are deeply troubled about their incarcerated Friends is a hauntingly similar situation in 1983 when a girl of 16 named, Mona, was hanged with nine other young women—just for being Bahá'ís...



Mona

**Would that we All could help in some way to end All  
religious persecution...**

*Spiritual Quote:*

Legislation can and does suppress both acts of religious persecution and the attitude of religious intolerance itself. As Mr. Arcot Krishnaswami indicates in his Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Religious Rights and Practices , "Individuals are inclined to consider wrong what the law prohibits, and right what it enjoins them to do" (p. 63). However, to eradicate religious intolerance at its root, legislation must be supported by education, beginning in primary school.

"Schools must first train the children in the principles of religion," says Bahá'u'lláh, "so that the promise and the threat, recorded in the Books of God, may prevent them from the things forbidden and adorn them with the mantle of the commandments; but this in such a measure that it may not injure the children by resulting in ignorant fanaticism and bigotry" (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh , 68). Religious education should teach children to manifest the nobility with which they were endowed by a loving God. It should encourage them to cultivate in their own character such divine attributes as compassion, tolerance, justice, righteousness, loyalty, truthfulness, wisdom, and humility. Children

who learn to see in all religions the signs of the one Creator, will consider all religions part of a common human heritage, worthy not only of respect but of careful study.

The study of the history and culture, if based on the premise of the oneness of humanity, should lead to a growing appreciation of the diverse religious traditions. This appreciation will be strengthened by interaction with people of different faiths, if the purpose is to promote unity. An everyday familiarity with people of different backgrounds will help each individual to lift the veil of cultural difference and see beneath it the shared humanity of all the peoples of the world. "O people! consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship," Bahá'u'lláh commands His followers (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh , 22). "Consorting with people hath promoted and will continue to promote unity and concord" (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh , 36).

Bahá'í International Community, 1995 Jan 10, *Promoting Religious Tolerance*

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8. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
9. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Bob (2009-02-18 18:56:30)

UNESCO can help build millions of elementary schools all over the earth. We can show every child a picture of earth taken from space in the context of a conversation about share this tiny, fragile biosphere, floating around in a vast empty space and violent forces. A religious text book will include chapters about each the major religions, written from the perspective of each religion. Religion is an inherent attribute of human nature. Not teaching children the truth about religion, is equivalent to not teaching them the truth about human nature. Allah'u'Abha

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-18 19:02:56)

Bob, "Not teaching children the truth about religion, is equivalent to not teaching them the truth about human nature." Clear Wisdom and Wonderfully Unique Way to Say it !!

Angellaa (2009-02-24 13:09:27)

Hmm, very cognitive post. Is this theme good enough for the Digg?

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-24 13:59:19)

angellaa, Hmm... I don't think I'm the one to make that judgement. Wish I could read your blog... Is that Russian?

## 2.2.8 We Are One ~ "Ya Gotta Be Kiddin'!" (2009-02-19 21:02)



Actually, I'm not kidding. We have always been One.

Sure doesn't seem like it though, right?

Consider this example:

Any given human being is One individual. That human being has many aspects and functions that compose their Oneness. Often, one or more of those aspects or functions starts to veer out of balance with the other functions and the One human has a Conflict; even to the point that they feel like more than One person—multiple entities fighting for control...

That's a perfect picture of our Human Oneness—at war with itself, aspects and functions of the Whole fighting and disrupting the Balance.

One Person/One World: Sick and Disrupted, the Parts bringing down the Whole, Suicidal...

I, however, firmly believe that humanity's Oneness will be healed; in fact, I can say it's inevitable!

Consider:

Humans began as small family and tribal units and learned the evolutionary lessons of how to live as One.

We then formed city-states and, eventually, nations. Those human structures have gone through an evolutionary growth that has given each of us an identity as members of rather large Wholes.

Why should human evolution stop here, no matter the crises and sicknesses that infect the Whole?

Who but a doomed pessimist would look into the future and see us reduced back to separate, small tribes or totally wiped out?

Historically, as each phase of transition in the organization of humanity approached, things began to look bad, people cried out a warning that humanity was doomed and... We're still here.

Almost makes one think there's a greater Plan; that a higher power actually wants us to achieve Global Unity and express our inherent Oneness in peace and tranquility...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Let there be no mistake. The principle of the Oneness of Mankind—the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve—is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope. Its appeal is not to be merely identified with a reawakening of the spirit of brotherhood and good-will among men, nor does it aim solely at the fostering of harmonious cooperation among individual peoples and nations. Its implications are deeper, its claims greater than any which the Prophets of old were allowed to advance. Its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family. It does not constitute merely the enunciation of an ideal, but stands inseparably associated with an institution adequate to embody its truth, demonstrate its validity, and perpetuate its influence. It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced. It constitutes a challenge, at once bold and universal, to outworn shibboleths of national creeds—creeds that have had their day and which must, in the ordinary course of events as shaped and controlled by Providence, give way to a new gospel, fundamentally different from, and infinitely superior to, what the world has already conceived. It calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world—a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units.

"It represents the consummation of human evolution —an evolution that has had its earliest beginnings in the birth of family life, its subsequent development in the achievement of tribal soli-

clarity, leading in turn to the constitution of the city-state, and expanding later into the institution of independent and sovereign nations.

"The principle of the Oneness of Mankind, as proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, carries with it no more and no less than a solemn assertion that attainment to this final stage in this stupendous evolution is not only necessary but inevitable, that its realization is fast approaching, and that nothing short of a power that is born of God can succeed in establishing it."

Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 42

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rainforestrobin (2009-02-20 16:11:11)

Hi dear Alex, I believe that we are all one. And not just humans but all creatures, plants, rocks, stars, everything that exists is ONE. I am experiencing this ONE-ness intensely in the last two years. Where I am really aware of the fact that everything I do or don't do effects the ONE. It's a bit like if we throw a pebble into a pond the ripples don't stop two inches from where the pebble hit the water, they keep going out and out. OR it reminds me of LIGHT. When we were kids and we took flashlights out and used them to point at stars while we looked for certain constellations, my Dad would say, "Do you realize that the light never stops? It will keep going until it hits something and even then it will bounce off the object and keep going." So every action (or inaction) that do either consciously or unconsciously effects the whole. It is quite an amazing thing to feel this fully in my body. It is both grand and painful. It is both a overwhelming sense of love being connected to my fellow humans the world over, and it is also a sense of deep pain to feel their suffering. Which goes back to our talk last time where you said if one family member is starving or suffering it makes it very hard for me to eat and not share. I have to help my global brothers and sisters in whatever way I can. I too believe that we are currently in the midst of a great planetary energy shift. I see it everywhere in people as they awaken, care deeply and want to help. The media might not tell us this but one to one I see it EVERY single day. There is an upsurging or uplifting energy on the planet right now that is requiring people to rise up out of lethargy. I know many would argue this as there is SO much pain and suffering in the world right now, but nonetheless I still feel this a shift toward unity and oneness. Thank you my friend. Hugs, Robin

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-20 16:20:00)

Robin, Thanks for bringing up "all our relations"—reminded me of a sweat lodge experience I had! Very encouraging to hear your experience of the upsurge you find in people—my life is a bit reclusive and knowing

what's really happening is really nice!! The pain and suffering in our global family is much like the experience of a woman as she gives birth...

benafia (2009-02-22 02:20:54)

There have always been seemingly odd ideas of union, but hard ones to deny. One I think of now is the assertion that you cannot know what you are not. It is curious to ponder our reflections on this into our emotions. I do find that I tend to be bothered by unresolved issues in myself when I see them in another. And there is the mirror. It is impossible to separate ourselves out of nature. I am energy and matter just like everything else. I must assume consciousness is likewise a part of it all. We look out and in simultaneously it seems. I am excited about the possibilities of connection to the outside world and to others naturally, that in engaging my interest toward the Whole of Life, my home life grows as well. So much is about reaching toward balance, and if out on a limb, to be very careful.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-22 02:35:30)

benafia, Extremely thought-provoking comments!!!

jamesesz (2009-02-23 15:38:17)

Dear Mr Alexander, Thanks for ur feedback on my post! Do u believe in evolution as a scientific theory? Curious..lol.. Bout ur post, I do agree that we are one in a way. However, human beings are not perfect (that is why we need God) and thus whether the oneness can be achieved and sustained remains doubtful. Furthermore, it is my own personal believe that only if u take away free will and choice can u take away all conflict and tendency of working for one's self interest (but is a life without free will worth living?) If history can be used as a guide, I do not think that the oneness u speak of can be achieved in this age. Yet like u, I hope that I am wrong. Urs sincerely, ESZ,James

Bob (2009-02-23 16:35:10)

The human race is coming together. The United Nations is the greatest civilization that has ever existed on earth. The whole world economy is booming, there is more wealth, more widespread, now than ever before in history. I agree we human beings live in harmony with each other and the natural environment. Paraphrasing Abdul Baha: The mineral kingdom has the attribute of attraction(chemistry), the plant kingdom has the attributes of attraction and growth, the animal kingdom has the attributes of attraction, growth, sensation and motion, the human kingdom has all these attributes plus our intellectual and spiritual perception. Science and religion are complimentary aspects of the search for truth. Religion is the divine education, the Kingdom of God. It is the source of our families and our nations. And now it is the source of our universal and divine civilization. Religion is the difference between a wild animal and a civilized human being. Ya Baha'u'l Abha

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-23 16:52:43)

Bob, I deeply appreciate your comment! Could you, though, expand a bit on this part of it: "The whole world economy is booming, there is more wealth, more widespread, now than ever before in history."

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-23 17:45:59)

James, Thanks for that very interesting comment! I do believe in evolution as a scientific theory. I also believe in the evolution of human social behavior and systems as well as the evolution of religion. For a Baha'i, like myself, the concept of religious evolution is called "progressive revelation" which leads to the concept of One Faith of God ever-evolving as humanity continues its development. The critical thing for

this idea to have maximum impact in the world is Education—so many people still believe that the "different" religions can never get along. If more people realized that the core of all the religions is exactly the same Truth, we could end all religious confrontation and conflict...

Bob (2009-02-23 22:01:23)

Alexander I am referring to the fact that since 1844 there has been an unprecedented explosion of prosperity that is spreading all around the earth and throughout human civilization. I realise there are many people suffering in extreme poverty. We need to work together to completely and permanently eliminate that material poverty as quickly as possible. In 1844, horses and camels were the standard form of transportation. Human civilization was almost totally agricultural. Agriculture is the foundation of the human economy, but since 1844 an immense industrial revolution has produced a tremendous amount of material prosperity. Today we fly around in jets, send swarms of robotic probes to explore our solar system, we have the Internet and cell phones. Now, I agree that this material prosperity needs to be matched by our spiritual progress. I believe that is also progressing very well, in spite of all the bad news. Pope John Paul 2 was a great spiritual leader, I love the Dalai Lama. Baha'u'llah has already fulfilled the prophecies of every former religion. He has revealed a new revelation of the Word of God and founded the Kingdom of God. The Universal House of Justice is on Mount Carmel in Israel. Peace be with you. Ya Baha'u'l Abha

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-23 22:05:58)

Bob, Thanks for that clarification!!! I'm sure my other readers will appreciate it!

### 2.2.9 Youth ~ Yes They Can ! (2009-02-21 00:59)



Youth have been mostly overlooked when adults consider solutions for critical problems.

Some typical responses are:

”They don’t have the experience or maturity to deal with major issues.”

”All they care about are watching videos and texting each other.”

”Youth? Their major interest is sex.”

”Help the world? Are you kidding?!”

Well, I happened on a video that shows a group of youth doing what most people consider an adult occupation.

In fact, they’re doing it just as well as the adults.

Mature? Capable? Informed? Organized? Disciplined?

Yes They Are!!!

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amSqQ5XNaGE]

*Spiritual Quote:*

”In spite of the encircling gloom....There are many notable signs of the awakening now in progress. Men and women everywhere, and the youth of both sexes in particular, are devoting their energies to the service of great ideals.

”National service in itself is a training for the reconstruction which must take place in the world...National service is great, but world service is greater.  
Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway* , p. 3

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Robin Easton (2009-02-24 23:03:25)

Hi Dear Alex, This is SUCH an important post. I too know this to be true of our youth. I taught music to kids of all ages and they are AMAZING. If someone sees them, believes in them and encourages them they can do anything. You wouldn't believe the things kids are doing to save the environment. Just because a soul is still in a small body doesn't mean it doesn't see what is important and needed. Kids rise instantly to greatness when seen. I applaud you for writing this. I watched the video also. Amazing story. Thank you for knowing this about our youth. They are so smart, creative, inspiring, dedicated and insightful...given the chance.

Kikolani | Blogging, Poetry, Photography (2009-02-24 23:22:40)

The youth of today are the ones who are going to take care of this earth from now on. Instead of ignoring them, we should be shaping them to do the things that the adults of this generation aren't doing well enough: protecting the environment, caring for the people and living things around them, and so on. I think the youth can be more readily steered in the right direction to begin with easier than adults will change their ways now. Kristi

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-24 23:30:34)

Dear Robin, The music in your videos inspires me and we both know you're still a "kid"... When I was a kid I had the blessing of playing instruments and singing; soul-building experience! Thanks for supporting the intent and truth of this post!!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-24 23:33:39)

Kikolani, Being an adult, I can emphatically state that I wish I'd had more creative encouragement as a youth! Yes, They Are Our Future !!!

Bob (2009-02-25 20:13:40)

Alexander "There are many notable signs of the awakening now in progress." I like the Dalai Lama traveling around the world teaching people about Buddhism. The Millennium Forum and the Millennium Summit and the follow up consultations at the United Nations. The Earth Summit and all the activity in the development of our global civilization. "In spite of the encircling gloom..." The whole world economy is booming. We will eliminate the extremes of wealth and poverty. The present economic difficulties are a wave of progress, purging a lot of corruption and inequality out of our economy. When the economy recovers, and it will, we will have a much more level playing field. What do you think about my blog? <http://9earthling19.blogspot.com/> Is it totally out of line or do you think blending spiritual and economic culture is a good idea for a holistic healing and teaching blog? I am checking into your websites and blogs every once in a while to learn from someone far more experienced at this than me. Allah'u'Abha

Bob (2009-02-25 20:20:53)

Alexander "There are many notable signs of the awakening now in progress." I like the Dalai Lama traveling around the world teaching people about Buddhism. The Millennium Forum and the Millennium Summit and the follow up consultations at the United Nations. The Earth Summit and all the activity in the development of our global civilization. "In spite of the encircling gloom..." The whole world economy is booming. We will eliminate the extremes of wealth and poverty. The present economic difficulties are a wave of progress, purging a lot of corruption and inequality out of our economy. When the economy recovers, and it will, we will have a much more level playing field. Do you think blending spirituality and economic culture is a good idea for a holistic healing and teaching blog? I am investigating your website to learn from

someone far more experienced at this than me. Allah'u'Abha Allah'u'Abha

Alexander Zoltai (2009-02-25 20:28:21)

Bob, "Do you think blending spirituality and economic culture is a good idea for a holistic healing and teaching blog?" I say: Go For It !!!

## 2.2.10 Religion & Human Rights (2009-02-24 23:18)



### Two Prickly Folks At The Café

PF1: "How can you say that? God intended for His servants to worship him through well-trained and devoted ministers—people called to His service and anointed with His power!" PF2: "Bull! You think God cares about the kind of ministers you have? Bigoted, servile automatons is what they are!!" PF1: "Well, I'd rather listen to one of my ministers than one of your so-called 'priests'—just a bunch of puny excuses for real men—

Your humble observer quickly left the Café before a fist-fight broke out...

That imaginary "conversation" isn't all that different from real ones I've heard. People displaying highly irreligious attitudes as they fight like animals over what they claim is the "True Faith". This kind of religious intolerance can quickly lead to actual violence and, if sanctioned by powerful organizations or governments, roll right downhill into flagrant and physical persecution of whole groups of our human family. From the [1]**United States Commission on International Religious Freedom**: Countries of Particular Concern: Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Vietnam Lest someone think that concerning themselves with religious freedom is of low value, remember: losing one freedom erodes the security of other freedoms... International Conventions that need global support: International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 "The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom shall have as its primary responsibility the annual and ongoing review of the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom and the making of policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress with respect to matters involving international religious freedom." Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes the freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship,

observance, practice, and teaching.” From [2]**The Guardian**: ”Religious persecution can never be excused, but its causes can be explained. The haunting fear of hidden, unexpected revolution drives every dictator, sooner or later, to savage attacks on those he fears most and understands least. Dictators who claim dominion over a man’s mind as well as his body, whose regimes are based on tyranny and their people’s ignorance of the outside world, are wont to attack religious leaders, who must, at all costs, be discredited.” *Spiritual Quote*: ”The activity most intimately linked to the consciousness that distinguishes human nature is the individual’s exploration of reality for himself or herself. The freedom to investigate the purpose of existence and to develop the endowments of human nature that make it achievable requires protection. Human beings must be free to know. That such freedom is often abused and such abuse grossly encouraged by features of contemporary society does not detract in any degree from the validity of the impulse itself. ”It is this distinguishing impulse of human consciousness that provides the moral imperative for the enunciation of many of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration and the related Covenants. Universal education, freedom of movement, access to information, and the opportunity to participate in political life are all aspects of its operation that require explicit guarantee by the international community. The same is true of freedom of thought and belief, including religious liberty, along with the right to hold opinions and express these opinions appropriately. ”Since the body of humankind is one and indivisible, each member of the race is born into the world as a trust of the whole. This trusteeship constitutes the moral foundation of most of the other rights – principally economic and social – which the instruments of the United Nations are attempting similarly to define. The security of the family and the home, the ownership of property, and the right to privacy are all implied in such a trusteeship. The obligations on the part of the community extend to the provision of employment, mental and physical health care, social security, fair wages, rest and recreation, and a host of other reasonable expectations on the part of the individual members of society.” Bahá’í International Community, 1995 Mar 03, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, Section II

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2.

[http:](http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/feb/18/religious-persecution-bulgaria-communism-intolerance)

[//www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/feb/18/religious-persecution-bulgaria-communism-intolerance](http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/feb/18/religious-persecution-bulgaria-communism-intolerance)

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David E. Holt (2009-03-01 21:09:31)

Couldn’t agree more! Take away (or give away) one freedom and you open the door for the take away of any or all others. Obviously, the ”freedom” must be such that will not harm or harass those for whom the freedom is objectionable. Here’s a freedom I don’t want to give up or have taken from me! I believe in the

freedom, while in my right mind and well informed, to determine when my own death is to my advantage. Presently, in Florida, I don't have that freedom. I didn't give it away; it was taken away by those who make up our laws concerning such things. As a pastor I've ministered to people in such pain that they've begged for help; help none of us could give. In some cases, their doctors sought to help by providing pain relief (medicine) which took away their pain but left them in vegetative forms. In other cases, food was denied them, leaving them to wither away as they starved. Or, a feeding tube was implanted, leaving the person to linger until infection or something else (like a court case) finally takes them. My own mother and father both lingered in nursing homes for months and months, not knowing anyone, bound to their wheelchairs until their bodies finally wore out and gave them some peace. A number of my friends and acquaintances were in such pain toward the end of their lives that they took drastic means to end their suffering; guns, pills, whatever they could get their hands on. From the time I was a boy we had animals around the house, dogs, and cats. We loved them. Loved them enough to end their suffering by allowing doctors to "put them down." Do we not love each other enough to allow the freedom of well thought out, well planned, escape from what eventually happens anyway? Must we give up that "freedom" for the conscience of others? Must we take away that freedom from others simply because we "can't bear the thought?" Are we so afraid of death that we will do anything to stave it off, even if doing so places great pain and suffering on others? The apostle Paul said: "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Does that sound so horrible? Not to me! David

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-01 22:33:45)

David, The issue you bring up is a difficult one for many people. My own mother was suffering horribly in her last days until the doctors said they could do nothing to stop her internal bleeding—to forestall further suffering they overdosed her on morphine. I don't know if that was "legal"—they could have just said they gave her enough to ease her pain and she died anyway—but my father was consulted about "ending it" by the doctors and he agreed...

## 2.3 March

### 2.3.1 Why should You care? (2009-03-01 00:02)



Why should you care that seven innocent people are languishing in prison in Iran with no access to legal counsel?

Well, even if they were guilty, the lack of access to their lawyer—Shirin Ebadi—is criminal. The image on the left is of Cyrus the Great. The following is from [1]Wikipedia :

On December 10, 2003, in her acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize, Shirin Ebadi evoked Cyrus, saying:

“I am an Iranian, a descendant of Cyrus the Great. This emperor proclaimed at the pinnacle of power 2,500 years ago that he ‘would not reign over the people if they did not wish it.’ He promised not to force any person to change his religion and faith and guaranteed freedom for all. The Charter of Cyrus the Great should be studied in the history of human rights.”

Why should you care if the prime reason for these people’s incarceration is that they hold a belief in the Bahá’í Faith?

Well, jailing someone for their beliefs is an attempt to induce mind control through force.

Nader Saiedi has written a scholarly yet scathing article called [2]Forgetting They Are Human. In that article (which goes into great depth on the psychology of the people who would use force to control thoughts), he says:

"It is now thirty years that the Islamic regime has been engaged in a brutal, systematic and organized persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. This religious sadism, however, has recently been much more intensified. The Islamic Republic forces elementary school teachers to publicly humiliate the Baha'i children, and with utter inhumanity to insult their religion. This is one of the manifestations of their brand of 'Islamic Justice' whose like is rarely seen even among the most despotic and racist contemporary regimes of the world. The reactionaries, led in this 'holy war' against these children by the leaders of the Hojjatiyeh Association [a secret anti-Baha'i society], have opened up new chapters in the annals of courage and humanity. These brave warriors are not content with just harassing children, instead they systematically attack the organized lines of Baha'i corpses in cemeteries, and after bravely defeating the dead, burn their remaining bodies."

Why should you care about this if you don't live in Iran?

Well, there's that concept gaining increasing acceptance—the one that stresses our common humanity—that holds us to the high standard of protecting any human who is dealt with unjustly.

Why should you care, even if you wished they weren't being treated badly, when you might feel it to be impossible for you to do anything to protect them?

Because you can do something to protect them...

You can pray for them.

If you don't believe in prayer, have the courtesy and maturity to respect those who do believe in it.

From an open letter entitled, [3]We Are Ashamed, from a group of more than 200 prominent academics, writers, artists, journalists and Iranian activists throughout the world to the Baha'i community come these words:

"In the name of goodness and beauty, and in the name of humanity and liberty!

"As Iranian human beings, we are ashamed for what has been perpetrated upon the Bahá'ís in the last century and a half in Iran.

We firmly believe that every Iranian, 'without distinction of any kind, such as, race, color, sex, language, religion, politics or other opinions', and also without regard to ethnic background, 'social origin, property, birth or other status', is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the [4]Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, from the very inception of the Bahá'í Faith, the followers of this religion in Iran have been deprived of many provisions of human rights solely on account of their religious convictions."

Why should you care about these Bahá'ís if you're a Christian, Jew, Muslim, or member of any other Faith?

Well, true religion upholds justice and instills unity.

*Spiritual Quote:*

"All the divine Manifestations have proclaimed the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. They have taught that men should love and mutually help each other in order that they might progress. Now if this conception of religion be true, its essential principle is the oneness of humanity. The fundamental truth of the Manifestations is peace. This underlies all religion, all justice. The divine purpose is that men should live in unity, concord and agreement and should love one another. Consider the virtues of the human world and realize that the oneness of humanity is the primary foundation of them all. Read the Gospel and the other holy books. You will find their fundamentals are one and the same. Therefore unity is the essential truth of religion and when so understood embraces all the virtues of the human world. Praise be to God! this knowledge has been spread, eyes have been opened and ears have become attentive. Therefore we must endeavor to promulgate and practice the religion of God which has been founded by all the prophets. And the religion of God is absolute love and unity.

Abdu'l-Bahá: *Bahá'í World Faith*

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2. <http://www.iranian.com/main/2009/feb/forgetting-they-are-human>
3. [http://news.bahai.org/sites/news.bahai.org/files/documentlibrary/697\\_02\\_ApologyOpenLetter\\_en.pdf](http://news.bahai.org/sites/news.bahai.org/files/documentlibrary/697_02_ApologyOpenLetter_en.pdf)
4. <http://un.org/Overview/rights.html>
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Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-02 10:23:14)

"Chase" may not be the most appropriate word for our approach to unity. I'd suggest that unity is chasing us, pursuing us, and the People will continue to suffer until the Leaders stop running from unity and embrace it...

Marley (2009-03-01 04:03:22)

Ironically, the world center of the Baha'i Faith is located in Israel because the Founder, Baha'u'llah, was exiled, in 1853, from Iran (Persia) and ultimately ended up in Israel (Palestine). Today, once again, ironically, with the trial of the Baha'is, Iran is putting itself on trial before the world.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-01 04:33:11)

Marley, Yes, it is on trial and if they kill those Baha'is the verdict on Iran will be devastating!

Darrell (2009-03-02 06:23:01)

Thanks for this posting Alex. Isn't it sad that Iran has abandoned her noble heritage? And isn't it ironic that Islam proclaims, in the second Surah of the Qur'an (verse 256): "Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from error; whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things." ? Looks like Iran has also abandoned Islam.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-02 08:26:17)

"Looks like Iran has also abandoned Islam." Ya know, I don't blame anyone who says they don't want to be religious. So many wrong examples... Wish I'd had that quote to hand when I wrote the post. Ah, well, the way things are going, I'll be writing another post about the situation.....

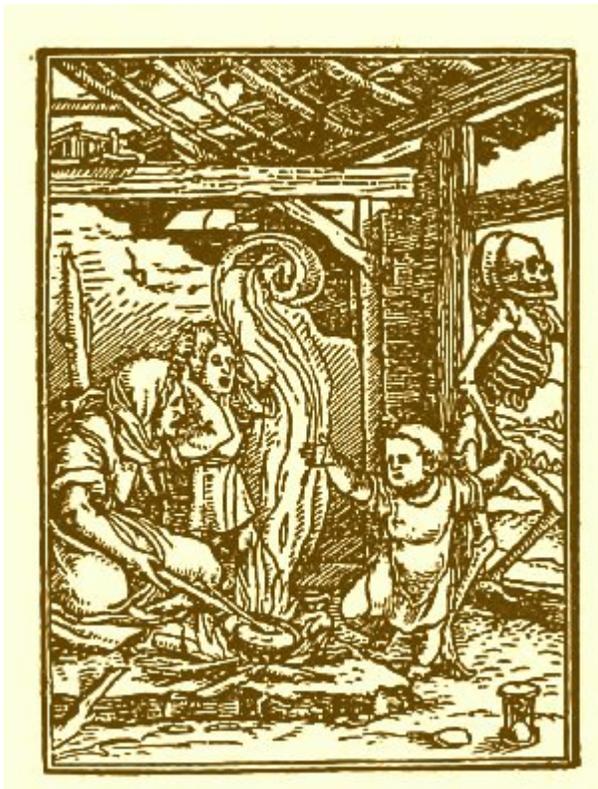
Michael C. Dewey (2009-03-02 10:17:37)

Unity seems like a very good goal to chase. For we are today falling apart from distractions. Lets stand together for then the People will have the power.

The World Is Watching&#8230; &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-23 20:47:47)

[...] Why Should You Care? [...]

### 2.3.2 Human Life and Death (2009-03-04 13:08)



#### What Do You Think?

It's time for a survey about this life and the next one—or is there a "next life"—and, is it on earth or not?

Would love to have (and feel a strong need to know) your ideas and opinions about what may or may not lie beyond that moment we call death...  
Please take a moment to complete the survey. And, come back in the next few days and check the ongoing results.

Leave your comments on the survey and the results, too.  
There's a link at the bottom of the poll to view the ongoing results.

**You can select multiple answers**  
[poll daddy poll=1423977]

**Please leave *Your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.***  
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Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-05 19:21:32)

" I think truth is better expressed poetically..." – kinda like not either/or but more like both/and...

rainforestrobin (2009-03-04 19:13:01)

Over the years I would hear people tell me that they strongly believed in reincarnation and that they knew, without doubt, that that was what would happen to them when they died. Then during my years in the wild as I went through the most astounding soul journey of my life, I began to seriously look at and see how I felt about reincarnation. After a whole series of visions, dreams and awakenings I realized that it wasn't about whether or not I believed in reincarnation; it was that I suddenly realized reincarnation would no longer be my path. That I was finally done with birth and death and rebirth and death and so forth. I knew that I'd been through such rigorous changes and awakenings in myself that I was now upon a completely new and never before traveled (by me) path. I had made a huge leap in my soul's evolution. From here on it is all walking into the "unknown", forever closer to the infinitely familiar and "always known" Love. I live each day as if it were my last, as if it would end tomorrow, and yet, I do not believe in death. I simply AM. Have always been and will always BE. I realize that all this is contradictory, Alex, but it is all part of the "same". I hope to write more about it in my second book. As it was and still remains a truly remarkable journey. And someone asked me why I don't now write about such things on my blog, and I told them that I was so content just "being" that I felt no need to write about it. Again, the contradictions that may not make any sense to others. Thank you for your inspiration my friend. Hugs, Robin

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-04 19:20:19)

I don't see your statements as "contradictions", Robin. To me the spiritual life always flows through what I call Rational Paradoxes—seeming contradictions that actually have rational resolutions; that is, if we embrace them, not in the spirit of either/or but the spirit of both/and. I truly do hope you find it possible to address these issues in your blog. To my other readers: Give yourself a spiritual treat! Visit Robin's blog:

<http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/>

kelly (2009-03-04 19:48:40)

I've had dreams about my past lives. Speaking and understanding a foreign language (only in the dream) but the mirror reflection looks different. I knew then I was looking at a past life! I also read somewhere of a boy who was the father's father. Could be the only reason why the boy knows so much of his father's childhood. The boy refuses to sit anywhere except at the chair where the boy's grandfather used to occupy at meals.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-04 19:53:10)

I find your comment very interesting... I had a phase in my life when I did what used to be called past-life-regression. I "identified" three strong "memories". Over the years since, I've come to see these experiences more as a deep response from my collective unconscious than as any "proof" of actual past lives... It all is totally fascinating though!!

Alexys Fairfield (2009-03-06 01:49:45)

Hi Alex, Life is eternal and within that eternity we are born and reborn millions of times. There is no death, just life. :D

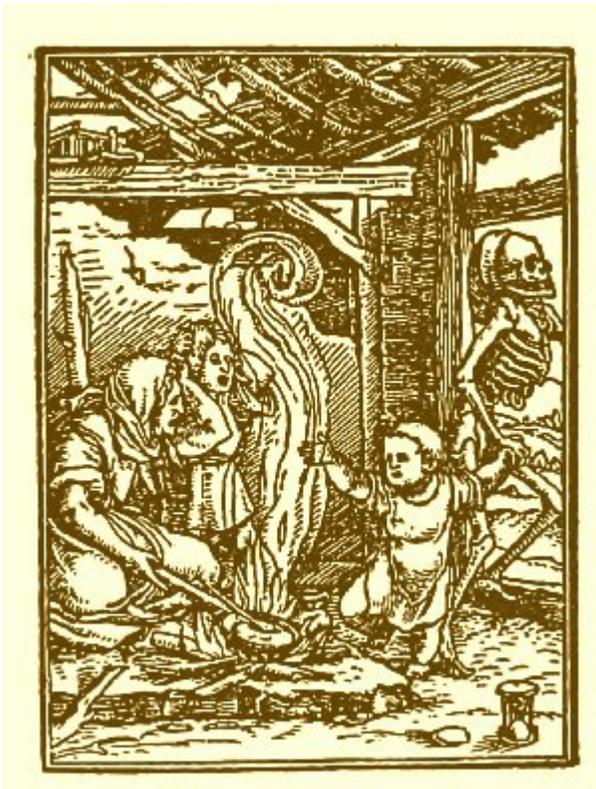
Ben (2009-03-05 19:17:16)

I don't see it as a contradiction—I see it as something that is difficult to work around if you think the logical rules we inherited from Greece are the only valid way of understanding anything. I think truth is better expressed poetically, as you have tried to do, than logically, as so many others have tried and, in my opinion, mostly failed.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-06 02:36:07)

Poetically and Rationally spoken, my dear Sage...

### 2.3.3 Life & Death ~ Survey Results (2009-03-07 20:23)



to comment on this statement:

Our previous post contained a survey that asked folks

#### **Life ends at the moment of death.**

There were 40 people voting (though more may vote in the future...) and the top response, with 30 %, was:

**Physical life ends but Spiritual life continues.**

Next, with 20 %, was:

**No, spiritual life continues and heaven and hell are states of being here on earth.**

13 % merely said, "No."

**Yes but we get another chance at it in a new body. and I don't know.** tied at 8 %

**What's Life?, What's Death?, Maybe., and Yes.** all had 5 % of the vote.

Most interestingly, **Yes and you go to heaven or hell.** was last with 3 %...

I don't have to say this wasn't a "scientific" survey. It was a survey of Faith. And, it was a

survey "biased" by the answers and the responses of people who found my blog and spent enough time to take the survey.

What conclusions can be made?

Maybe none. Maybe that a "representative" segment of my readers believe more strongly in "Life" after "Death" than in Nothingness... Maybe those readers also don't believe in the dogmatic preachments about "Heaven" and "Hell"...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The soul is the focal point for love and compassion, for faith and courage, and for other such 'human' qualities that cannot be explained solely by thinking of a human being as an animal, or as a sophisticated organic machine. The soul does not die; it endures everlastingly. When the human body dies, the soul is freed from ties with the physical body and the surrounding physical world and begins its progress through the spiritual world. Bahá'ís understand the spiritual world to be a timeless and placeless extension of our own universe—and not some physically remote or removed place. Entry into the next life has the potential to bring great joy. Bahá'u'lláh likened death to the process of birth. He explains: 'The world beyond is as different from this world as this world is different from that of the child while still in the womb of its mother'.

Just as the womb constitutes an important place for a person's initial physical development, the physical world provides the matrix for the development of the individual soul.

Bahá'í International Community: 1992 Magazine - *The Bahá'ís*

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emammameala (2009-04-04 17:13:40)

Great site this [anzuri.wordpress.com](http://anzuri.wordpress.com) and I am really pleased to see you have what I am actually looking for here and this this post is exactly what I am interested in. I shall be pleased to become a regular visitor :)

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-04 17:49:41)  
Glad you found us...

### 2.3.4 Rainn Wilson, Dwight Schrute, and Spirituality (2009-03-10 01:45)



Dwight Schrute?

From the hit show The Office?

Giving deep answers to big spiritual questions?

With Oprah?!?

Well... Recently, Rainn Wilson appeared on Oprah's [1]Soul Series Webcast {Scroll down to "Download Files" for the easiest access! }.

He was definitely not the character he plays on [2]The Office!

Not the man with a boundless ego who's always looking for the best way to screw anybody—the man you love to hate...

Here was a thoughtful, intelligent man talking about his spiritual journey and introducing a new web site that targets youth and challenges them to think about and take action on the Big Spiritual Questions—[3]SoulPancake.

He talks about creative endeavors as Prayer and the crying need for our Human Family to Unify —to realize that the answer to all the Big Questions is an awareness of our common Humanity...

Oprah draws him out with her matchless style of down-to-earth yet deeply spiritual questions and gives him a chance to soar on the wings that only a Creative Soul can use to give each of us Hope!

I rate this one as a Must-Watch!!!

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The mystery of this phenomenon, the cause thereof is this, that mankind has been created from one single origin, has branched off from one family. Thus in reality all mankind represents one family. God has not created any difference. He has created all as one that thus this family might live in perfect happiness and well-being.

"Regarding reciprocity and cooperation: each member of the body politic should live in the utmost comfort and welfare because each individual member of humanity is a member of the body politic and if one member of the members be in distress or be afflicted with some disease all the other members must necessarily suffer. For example, a member of the human organism is the eye. If the eye should be affected that affliction would affect the whole nervous system. Hence, if a member of the body politic becomes afflicted, in reality, from the standpoint of sympathetic connection, all will share that affliction since this (one afflicted) is a member of the group of members, a part of the whole. Is it possible for one member or part to be in distress and the other members to be at ease? It is impossible! Hence God has desired that in the body politic of humanity each one shall enjoy perfect welfare and comfort.

"Although the body politic is one family yet because of lack of harmonious relations some members are comfortable and some in direst misery, some members are satisfied and some are hungry, some members are clothed in most costly garments and some families are in need of food and shelter. Why? Because this family lacks the necessary reciprocity and symmetry. This household is not well arranged. This household is not living under a perfect law. All the laws which are legislated do not ensure happiness. They do not provide comfort.

"Therefore a law must be given to this family by means of which all the members of this family will enjoy equal well-being and happiness.

Is it possible for one member of a family to be subjected to the utmost misery and to abject poverty and for the rest of the family to be comfortable? It is impossible unless those members of the family be senseless, atrophied, inhospitable, unkind. Then they would say, 'Though these members do belong to our family—let them alone. Let us look after ourselves. Let them die. So long as I am comfortable, I am honored, I am happy—this my brother— let him die. If he be in misery let him remain in misery, so long as I am comfortable. If he is hungry let him remain so; I am satisfied. If he is without clothes, so long as I am clothed, let him remain as he is. If he is shelterless, homeless, so long as I have a home, let him remain in the wilderness'.

"Such utter indifference in the human family is due to lack of control, to lack of a working

law, to lack of kindness in its midst. If kindness had been shown to the members of this family surely all the members thereof would have enjoyed comfort and happiness.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá: *Foundations of World Unity*

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2. [http://www.nbc.com/The\\_Office/bios/rainn\\_wilson.shtml](http://www.nbc.com/The_Office/bios/rainn_wilson.shtml)
3. <http://www.soulpancake.com/>
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Pages tagged "abject" (2009-03-10 09:15:26)

[...] bookmarks tagged abject Rainn Wilson, Dwight Schrute, and Spirituality saved by 4 others mateoholl bookmarked on 03/10/09 | [...]

### **2.3.5 Food, Crisis, and The Human Spirit (2009-03-12 02:14)**



From [1]The Online Etymology Dictionary:

FOOD = "to tend, keep, pasture, to protect, to guard, to feed"

CRISIS = "to separate, decide, judge, discriminate, distinguish, to sift"

SPIRIT = "animating or vital principle, soul, courage, vigor, breath"

It's estimated that one billion people on the earth are starving and many are farmers. Farmers starving? How in the hell...

Take a typical independent farmer, let them do what they know how to do—use their human spirit to relate to the good earth—and they're the best fed people on the planet. The crisis—what we need to separate out and make decisions about—is caused by not letting them do what they know how to do—letting multinational corporations that specialize in industrial agriculture supplant their efforts—provide food that's of less nutritional value but is much cheaper than what the farmer can raise on their own. Also make sure that various multinationals control the seeds the farmer can get their hands on, making sure the seeds can only be used for one crop then have to be bought again—see Monsanto: [2]Seed Police, [3]The Bad Seed, and [4]Harvest of Fear. The farmer can't afford to buy new seed and they risk legal entanglement if they reuse the seed. And, if they try to use their own non-genetically-modified seed they're pressured so much they can't sell their healthy food and they can't even grow it to feed themselves. If you doubt that a small town or village farmer can be pressured into not growing food from healthy seed just think about those multinationals and all the money they have. Do you think they mind paying some of those farmers to spy on other farmers?

So, the farmers are starving unless they buckle-under to the pressure from agri-business that seems to not use the human spirit in their mix of business factors. Then, the people who used to eat the healthy food the farmers grew have to settle for genetically-modified and less nutritious food—if the farmer used the "approved" seed or if the particular government lets food aid (also less than wholly nutritious) actually arrive at their table (if they even have a table...).

If you've gotten this far in the post and you're starting to get bored about the one billion fellow human beings who are being starved by corporate greed, I suggest you review your commitment to the basics of the human spirit—love, harmony, sympathy, service, and compassion—as well as catching up on the concept of the Oneness of Humanity—the fact that what hurts one, hurts all... sooner or later...

Thankfully, there are some companies that do all in their power to resist the pressure from the spiritless corporations, grow fully nutritious food, and not only make it available to affluent people but install procedures that implement microfranchising so the poor can benefit as well. Check out [5]Nuriche as one example.

Then, there are organizations like Yes! that do everything in their power to help us all build a more sustainable world.

Look into their special Spring 2009 theme: [6]Food for Everyone: How to Grow A Local Food Revolution. Plenty of advice that ordinary people can use to make a major contribution to the global food crisis.

So...

FOOD = something we all need in a form that supplies us with the nutrition we must have

to function effectively.

CRISIS = a time to make decisions, separate out the truth from the propaganda, and make a personal judgement to take some kind of positive action.

SPIRIT = what we all have and some need to dust off and shine up so our human family can get back on its feet and live in peace and tranquility...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"A new economic order can be founded only on an unshakable conviction of the oneness of mankind. Discussions aimed at solving problems related to extreme poverty based on the premise that we are one human family rapidly expand beyond the current vocabulary of economics. They demand a wider context, one which anticipates the emergence of a global system of relationships resting on the principles of equity and justice."

Bahá'í International Community: 1993 Feb 12 Human Rights and Extreme Poverty

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ggw\_bach (2009-03-12 03:12:41)

indeed this is a time of turmoil and faith. One has to be strong to stay strong ... to stay true.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-12 03:28:18)

Thank you, so much, for responding to this post! Staying strong... Yes! No matter what... Because we all depend on each other and a broken link in the chain weakens All of Us...

Liara Covert (2009-03-18 13:20:05)

Over perceived human time, diverse views and interpretations are presented about what is desirable. When a person is unable or unwilling to look beyond such interpretations, that person does not recognize the reality the words are highlighting. As words are only abstract, they point beyond what you readily see or register. Its about learning to read between teh lines and beyond them, not simply taking everything at face value.

### 2.3.6 Killing Our Fellow Humans (2009-03-14 16:13)



#### Three Guys At The Café

G1: "You're sayin' it's America's fault?"

G2: "Sure. Who uses the most stuff that ends up in the atmosphere?"

G1: "What about China?"

G3: "Yeah, they beat the Americans by a billion miles!"

G2: "But America's tryin' to spread its life-style all over the world—tryin' to make everybody into gross consumers."

G3: "But China's makin' the most babies..."

{ A Gal Walks Up... }

Gal: "Whachu guys talkin' 'bout?"

G1: "Who's puttin' the most shit in the atmosphere."

Gal: "That's easy, it's the rich guys in power."

G2: "But which rich guys?"

Gal: "Don't matter what country, if they got the power they're gonna trash things for the rest of us..."

That imaginary scene certainly isn't deep or precise or particularly wise, but one thing's for sure—those in power aren't doing anywhere near enough to save our human family from critical disaster.

And, It's not China or the Americans; it's the people in power in those countries. The rest of us, all over the world, are reaping the dark fallout from their lack of wisdom.

"So, Alex, you seem to be saying the rich/powerful leaders are killing humanity?"

Pretty much, yes.

A case in point:

From **SciDev.Net**: [1]Sea level rise 'will surpass worst-case scenario' "A sea level rise of one metre or more is predicted to have a devastating effect on major coastal cities, island states and populous delta areas such as those in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

"A panel of experts speaking yesterday (10 March) at the International Scientific Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen, Denmark, warned that without efforts to curb the rise of greenhouse gas emissions, sea level rise would expose most parts of the world to greater storm surges — increases in local sea level caused by the winds of storms — threatening lives and infrastructure."

I can imagine one of those guys in the café saying: "So a bunch of poor beggars get a little wet, so what?"

Sorry guy, it's not just a bunch of poor beggars getting a little wet; it's millions of our fellow humans suffering and dying because a certain class of humans are addicted to a life-style that harms Mother Nature and makes Her lash out in pain and rage.

I may be attacked for saying this, but the attitude that unlimited freedom leads to prosperity

has been clearly proven to be false. The affluent bubble has needles of crisis poking it all over...

From the Climate Change Policy Advisor at **Oxfam** : [2]Sea level rise spells increased likelihood of disaster for the world's poorest people "These startling new predictions on sea level rise spell disaster for millions of the world's poorest people. Poor coastal communities in countries such as Bangladesh are already struggling to cope with a changing climate and it can only get worse. This must be a wake-up call for rich countries are not doing anywhere near enough to prevent these cataclysmic predictions becoming a reality. Rich countries, who created the climate crisis, must cut their emissions from 1990 levels by at least 40 percent by 2020 and provide the \$50 billion that is the minimum needed each year to help the world's poorest people adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change."



Your home may not look like the one in that image but if the kind of home it is makes you not care what's happening to the people who live there, you need to examine your conscience, make it face reality, and find some form of compassion for the struggling and innocent members of our Human Family...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"He must not consider divergence of races nor difference of nationalities; he must not view variation in denomination and creed, nor should he take into account the differing degrees of thoughts; nay, rather, he should look upon all as mankind and realize that all must become united and agreed. He must recognize all as one family, one race, one native land; he must see all as the servants of one God, dwelling beneath the shelter of His mercy."

'Abdu'l-Bahá: The Promulgation of Universal Peace

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Liara Covert (2009-03-18 13:14:57)

As a human being learns to truly listen to the self, he learns what it means to stop thinking. You stop paying attention to what other people are supposedly saying or doing and suddenly realize none of that matters. This is the start of the sudden desire to stop blaming, victimizing or judging. When communication consists of ego minds interacting, this is not dialogue. This simply reveals the mind is controlling you, instigating conflict, torment and reasons for prolonged suffering. Getting in touch with one's inner self creates a space where mind is not present, where you only speak of others in terms of compassion. That is the answer to any question.

### 2.3.7 Would A Scientist Lie To You ? (2009-03-15 19:23)



Science has attained a position in modern culture that approaches what was formerly reserved for religion. Many people would thank God for that turn of events but most of the scientists, good "priests" of the new "religion", would caution the God-thanker against unscientific thinking.

If that little scenario seems a bit convoluted, the actual situation in science-at-large is much more distorted.

Before launching into a case-in-point, I want to float an analogical situation to ease our approach to some extremely tangled territory:

You're just cruisin' along, doin' your thing in life, when a rival you didn't even know you had starts to spread a rumor that you're a sex abuser. The first you hear of it is during a conversation at the next table in the café. It's about whether the police should use entrapment to find sex abusers and it's definitely loud enough to make you listen.

Certain details of some recent case start surfacing and you begin to realize that these people are talking about a man who's currently being investigated for his activities who sounds like it might be you—too many little details, no name, but enough circumstantial evidence to deduce that these people are discussing You!

This kind of rumor-mongering doesn't happen just in cafés; it's present in business, political, and religious communities, too. The point I want to make is how hard it can be, once a rumor has circulated enough to gain currency, to disprove it, no matter how many facts you have at your disposal. Shades of Lenin and the Big Lie...

Back to the scientists.

A recent news buzz was created by an extremely expensive collection of scientific equipment—the [1]Large Hadron Collider. This particle-smashing machine was built by tax-payer money but the people who's pockets were emptied haven't been given the whole truth...

An entertaining yet scientifically weak article in [2]The New York Times, Gauging a Collider's Odds of Creating a Black Hole, discusses some apparently alarming aspects of the risks scientists create with their expensive experiments. The problem with the article and most of mainstream science is that the science being done isn't as rigorously honest as one might imagine it should be.

What some folks would call a fringe-group (a group that has successfully predicted what many recent spacecraft have recorded, things that have the mainstreamers running back to their drawing-boards) recently posted an [3]article by Jeremy Dunning-Davies, senior lecturer in physics at the University of Hull and fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Dr. Dunning-Davies discusses the alarm produced by the switching on of the Hadron Collider, then proceeds to give an acute analysis of Relativity and Quantum Mechanics (not horribly technical) and says something very interesting for a scientist:

"Science should be studied with a totally open mind and any advances should be examined in a like manner. Surely the aim of any scientific investigation is to seek the truth? Probably mankind will always be found wanting intellectually and any solution to a problem will be no more than an approximation to the real truth, but efforts must continue in all areas to find that elusive complete answer....Where several theories exist, that fact must be openly acknowledged with no thought for protecting vested interests of any sort."

Dr. Dunning-Davies is not well appreciated by his fellow scientists. He's encroaching on their "priesthood", he's asking for the complete truth and that just might lead to the mainstream scientists

not having the monetary support they want.

Point?

If a large group of scientists are not letting the whole truth reach the public, or using the tactics of the malicious rumor-monger to keep competing theories from the funding-dollar, we the Public deserve to know.

Figuring out how to put down the rumor-like science and let the whole truth shine is a bit harder than just knowing about it. Just like the fellow having misinformation being spread about his sexual abuse, beating down a popular lie is a huge task...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...the injunction to investigate truth—that is to say, no man should blindly follow his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and investigate the truth himself in order that he may follow the truth instead of blind acquiescence and imitation of ancestral beliefs."

'Abdu'l-Bahá: The Promulgation of Universal Peace

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1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Large\\_Hadron\\_Collider](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Large_Hadron_Collider)
2. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/15/science/15risk.html>
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Leanne (2009-03-15 21:56:57)

Would a scientist lie to you? Of course he would! Some unscrupulous scientists will say whatever their sponsors want them to say. Case in point? "Our research proves that nicotine is not addictive, and definitely does NOT cause lung cancer." or "Research proves that formula is better for baby than mother's breast milk." The savvy news consumer knows to ask "who is paying for the research?" (Yes, it's always been the formula manufacturers.) The media has their hand in it as well. Some scientist reports that a glass of red wine each day has been linked to lower risk of heart disease. Yet they fail to report that the same benefit can be acquired by drinking purple grape juice, which has the added benefit of not damaging your liver. Of course, not all scientists are for sale to the highest bidder. I like to think that most are fair minded,

honest folk. But that doesn't mean that a fair-minded, honest scientist's own biases won't blind them to other possible explanations. After all, the scientific method has a built in prejudice: You come up with a hypothesis, and then you test it. You assume that you know the truth, and you try to prove it wrong. It's always possible that you can find multiple scenarios that don't disprove a theory, but they certainly don't prove it either. Just goes to show, we need to be conscious critical thinkers whenever we hear or read something.

jay fulton (2009-03-15 20:35:52)

hogwash. If you think science has attained a position .... approaches formerly reserved for religion... you've missed the point of science - rather completely. Are you missing that point to deceive others deliberately, or are just ignorant about science? The erroneous concept that science is a religion is poppycock. And the concept keeps popping up from new holes like some hellish version of "whack-a-mole"; one can explain and point out facts endlessly to correct one problem, and then "pop" up comes another erroneous person asserting the same thing. Can I guess that some religious leaders are behind this? In any case, this ain't the Queens garden in Alice in Wonderland. Go look up Science in the dictionary, please. Please. Please

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-15 20:28:39)

Well, the "seems" of your comment seems to take the Dr.'s statement from an angle I don't think he was speaking from. He neither affirms nor denies the truth of alternative theories. What I hear him saying is that one must, at least, consider other "existing" theories, which far too many scientists do not do. Also, I don't think the Dr. was saying the LHC was dangerous; just that building it for less than completely honest reasons is wrong...

morsec0de (2009-03-15 19:45:35)

"Where several theories exist" He seems to think that, by existing, all theories are equal. This is false. His theories are wrong, and have been demonstrated as wrong. There is no horrible danger from the LHC.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-15 22:00:38)

Leanne, Thanks for this informed and informative response!

kelly (2009-03-16 10:33:18)

I agree that there are some unscrupulous scientists out there. Some I know are mis-informed by some former assumptions he's been taught at college! lol For example, pharmaceutical scientists have been programmed that the 'real proven' medicines are those man-made in laboratories and all other kinds of medicines are inferior! And some others often keep an open mind, which is important for any science-based theory to advance.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-16 01:24:05)

Jay, I didn't say science is a religion. I said it's attained a place in our society that religion used to have; i.e., the position of authority. I happen to be quite well-versed in science and religion and can clearly see the difference in their approaches to life; but, to say that science has replaced religion as the societal authority is not the same thing as saying that science is a religion...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-16 10:47:25)

Kelly, Yes, like most professions there are good ones and bad ones. Some of the best are here: <http://www.thunderbolts.info/>

Liara Covert (2009-03-16 18:14:26)

Human beings are not completely candid with themselves. Until they evolve within to rediscover the nature of consciousness, then truth is obscured by cultural conditioning. The soul does not judge. It opens wider to rediscover its own truth. Nothing else matters.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-16 18:20:47)

Thank you, dear Liara, for, as always, a comment that lifts us above the turmoil...

benafia (2009-03-18 02:35:41)

Nice reflection on the nature of truth and knowing. It seems we need to have a truth seeking consciousness, we need some humility as to the nature of our conclusions, particularly the motives for investigation, since we all can be wrong without knowing it. A huge cavern can exist between truthful observation and a conditioned imagination connecting invisible dots. Overall, the scientific method is one of the most honest at proving, or seeming to prove what it attempts to. Most religions I assume do not wish this kind of attempt at objective critical reasoning, instead, establishing question free zones. I am proud in the subjective sense, of religions and or religious teachers who incorporate the views of science and critical thinking without bias. These would seem more worthy of my attention. Thanks for the post.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-18 02:40:30)

Thank you, so much, for your perspicuous and truly informative comment!!!

### 2.3.8 Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy (2009-03-18 17:46)



I hang out at a local café (you may have noticed I use many imaginative dialogues at the beginning of posts and they're almost always in a café). I also do some of my own work at the café plus volunteering a little marketing and promotion—basically, I like the place.

However, this creeping, crawling economic downturn (aka recession or crunch) hit the owner of [1]Java Street Café pretty hard. I've spent hours talking business with him and watched as a bright and friendly man became progressively morose and extremely exhausted (when a business has hard times, paying employees becomes a problem and the owner has to not only run the business but literally Work it).

Months went by, things getting worse, while the owner, Sam, in spite of the grueling conditions, continued to try various ideas to attract customers...

Finally, last week, an idea he'd been experimenting with became a what-the-hell—"I can't lose more than I already have"—Decision:

Take All The Prices Off The Menu—let people pay whatever they feel is a Fair Price!

Sam had his back against the wall, he was willing to try just about anything, and he "happened" to choose and made a commitment to act on what could seem like a very crazy idea...

That was last week...

Since then, he's been [2]interviewed on CNN twice, phone interviewed on MSNBC and Fox, appeared on all four of the local channels, been on three out-of-state radio talk shows, will be appearing in a morning cooking segment on the local Fox affiliate, and received calls of thanks from three other states and Canada...

As if that weren't enough, the blogosphere is starting to warm up to the story and it's on the edge of tipping into the viral realm.

Why?

Because it's "crazy" and unusual?

Nope.

That may have been the initial and conscious decision of the media but, after watching it happen and, especially, watching his customers react, the real and deeper reason for all the interest certainly seems to be related to a nearly archaic principle—Business Ethics...

Sam's customer's have a variety of reactions when he takes their order then says, "O.K., what do you think is a fair price for what you just ordered?":

"Huh?"

"Me?"

"What's your usual price?"

"Oh, my! I have to think about it?"

"You're kidding, right?"

Sam's not kidding, they do have to think about it, his "usual" price is now "your price", and, when the day is done, the under-payers and the over-payers even out and he's collecting what he used to get when he had prices...

Of all the various reactions, my personal favorite, and the one that sings of ethics in business during hard times, is what the woman from Missouri said, when she called to thank Sam for his decision:

"After I saw the story on CNN, I cried..."

*Spiritual Quote:*

"As a practical step in contributing to a dialogue about development and social transformation that explicitly takes account of spiritual values and perspectives, some 100 influential development organizations, international and government agencies, religious representatives, and academics recently gathered in New Delhi to participate in a colloquium on the theme of Science, Religion and Development. The primary goal of the event was to explore how a unified interaction between scientific methods and religious insights can promote the building of human capacity, particularly in the areas of governance, education, technology and economic activity."  
2001 Jun 11, Universal House of Justice, Overcoming Corruption

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2. <http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/03/17/lippert.qanda/?iref=mpstoryview>
3. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
4. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy &laquo; Financial Blogger (2009-03-18 18:27:27)

[...] Read the rest here: Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy [...]

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-19 18:58:40)

It was actually therapeutic to write it... I'm on the inside of the media blitz (which hasn't stopped) and stepping back and objectifying the story helped me gain perspective...

Leanne (2009-03-20 02:08:12)

What a fabulous story! There may be hope for us yet...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-20 12:12:05)

Yes, Baha'u'llah is making sure of that! Being on the Inside of this story was a huge inspirational boost for me!! The ordinary, every-day person is Fair!!!

Alexys Fairfield (2009-03-19 18:55:10)

Hi Alex, I LOVE this story. LOVE IT. LOVE IT. LOVE IT. So refreshing to hear this type of story instead of the usual news fare. Thank you for sharing this gem. It sparkles. :D

Business Ethics Training Embracing Complexity: Business Ethics &laquo; (2009-03-19 09:34:44)

[...] Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy ? Our Evolution By Alexander Zoltai Of all the various reactions, my personal favorite, and the one that sings of ethics in business during hard times, is what the woman from Missouri said, when she called to thank Sam for his decision: ?After I saw the story on CNN, ... Our Evolution - <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/> [...]

benafia (2009-03-21 05:03:13)

You are one of my favorite sites! We face the problem of letting the situation define us, or redefining the situation we are in. Hurray for those who trust something more than their fears. A whole new paradigm is sometimes just one thought away. Here's for listening.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-21 18:45:24)

I'll show your comment to Sam, the owner! I know he'll appreciate it!!

the fearless blog (2009-03-22 02:37:28)

Great story. At first the title in the broadcast got my attention and then the story itself. Perhaps, this story indicates that this may actually be a good time for entrepreneurs who choose to get creative and do so for the right reasons. Now all we need is for our current government to demonstrate some of that "ethical" behavior and maybe just maybe our future won't be as bleak as so many of us predict. Very good post...inspiring and an excellent example of the awesome American spirit that we must fight never to lose.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-22 07:20:07)

Being on the inside of this story, I can affirm the owner's never-ending creativity! He kept trying ideas, too--that's persistence. Then, the ethical quality of the one that got him the customers he needed is pure poetic justice!!

An Ethical Business Press Release &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-04-09 15:15:18)

[...] Ethics? Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy Sam's Interview On CNN One final [...]

### 2.3.9 Bubbles, Bailouts, and Stimulus Plans (2009-03-20 21:01)



So much of the shouting about this economic "downturn" centers on the United States of America. I'm no economist (thank, God!), but it seems to make sense that the epicenter of the econoquake is the USA.

Still . . .

What about other countries? Like:

China, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Taiwan (ROC), Philippines, Romania, Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Brazil, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Iceland, and Australia.

One of my constant companions on the Internet Journey is Global Voices. In [1]a recent article, they rely on their global network of bloggers to identify these issues:

"...Jamaica's dollar-earning bauxite industry has shed hundreds of jobs already because of the downturn in US car production."

In Bangladesh, the housing bubble is tied to remittances sent by Bangladeshis working in other countries; but, mass layoffs in the US and Europe is ending their property boom.

"Cambodia is also experiencing a property bubble. South Koreans are Cambodia's biggest investors. Since South Korean businesses have been badly hit by the financial crisis, many of them have already pulled off their real estate investments in Cambodia."

The Caribbean financial crisis originated, partly, from drops in methanol and real estate prices.

The Brazilian government was claiming the global crisis was having a minimal impact on their economy. But, recent reports show Brazil as the second "most affected" country.

"Bank nationalization schemes have been enforced in some countries like Iceland and Kazakhstan. Trinidad and Tobago banks were rescued not just by their government but also by governments from neighboring countries."

Hungary is going to implement a tax reform.

"Hiring street sweepers is part of the Philippine stimulus plan."

There are many more details on the Global Voices site...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Central to the task of reconceptualizing the organization of human affairs is arriving at a proper understanding of the role of economics. The failure to place economics into the broader context of humanity's social and spiritual existence has led to a corrosive materialism in the world's more economically advantaged regions, and persistent conditions of deprivation among the masses of the world's peoples. Economics should serve people's needs; societies should not be expected to reformulate themselves to fit economic models. The ultimate function of economic systems should be to equip the peoples and institutions of the world with the means to achieve the real purpose of development: that is, the cultivation of the limitless potentialities latent in human consciousness.

"Society must develop new economic models shaped by insights that arise from a sympathetic understanding of shared experience, from viewing human beings in relation one to another, and from a recognition of the central role that family and community play in social and spiritual well-being. Within institutions and organizations, priorities must be reassessed. Resources must be directed away from those agencies and programs that are damaging to the individual, societies and the environment, and directed toward those most germane to furthering a dynamic, just and thriving social order. Such economic systems will be strongly altruistic and cooperative in nature; they will provide meaningful employment and will help to eradicate poverty in the world."

Bahá'í International Community: 1998 Feb 18, Valuing Spirituality in Development

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  2. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
  3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>
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### 2.3.10 Bugs In Our Moral Code (2009-03-22 09:43)



#### Cheating At Life

Many could care less about moral codes as long as they feel they're getting ahead in life. Thing is, getting ahead means nothing if you then fall far behind.

The current economic crisis is a good example—many people cheating and others looking the other way—all to get ahead—an example of institutionalized cheating that blossoms into international crime.

It's easy to find studies and articles about cheating, from [1]ways to stop it to [2]ways to regulate it to the [3]whys of its happening.

What's very hard is finding ways to implement possible solutions to the obvious fact of widespread cheating...

An important consideration in any exploration of cheating or moral action is to be clear about why we even have such codes or laws in society.

Consider:

The word cheat comes from roots that mean to "fall away" and moral comes from "character" and "good".

There's a strong emphasis in those words on the group or social unit. There's also an interesting perspective from which to discuss the social value of unbridled independent action. But that's a subject for a future post...

The following video is a fascinating exploration of cheating, morals, and economic crime by a behavioral economist. Quite informative and also entertaining:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUdsTizSxSI>]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The endowments which distinguish the human race from all other forms of life are summed up in what is known as the human spirit; the mind is its essential quality. These endowments have enabled humanity to build civilizations and to prosper materially. But such accomplishments alone have never satisfied the human spirit, whose mysterious nature inclines it towards transcendence, a reaching towards an invisible realm, towards the ultimate reality, that unknowable essence of essences called God....No doubt some observers would disagree, observing that religion has sometimes retarded, instead of advanced, social progress. In our view, such cases represent a distortion of religion.

"We would strongly suggest that this and any discussion of social policy give recognition to the role of spiritual principle in the functioning of society and indeed of government. Neither in theory nor in practice, should we separate material and moral affairs in a dichotomous way. The moral capacities and strengths of a nation – and of the global community – may be regarded as its ultimate form of wealth. Deficiencies in this form or wealth too easily lead to material effects as, for example, an unfair distribution of resources or, in the case of war, the near or total destruction of the physical infrastructure."

Bahá'í International Community, 1987 Sept 09, *Social Progress*

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1. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/1998/07/980708085624.htm>

2. <http://www.cheatingculture.com/cheatingblog.html>

3. [http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/2006-06-26-cheating-study\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/2006-06-26-cheating-study_x.htm)

4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

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Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-22 18:19:06)

Very nice perceptions, Suzie! Humility in the face of Truth... And, Forgiveness for when we miss the mark... Yes!!

Suzie (2009-03-22 15:22:47)

What an eye opener. I have been thinking that it may be necessary for us all to rely more upon our intuitions because things are changing so quickly that there may not be time for thorough scientific review. But it is impossible, perhaps, for us to be sure that our intuitions are anything beyond our own individual point of view. Even within a spiritual tradition. Maybe humility is our best tool for attempting to know the truth and acting correctly. Humility and forgiveness, because we are all going to make mistakes.

Roger (2009-03-23 23:37:15)

I got a car insurance bill last night for \$831. At present we (my wife and I) only have \$600 total, and also have to pay the home insurance (another \$700). I get paid on Wednesday and those 2 bills will soak up pretty much all my pay. I burst out laughing at the bill. It's so ridiculous to claw away at getting ahead. I'll never get ahead, because I'll always be in this moment now. I'll pay the bill when I can. Why wasn't I upset? I'm not altogether sure, but I think at that moment the whole notion of money just became a total joke. I went to bed in an excellent mood and had a great night's sleep. I'm a teacher, and I love my job. I get to see people learn things that benefit them and society. I'll pay the bill when I can.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-24 00:14:06)

Roger, Thanks for your comment! Money is becoming a serious joking matter... So glad you've found a way to buffer the insanity!!

benafia (2009-03-24 05:47:01)

We mostly object to the concept of cheating; we want to be treated fairly, meaning, not secretly having the rug pulled out from under us somewhere. The Golden Rule and Categorical Imperative seem to address the spiritual and or karmic necessities of being fair to others, giving them the right to be fair to you, or something to that effect. I feel we, I included, have benefited much from my own ignorance, like; What do my needs and wants do to the earth-carbon footprint? What do the relatively cheap goods here have to do with workers suffering in China and elsewhere? Being naturally repelled by cheating, and really owning up to the nature of cheating; where I own up to the greater impacts of my own actions, seems to require a greater sense of connection than I might find comfortable in my private wants. What I like about owning up to my incongruous ignorance in action is, that I can begin to act more responsibly, and with a more true awareness. My own value on earth is known more clearly as I realize I do not "get away with" cheating Life.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-24 11:29:56)

You say an awareness of the impact of cheating "seems to require a greater sense of connection than I might find comfortable in my private wants". You lay out in that statement the biggest challenge I face in my daily life! We \*are\* connected, deeply; and, the greater each of our awarenesses of that Truth becomes, the closer we get to heaven on earth...

Robin Easton (2009-03-25 02:14:10)

Wow! I love this whole thing but this line just jumped right off the page and reflects some deep thought on this topic, a level of thought is almost completely overlooked in our culture: "An important consideration in any exploration of cheating or moral action is to be clear about why we even have such codes or laws in society." This could apply to kids who cheat in school or kids that lie and "cheat" with their parents. Just as a kid lies because they learn that their parents scream or hit if they tell the truth. So honesty is no longer an option. It could apply to many areas of our culture — or simply of human nature. I think lying often comes about because people (especially kids) do not have reinforced the reality that honesty is an option. And...that honesty could bring about change or reassessment of a situation. Resulting in new guidelines set down, more needs met, etc. This is some truly liberated thinking here. Thank you Alex. Hugs, Robin :)

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-25 02:22:03)

You've brought up some very important considerations: Lying because the truth brings punishment... The idea that reality isn't an apparent option for some folks... That honesty can Change Things! Wonderful perceptions, Robin!!!

### 2.3.11 God ? (2009-03-25 00:45)



#### Jim & Denise at the Café

Jim: "So I hear you found God..."

Denise: "More like God found me."

Jim: "..."

Denise: "Kind of like when the student is ready, the Teacher appears..."

Jim: "God, huh?"

Denise: "Yep."

Jim: "Did He speak to you?"

Denise: "No, She didn't. Actually, I don't think God is sexed—beyond all that..."

Jim: "So how do you know God found you?"

Denise: "I feel 'Blessed ', I feel I'm worthy of working toward my best potential..."

Jim: "Quite a change from last month with all that talk about dying..."

Denise: "Yeah, I want to live now and I'm not afraid of dying either, whenever..."

Jim: "Wild! "

Denise: "Yeah, wild... Wonderful... Weird..."

Jim: "Yeah..."

If you'd been in attendance at this imaginary scene, you'd have seen the body language and felt the emotion—you'd have believed that Denise really did feel that God had found her.

Who or What is God?

Big Question...

This post was stimulated by a post on BloggersBase called, [1]Perspectives on the Nature of God - Which of these Five Views Matches Yours? The author lists five very common conceptions of God with descriptions:

God the Wrathful...

God the Judgmental...

God Who?...

God the Compassionate...

God the Universal Spirit...

Then, comes a fascinating piece of contemplation:

"You have probably rejected four of these five views of God as being absolutely wrong, and even been uncomfortable with the wording of the view with which you most closely align. In doing so, you have rejected the sincere beliefs of the vast majority of humanity. Is promoting your preferred characterization of God more important than compassion and acceptance of diversity?"

I have my conception of God and it embraces a few of the five mentioned but goes well beyond any of them...

To me, God is First and Foremost, the Unknowable—no conception from us—the creations of God—can attain to the True Nature of our Creator...

This belief doesn't relieve me of the necessity for compassion and empathy and tolerance of other's beliefs...

There is, however, a concept in religion that indicates the existence of Messengers from God, Prophets of God, Manifestations of God, Who have acted as intermediaries between God the Creator and we the created. Some of their names have been Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh.

There's also a concept called Progressive Revelation that says that all those Manifestations are One in Spirit and the religions They each founded were but Chapters in a continuing revelation of One Faith of God. This principle holds that all the religions are stages of one religion—the outer social laws changing with the constant evolution of humanity but the core spiritual Truths remaining—immutable...

One God...

One Faith...

One Human Family...

Hmmm . . .

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The holy Manifestations of God come into the world to dispel the darkness of the animal, or physical, nature of man, to purify him from his imperfections in order that his heavenly and spiritual nature may become quickened, his divine qualities awakened, his perfections visible, his potential powers revealed and all the virtues of the world of humanity latent within him may come to life. These holy Manifestations of God are the Educators and Trainers of the world of existence, the Teachers of the world of humanity. They liberate man from the darkness of the world of nature, deliver him from despair, error, ignorance, imperfections and all evil qualities. They clothe him in the garment of perfections and exalted virtues. Men are ignorant; the Manifestations of God make

them wise. They are animalistic; the Manifestations make them human. They are savage and cruel; the Manifestations lead them into kingdoms of light and love. They are unjust; the Manifestations cause them to become just. Man is selfish; They sever him from self and desire. Man is haughty; They make him meek, humble and friendly. He is earthly; They make him heavenly. Men are material; the Manifestations transform them into divine semblance. They are immature children; the Manifestations develop them into maturity. Man is poor; They endow him with wealth. Man is base, treacherous and mean; the Manifestations of God uplift him into dignity, nobility and loftiness.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 465

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benafia (2009-03-27 19:09:43)

Very well said quote on the human challenge to know and be. In some respects it seems absurd to me to think we can claim to know, in our different ways, usually an idea of one true God, then go about seeking to undo others who believe in their own version of one true God. Seems we may argue and fight over our own images of a god in separation from others and perhaps even Creation. That god is an idea in our minds and inherently imprisoned by our concepts, but what of reality? The quote you posted infers a Divine Essence that sees past confusion, hatred and selfishness as collateral damage of ignorance. Now that is seeing!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-27 19:17:20)

You write pure Wisdom!

### 2.3.12 Obsession with Material Things? (2009-03-27 20:15)



It can seem, in the affluent parts of our globe, that to buy is our fortune. It could also be said that, if buying is good, more buying is better.

Of course, we're in the middle of an economic crisis and some folks might think we need moderation in interaction with the human-created marketplace—that we not treat it as some magically powerful entity that must be worshiped with human sacrifice.

"Huh?"

I'll get back to that human sacrifice idea in a bit...

Today on [1]SoulPancake a discussion was started called, *Are we completely obsessed with material possessions? Do they mean anything?*. Here's a representative sample of the comments:

"An iPhone to match your sneakers? Sneakers to match your vest?"

"I love clothes and dinners out with friends, and new shiny things but understand the completely vapid nature of these things."

"They only mean something if you let it mean something. If it makes you happy then buy it."

"Honestly, if you have the CASH to buy this stuff up front, go right ahead."

"Few people lie on their death bed and talk about that car they should have bought or that purse that they were so close to buying"

"As someone below pointed out it does have a huge impact on making the world as we know it go round"

"...yes we are obsessed, and its not a good thing. And yes, these things are important but shouldn't be occupying our thoughts and efforts to the extent at which it is."

" Its all one big contest and a race to the finish line. Its a shame most people don't stop and look around them more often."

I was happy to see, at least, a range of responses in the normally affluent participants on the site.

I was very sad about a few of them: "If it makes you happy then buy it.", "Honestly, if you have the CASH to buy this stuff up front, go right ahead."

Here's where the idea of materialism brings up the idea of human sacrifice.

Who suffers for the extraction of the raw materials needed to make all the fanciful things people buy?

Who receives no help in their daily lives because they happen to live where the marketeers won't put their markets?

Who sweats away their days making the toys of the affluent?

Who can any longer ignore that We are One Human Family and what hurts one hurts all ?

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Whether as world-view or simple appetite, materialism's effect is to leach out of human motivation—and even interest—the spiritual impulses that distinguish the rational soul. 'For self-love,' 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said, 'is kneaded into the very clay of man, and it is not possible that, without any hope of a substantial reward, he should neglect his own present material good.' In the absence of conviction about the spiritual nature of reality and the fulfilment it alone offers, it is not surprising to find at the very heart of the current crisis of civilization a cult of individualism that increasingly admits of no restraint and that elevates acquisition and personal advancement to the status of major cultural values. The resulting atomization of society has marked a new stage in the process of disintegration about which the writings of Shoghí Effendí speak so urgently.

"To accept willingly the rupture of one after another strand of the moral fabric that guides and disciplines individual life in any social system, is a self-defeating approach to reality. If leaders of thought were to be candid in their assessment of the evidence readily available, it is here that one would find the root cause of such apparently unrelated problems as the pollution of the environment, economic dislocation, ethnic violence, spreading public apathy, the massive increase in crime, and epidemics that ravage whole populations. However important the application of legal, sociological or technological expertise to such issues undoubtedly is, it would be unrealistic to imagine that efforts of this kind will produce any significant recovery without a fundamental change of moral consciousness and behaviour."

Commissioned by The Universal House of Justice, Century of Light, p. 90

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Tomas (2009-03-30 08:50:56)

The picture pierced deeply into my heart. The questions awake. In the light of your post, the personal problems change in essence. So to speak, thank you for the healing.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-30 11:24:05)

So good to see you here again, Tomas! I'm glad you found a bit of healing from the picture. It encourages me since I do try to make the images play their part in the full context of each post...

### 2.3.13 Is World Peace Actually Possible? (2009-03-29 03:12)



My posts usually end with a spiritual quote. This time, the quote will dominate the post...

The words are from a man who spent 40 years as a prisoner of the Ottoman Empire. He was considered one of the most spiritual men of his time. He devoted his freedom, when once he gained it, to traveling Europe and America, carrying a Message charged with the power of the inevitable peace that humanity would win...

Inevitable?

**"A few, unaware of the power latent in human endeavor, consider this matter as highly impracticable, nay even beyond the scope of man's utmost efforts."**

Many, if not most, of humanity seem to think that people have an innate, in-born tendency toward fighting. Peace, in part of the world, for part of the time, then a reversion to war...

**"Such is not the case, however. On the contrary, thanks to the unfailing grace of God, the loving-kindness of His favored ones, the unrivaled endeavors of wise and capable souls, and the thoughts and ideas of the peerless leaders of this age, nothing whatsoever can be regarded as unattainable."**

This man's spirituality was very great and he proved it in action. It was said of him, "...he treads the mystic way with practical feet". He was also known for his extreme rationality as well as his unending positive vision.

**"Endeavor, ceaseless endeavor, is required. Nothing short of an indomitable determination can possibly achieve it. Many a cause which past ages have regarded as purely visionary, yet in this day has become most easy and practicable."**

Easy and practicable with ceaseless endeavor and indomitable determination.

**"Why should this most great and lofty Cause—the daystar of the firmament of true civilization and the cause of the glory, the advancement, the well-being and the success of all humanity—be regarded as impossible of achievement?"**

Why should it be regarded as impossible? If a person lacks faith in humanity; if a person is buried in materialism and can't lift their vision higher than what's happening in front of them; if a person is filled with hate and intolerance; if a person is beaten by circumstances and hollowed-out by compromise; if attitudes like this hold sway in a person's life, of course world peace would seem impossible...

**"Surely the day will come when its beauteous light shall shed illumination upon the assemblage of man."**

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 66

He passed away on November 28, 1921, in what is now called Israel.

"In the land that we know as the Holy Land, in all its turbulent history of the last two thousand years, there had never been an event which could unite all its inhabitants of diverse faiths and origins and purposes, in a single expression of thought and feeling, as did the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Jews and Christians and Muslims and Druzes, of all persuasions and denominations; Arabs and Turks and Kurds and Armenians and other ethnic groups were united in mourning His passing, in being aware

of a great loss they had suffered.

H.M. Balyuzi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá—The Centre of the Covenant, p. 453

For a detailed analysis of why our age holds the hope that 'Abdu'l-Bahá believed in, consult [1]The Promise of World Peace...

**Please leave *Your thoughts and feelings* in the Comments.**

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1. <http://info.bahai.org/article-1-7-2-1.html>

2. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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RersWordids (2009-04-17 02:01:23)

nice, really nice!

### 2.3.14 Exuberant Emancipation !!! (2009-03-30 23:36)



We often feel paralyzed when it comes to taking action on social issues, even when we feel passionate about them.

Common excuses are:

I'm only one person...

I don't have enough information...

I don't know the right people...

What would my friends/family think of me...?

Filmmaker, Bitá Haidarian, probably felt all these excuses raise their heads but she stood up, faced them, and found solutions. That's her in the picture but, from what I've found out, I feel it's a parody of her—who she may have been before she found her Mission.

Her film, Finding Bibi, is best introduced by the words from [1]the site that's forming a full-blown Movement around the experience:

"Bitá Haidarian, an award-winning Iranian American filmmaker fresh out of film school, sets off on a journey around the world to answer the big questions—who am I, where do I come from, and where can a girl find a good laser hair removalist?"

"Born in America to Bahá'í refugee parents from Iran, Bitá tells the tragic-comic story of her

family coming to America, her childhood in Texas, trying to fit in, and competitive cheerleading—all part of the quest of a girl who knows more about MTV than Al Jazeera.”

The movie’s name comes from part of Bitá’s search for identity—finding [2]Mukhtaran Bibi, a Pakistani woman who suffered a gang rape as a form of ”honour revenge”, a custom of local tribesmen. Also by custom, she was expected to commit suicide. ”Instead, she spoke up, and using word of mouth, took her case to court where her rapists were arrested and charged.”

The introductory trailer for the upcoming movie is both educative and hilarious. Bitá’s interviews with intoxicated fans at a football game, first in her American clothes, then in robe and veil, are at once humorous and chilling. When she goes to Pakistan and introduces her ”Lower Your Gaze” glasses so men won’t be tempted to look at a woman’s face, she instructs while instilling trans-cultural good-will.

It’s all about spirited empowerment—irreverent respectfulness. In a word, Amazing!

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrwuMhg9430]

*Spiritual Quote:*

”Through your letter to the Universal House of Justice of 14 January you requested a copy of a purported Tablet of Bahá’u’lláh on the subject of humour, and we are instructed to inform you that no Tablet by the Blessed Beauty on this subject is known. However, in a Tablet Bahá’u’lláh states that one of the Names of God is the ’Humourist’.

”The Tablet mentioned above is revealed in the Arabic language. It has not to date been translated into English. Though it begins with the words, ’In My Name, the Humourist’...it is a serious mystical poem, revealed in the form of a prayer. The text does not illuminate the reference to the ’Humourist’. It is, however, interesting to note that, while dealing with an exalted theme, the language of expression is, unexpectedly, that of the common people —light, simple, and even colloquial.

The Universal House of Justice, 1997 Jan 12, *The Humourist*, p. 1

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1. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/findingbibibi/>

2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mukhtaran\\_Bibi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mukhtaran_Bibi)

3. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

4. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

Linda (2009-03-31 03:27:12)

I have heard about this movie but did not realize it had humor as well. May she have success with this!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-03-31 03:37:16)

Yes! May she have so much success that women, all over the globe, can reach a state of Empowerment!!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-01 14:12:19)

So glad you made it here!!!

Aree (2009-04-01 00:44:10)

just stopping and say hi, sheer!!!

Aree (2009-04-03 05:35:30)

just stopping and say hi...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-03 13:36:29)

Well, Hi right back!

Kikolani (2009-04-07 18:23:26)

Thanks for sharing this. That was really sad, the way people looked at her when she went into her robe & veil look compared to the way she was treated as a blonde all-American looking gal. Overall, with her quest to find Bibi and realize that it doesn't take money or fame to make a difference, it looks to be a really inspiring film. Kristi

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-07 18:33:27)

Yes! A really inspiring film!! I'm in touch with their staff and will be posting updates as the film nears completion!!!

What Will You Rebel For ? &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-05-02 01:25:03)

[...] I've posted about Bitia Haidarian and her upcoming film, Finding Bibi, three times so far (check out the links for two trailers of the film !): Exuberant Emancipation !!! [...]

## 2.4 April

### 2.4.1 Business Ethics ? (2009-04-01 23:19)

*Breaking News !*



If a business owner falls behind on their rent because of the lousy economic climate, yet creates a new business model that successfully meets the crisis, should the landlord evict them before they can recoup losses and pay the rent?

Back on the 18th of March, I posted the story of Sam Lippert and the Java Street Café, in Kettering, Ohio—[1]Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy. That was in the midst of the first media blitz because of Sam's creative commitment to taking all the prices off his menu and letting the customer determine their own fair price. Here's the link to the [2]live CNN interview with Sam from that post.

That seemingly crazy idea worked, very well! Sam's sales quickly increased. Before he implemented the no-price policy, he was tracking last year's sales dead-even. Since implementing it, his sales are 13 % higher than last year. Comparing March to January and February, his sales are up 32 %. And, if that's not enough proof, a food supplier informed Sam that, due to his good example, 15 restaurants in Michigan have adopted the no-price policy...

So...

On the 31st of March, the landlord called and said an eviction notice would be sent the week of April 6th.

Admittedly, the landlord is within their legal rights yet, in this business climate, why would they be willing to kick Java Street Café out when they're clearly showing their ability to weather the economic storm and thrive in spite of it? Do they feel they can quickly fill the space with another business in this economic downturn? Do they care? Is it possible they don't give a \_ \_ \_ \_ about Sam's ability to thrive and pay his debt because they can write it all off and "balance" their books with not a thought about what ethics in business means?

Speaking of business ethics, Sam, in the midst of crushing economic circumstances, made a commitment to a business model that put the customer in the driver's seat—gave the customer a chance to afford that cup of coffee or sandwich they may have been otherwise unable to justify purchasing.

Take a look at Sam's latest [3]Press Release...

By the way, Sam is open to offering *Franchise Opportunities* - Call him at: 937-294-5280

**My final question:**

**Who wins if the landlord kicks Sam out?**

*Spiritual Quote:*

"He feels you should both consider the competent running of your business not only a moral obligation to any creditors outstanding, but also the wise and proper thing to do."

from a letter written on behalf of Shoghí Effendí: 6 June 1954, Compilation on Trustworthiness

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/03/18/cafe-owner-thrives-with-no-pricing-policy/>
2. <http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/03/17/lippert.qanda/?iref=mpstoryview>
3. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/javastreetevictionpressrelease.doc>
4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
5. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Business Ethics Training Business Ethics ? =AB Our Evolution &laquo; (2009-04-02 16:14:10)

[...] Business Ethics ? ? Our Evolution By Alexander Zoltai Speaking of business ethics, Sam, in the midst of crushing economic circumstances, made a commitment to a business model that put the customer in the driver's seat?gave the customer a chance to afford that cup of coffee or sandwich they ... Our Evolution - <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/> [...]

rainforestrobin (2009-04-02 19:13:22)

Hi dear Alex, I loved this story and had not heard or read about Sam. He is brilliant! What an amazing shift in consciousness, especially in the business world. This is truly remarkable. As I read this I had this mini

vision of the world going in this direction. It will take a long time but it is where we are headed. How freeing it is. It puts responsibility back on the people in so many ways. It puts the power of choice back into their hands AND invites them to act responsibly. It says to them I think you are worthy of trusting, so I am going to trust you. It says, I think my product is good enough. I can't really put it in words Alex but it speaks to some goodness in people that our culture just has not done in donkey's years, esp the business world. It is revolutionary, visionary. Even if he is kicked out and can no longer rent their, I don't believe Sam has lost anything. He still wins. His ideas, morals, visions and ability to take risks and trust go with him. He is still the winner. The landlord has lost out in every way. This was a great read and insight for me and how I also want to approach things. Thank you so much. Hugs, Robin <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/>

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-02 19:50:26)

You said, " It puts the power of choice back into their hands AND invites them to act responsibly.", and you uncovered one of the most important parts of this saga—his customers must take a moment to consider Fairness!! Also, you are totally right about Sam winning, no matter what happens!!!!

Business Ethics ? « Our Evolution &laquo; Ethics (2009-04-02 20:17:10)

[...] Here is the original: Business Ethics ? « Our Evolution [...]

Linda (2009-04-03 01:39:30)

Such an interesting paradigm! The cafe decides to do business outside the 9 dots and the building owner decides he needs to flex some power. Well, Sam wins cause there are ethical building owners who would assist him in moving his cafe to another location. Customers will follow as the word will get out and Sam gets free advertising. So, Sam wins any way you look at it! Good for him and may he have a heck of year!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-03 13:38:13)

Yes, Sam wins and he is pursuing a transfer of the store...

An Ethical Business Press Release &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-04-09 15:15:15)

[...] Business Ethics? Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy Sam's Interview On CNN                      One final thought: [...]

## 2.4.2 Father Law ~ Mother Mercy (2009-04-07 18:03)



When did the Law become our parents?

Why aren't parents protecting their children?

Why do the powers-that-be feel it's their job to protect everyone's children?

I'm not talking about situations when the Law needs to intervene in criminal acts against children—physical violence in public spaces, kidnapping, physical abuse, and other such crimes.

What those questions relate to is the Importuning Law; specifically, importuning on a telecommunications device—soliciting sex on a computer from an underage person...

If you like to twist your mind around legalese here's [1]Ohio's Importuning Law.

The most startling part of the law is where it says the "offender" is guilty "...whether or not the offender knows the age of the other person."

This seems to mean that someone could be in an Internet chat room, believing the other person is 21 years old, and, if they're only 14, the "offender" is guilty of a felony...

Sound twisted to you?

Also, police are permitted to pose as underage persons and entrap "offenders". This has been [2]challenged in court.

There are a great variety of opinions surrounding these situations. One example is on [3]waspohio.org.

Here are those questions again, in a slightly different order:

When did the Law become our parents?

Why do the powers-that-be feel it's their job to protect everyone's children?

Why aren't parents protecting their children?

I'd love to have your comments and I hope the comment section becomes a riot of conversation!

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...it should be recognized that the ultimate solution to the problems of humanity lies not in penalties and punishments, but rather in spiritual education and illumination. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has written:

"It is incumbent upon human society to expend all its forces on the education of the people, and to copiously water men's hearts with the sacred streams that pour down from the Realm of the All-Merciful, and to teach them the manners of Heaven and spiritual ways of life, until every member of the community of man will be schooled, refined, and exalted to such a degree of perfection that the very committing of a shameful act will seem in itself the direst infliction and most agonizing of punishments, and man will fly in terror and seek refuge in his God from the very idea of crime, as something far harsher and more grievous than the punishment assigned to it."

The Universal House of Justice, 1992, Violence and Sexual Abuse of Women and Children

And, in a more detailed format:

"Proposal submitted by the Bahá'í International Community at the Pre-sessional open-ended Working Group on the Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child, Forty-first session of the Commission on Human Rights New York, USA 25 January 1985 Revised Article 16

1. In addition to academic education, the child shall be entitled to receive guidance training and education designed to promote his social, spiritual and moral development and well-being. 2. The fundamental objectives of such guidance, training and education shall be: a. To promote the harmonious development of the personality of the child and the realization of his full potential; b. To protect the child by developing his ability to resist outside influences or pressures likely to lead him into lawlessness or delinquency, or into practices injurious to his physical or mental health or to his social, spiritual or moral well-being; c. To prepare the child to exercise the rights and undertake the responsibilities of adult life in a manner consistent both with his own well-being and with the well-being of others; d. To foster in the child a respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and an attitude of understanding, respect and friendship towards all people, regardless of race, sex, class, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief. e. To foster in the child an awareness of and a desire to promote the principles of universal peace and brotherhood proclaimed in the Char-

ter of the United Nations. 3. The States Parties to the present Convention, bearing in mind that, in accordance with article 8, the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child rests with his parents or guardians, shall use their best efforts to: a. Raise the level of public awareness of the importance of the social, spiritual and moral education of the child, particularly during his early years; b. Promote recognition and understanding by all those concerned with the upbringing of the child, most particularly his parents or guardians of their indispensable role. and the primary importance of their example, in the social, spiritual and moral development of the child; c. Encourage schools to develop guidelines and courses of instruction designed to foster the social, spiritual and moral development of the child.

Bahá'í International Community: 1985 Jan 25 Question of a Convention on the Rights of the Child

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1. <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/2907.07>

2. [http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/03/24/loc\\_importuning.html](http://www.enquirer.com/editions/2004/03/24/loc_importuning.html)

3. <http://apps.wasphio.org/Forum/message/index.cfm?topicGroupID=2490&topicID=1815&messageID=23275&start=7&last=1>

4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

5. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Marilyn (2009-04-08 11:04:32)

It seems to me that simply understanding the spiritual laws regarding chastity, and the sanctions against sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman would go a LONG way to protecting children (and adults) from ego-driven uses to which some people are prone to put others. For many, the sex instinct can become an addiction that gradually drives the heedless into shameful and often dangerous and harmful acts. Yet used in the spirit and within the boundaries of marriage - thus sanctified - it can be a wholesome nourishment to the well-being of the human family. The spiritual quotes are well-taken. It is not something that can be adequately legislated - without providing proper education that includes the physical, mental AND spiritual purpose of our existence and our powers.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-08 14:11:19)

Thank you for a response that goes to the Heart of the whole issue! Spiritual solutions, as you indicate, must become rooted when the sapling is yet pliable. 'Abdu'l-Baha had something to say about trying to inculcate proper attitudes too late in life...

Liara Covert (2009-04-18 17:08:45)

Universal energy laws are not human creations. They are remembered through feeling and practice. Other laws however, are human creations. These laws are conceived to extend ego-mind control, to impose ideas and judge morality. Every energy being already has core understanding of what is right. All strife that is created is based on fear and selective amnesia of universal intrinsic value. Inner knowing reveals that any thought not focused on being completely loving and accepting of all is limiting and false. To deny self-determination and equality is not grounded in absolute truth but in ego's quest for power.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-18 17:16:46)

You said in your comment, "Other laws however, are human creations." I must agree for most other laws, at least in this litigious age in which we live Still, there are the Laws the Messengers of God have left us—the Source of the kindest, most just laws we still have...

Bob (2009-04-14 18:02:05)

I agree that we need to do every thing in our power to educate and protect our children. The witch hunt for sexual predators going on in the USA today is part of the problem, not the solution.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-14 18:06:34)

Thanks for that perceptive comment!

Liara Covert (2009-04-18 17:50:48)

Views of what law is differ widely. To sense Love is all there is, is not necessarily viewed as a law. It is a given reality for those beings who choose to experience and explore the depth of it.

### 2.4.3 An Ethical Business Press Release (2009-04-09 15:15)

#### "A WAKE" FOR JAVA STREET CAFÉ



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sam Lippert  
Tel: 937-294-5280  
Cell Phone: 734-301-0089

## Nationally Recognized Café Will Keep The Doors Open For Three Days Straight

It may be the end of the line for Java Street Café in Kettering, Ohio, at least at its present location. Grabbing attention from CNN, MSNBC, Fox, and three local channels back in March for taking all the prices off the menu, even showing a steady 13 % increase in sales since that bold move, hasn't been enough for the landlord. The Café is slated to close its doors at 6pm, Saturday, April 11th.

"The new policy has been a success.", says Sam Lippert, the owner, "Unfortunately, we have obligations, including back rent, from the old business model that seem to be derailing the whole thing."

Lippert had hoped that, with the success of the new business model, the landlord, B. R. Kettering Towne Center, LLC, located in California, would be convinced to have a little more patience. "It obviously didn't work", said Lippert, "I was informed that I had to leave the premises to avoid legal action. Even though my sales are climbing, I'm out of resources. I need to make the new business model as plain as day with the numbers I have. Then, I need about \$40,000 to pay my obligations, secure a new location, and get rolling again." Sam continues, "What I'm doing here has touched people from as far away as Toronto and Salt Lake City, has sparked interest in the business community, and is still expanding its presence in the blogosphere. It would be a shame to see it come to a complete end before it has a chance to significantly prove itself."

So, from 7am on Thursday, April 9th until 6pm on Saturday, April 11th, Sam will keep the doors open for business. He said, "This continuous operation, 24/3, will be our Wake for this incarnation of Java Street Café. It will also help me make payroll and raise awareness about the "Fair Price" business model. I may be under the gun right now, but this business plan works and I'm going to do everything I can to make it keep happening."

# # #

If you'd like more information about this topic, or would like to schedule an interview, tender suggestions, or offer assistance, call Sam Lippert at 937-294-5280 or Cell at 734-301-0089.

Previous Posts about Java Street Café:

[1]Business Ethics?

[2]Cafe owner thrives with no-pricing policy

[3]Sam's Interview On CNN

### One final thought:

Incompetent bankers can get billions. One ethical, main street business man finds it extremely difficult to find thousands...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"In collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the European Bahá'í Business

Forum, a voluntary association of Bahá'í business professionals, recently produced a joint working paper entitled "Socially Responsible Enterprise Restructuring." The report has served as a basis for several training sessions organized by the ILO and has been disseminated to governments, employers associations and workers' organizations throughout the world. The European Bahá'í Business Forum has also conducted a series of seminars on business ethics in eastern Europe and has formed an educational partnership with AIESEC, one of the largest organizations of business students in the world.

"As a practical step in contributing to a dialogue about development and social transformation that explicitly takes account of spiritual values and perspectives, some 100 influential development organizations, international and government agencies, religious representatives, and academics recently gathered in New Delhi to participate in a colloquium on the theme of Science, Religion and Development. The primary goal of the event was to explore how a unified interaction between scientific methods and religious insights can promote the building of human capacity, particularly in the areas of governance, education, technology and economic activity. The event was organized by the Bahá'í community of India and the Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity, a research agency of the Bahá'í International Community. At the global level, Bahá'ís have also been involved in the very constructive World Faiths Development Dialogue between the World Bank and major religions."

Bahá'í International Community, 2001 May 28-31, Overcoming Corruption in Public Institutions

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/04/01/business-ethics/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/03/18/cafe-owner-thrives-with-no-pricing-policy/>
3. <http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/03/17/lippert.qanda/?iref=mpstoryview>
4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
5. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

## 2.4.4 Women, Stereotypes, and Truth (2009-04-13 16:19)



This is Bitá Haidarian, Iranian/American Filmmaker.

She's creating an amazing new film called Finding Bibi.

Here are just a few of the places you can become excited about this film:

[1]Mideast Youth - Thinking Ahead, where you'll find a podcast with Bitá talking about why she's making the film.

[2]MySpace, where they give you a hint of the issues in the film:

"Bitá takes her youthful irreverence and unique vantage point as a woman of both east and west and looks at bizarre variations on pornography in the Middle East, the Ecstasy "Rave" parties in Tehran, the lone female rickshaw driver in Delhi, as well as interview such notables as Anousheh Ansari (first female space explorer), Pakistani Super Model Amna Haq, and human rights activist Mukhtaran Bibi in Pakistan."

[3]FaceBook, where Bitá keeps us up to date on her progress.

And, the [4]Finding Bibi WebSite, where you can get involved with the Movement gathering around this film!

### Here's the captivating trailer:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrwuMhg9430>]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"When all mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war will be utterly destroyed. Without equality this will be impossible because all differences and distinction are conducive to discord and strife. Equality be-

tween men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to sanction it. Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifices upon the battlefield after twenty years of anxiety and loving devotion in rearing them from infancy, no matter what cause they are called upon to defend. There is no doubt that when women obtain equality of rights, war will entirely cease among mankind.”

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 175

**Please leave *Your* thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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1. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/2009/02/05/podcast-finding-bibi-interview-with-iranian-american-film-maker-bitahaidarian/>
2. <http://www.myspace.com/findingbibithemovie>
3. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/FINDING-BIBI/42991485739?ref=ts>
4. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/findingbibi/filmupdate1/>
5. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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alahmari2007 (2009-04-15 16:44:17)  
thanks

What Will You Rebel For ? &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-05-02 01:25:12)  
[...] Women, Sterotypes, and Truth [...]

## 2.4.5 Religion and Wildlife (2009-04-16 18:25)



In a story from OneWorld, [1]Eco-Islam: Malaysia's Imams to preach against poaching, it says: "Muslim preachers in Malaysia are using teachings from the Koran to raise awareness and help preserve endangered species, many of which reside in the Southeast Asian island nation."

This is an extremely hopeful sign in a prevailing culture that most often sees the natural world as a mere Resource, ripe for exploitation.

Malaysia is also one of the 18 countries considered to be [2]MegaDiverse; in other words, "countries that harbor the majority of the earth's species and are therefore considered extremely biodiverse."

On the [3]World Wildlife Fund site (where you can check all the MegaDiverse countries) they say something very powerful. You may already know this but, I feel, it bears near constant repetition:

**"The Earth is at a critical point where the decisions and actions taken by one species—ours—will determine the future of all life."**

For me, as a Bahá'í, religion supporting conservation of animal species is a no-brainer; but, I'd rather quote folks more eloquent than me...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Among the principles guiding the Bahá'í approach to conservation and sustainable development, the following are of particular importance:

» nature reflects the qualities and attributes of God and should, therefore, be greatly respected and cherished;

» all things are interconnected and flourish according to the law of reciprocity; and

» the oneness of humanity is the fundamental spiritual and social truth shaping our age.

”Bahá’í Scriptures describe nature as an emanation of God’s will:

”Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. Nature is God’s Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise.”

The Bahá’í International Community, 1995 Apr 06, Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Bahá’í Faith

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1. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/361885-eco-islam>
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megadiverse\\_Countries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megadiverse_Countries)
3. [http://www.panda.org/who\\_we\\_are/](http://www.panda.org/who_we_are/)
4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
5. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Liara Covert (2009-04-17 23:05:33)

Providence reminds each being is perfect at the core, even if certain memory lapses affect thoughts and behaviour. NOthing you can think, say or do lessens the love that is available to you every moment.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-17 23:18:30)

Thanks for that, Liara!

anotherworldcitizen (2009-04-16 18:45:16)

I always enjoy the spiritual posts on conservation and stewardship of God’s creation. Environmentalism and Religion go hand in hand.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-16 18:50:56)

Thanks for the positive feedback!

Sen McGlinn (2009-04-17 12:39:30)

"By God! This people have never been, nor are they now, inclined to mischief. ... Their concern hath ever been and now is for the betterment of the world. (Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 122) The 'betterment of the world' ('islaah-ye 'aalaam)is not limited to the human, societal world: 'aalaam is the whole world. There's more on this phrase (and its more dubious partner, madaniyyah on my blog under "civilization": <http://tinyurl.com/bahaicivilization>

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-17 18:00:29)

Thanks for a comment that teaches!!

Anne (2009-04-19 21:48:06)

Thanks for the analysis of "betterment of the world", I loved that! I also love to see the connections between religion and environmentalism. A wonderful statement on climate change has been released by the Baha'i International Community: <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/featured/Climate-Change-paper.pdf>. For many more resources see the Baha'i inspired International Environment Forum: <http://www.bcca.org/ief/home.htm>

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-19 22:03:31)

So glad you appreciated the post!! Also, very glad you supplied the links to the BIC on environment and the IEF !!!

## 2.4.6 Worshipping with Popcorn (2009-04-18 17:07)



*blog topics?"*

*"Worshipping with popcorn? Has Alex run out of worthy*

Nope, this may just be one of my best yet...

The country is Brazil. The protagonist is 36-year-old Valdir Novaki—used to be an itinerant farm laborer, a newsagent, then a car park driver. Now he's a *Popcorn Entrepreneur*.

*Hey, Alex, what about the "worshipping"?*

Worshipping?

Oh, yeah, in just a second...

On the site I discovered him, [1]GlobalVoices, they say:

"Despite the fact that Valdir only had the opportunity to finish elementary school, he now coaches students and business people of all ranks. For just over a year, Valdir has travelled around Brazil giving motivational lectures, entrepreneurship tips, and maybe some inspiration."

Valdir even has a website, [2]PipocadoValdir. Check it out! This is no *mere* popcorn man. He even gives his customers a "hygiene kit" with a napkin, a toothpick and a mint candy.



You can also watch the five news videos about his business by clicking the Valdir na Mídia link; and, the real kicker is the [3]slowmotion video of popcorn popping!!

Here's my favorite quote from Valdir:

“Oh, every day I'm in a good mood. And the key thing is to look back in hindsight. If we look back in hindsight, you will see that there are people [living in] much worse [conditions] than us. I'm healthy, I'm working, my family is not in need... So, it is only joy! Thus we overcome difficulties! I have always a smile on my face because, as I always say, the smile is the shortest distance between two people. And for me to be a popcorn seller, I have to be happy.”

*O.K., Alex, he's a great guy who's conquered many obstacles in life and maintained a happy attitude, he's an innovative entrepreneur and respects his larger social responsibilities... What about "Worshipping"?!*

Oh, right. Check out this quote...

*Spiritual Quote:*

“The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability, conscientiously, concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God. Briefly, *all effort and exertion put forth by man from the fullness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity.* This is worship: to serve mankind and to minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer. A physician ministering to the sick, gently, tenderly, free from prejudice and believing in the solidarity of the human race, he is giving praise.”

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 176

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1. <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2009/04/10/brazil-tips-to-face-the-crisis-from-a-street-popcorn-seller/>
2. <http://www.pipocadovaldir.com.br/>
3. [http://www.pipocadovaldir.com.br/videos\\_interessantes.php](http://www.pipocadovaldir.com.br/videos_interessantes.php)
4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>
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Liara Covert (2009-04-18 17:52:30)

Some human beings give up watching television, give up ingesting news and videos. Some people have never experienced what technologies have to offer. These individuals have less distractions, less noise in the mind to prevent them from reconnecting to the core truth.

### 2.4.7 Law and Terror (2009-04-21 16:52)



What good is government?

Why do people need government?

How much government is too much government?

Take those three questions to your favorite hangout and you can guarantee at least spirited discussion, if not an actual fight...

As humanity has evolved through the stages of Family, Tribe, City-State, and Nation, various forms of government have been organized. Some worked, some didn't. Some helped people, some oppressed people.

The United States recently elected a new head of state, Barack Hussein Obama. Many hailed his inauguration as a new force in America and the world. Many are troubled by what he stands for.

I certainly don't envy his position of power, the problems associated with the day to day administration of a government that must deal, in some way, with terrorist groups or movements; especially for anyone with what appear to be Obama's beliefs.

People criticize him for his stance on "engagement" rather than acting from advantage, his apparent desire to induce the unity of contending parties, his relative inexperience in the harsh world of Washington politics.

I can only hope he has some chance to make some of the changes that some of his words seem to portend. I want to see the world unified. I don't want my grandchild to live in a squandered or terrorized world. I don't want my grandchild's grandchildren to have no civilization at all, no government organizations or protections.

Mr. Obama recently gave a speech to the members of the CIA. It's rather remarkable when compared with the attitude of the last American administration. I pray he means what he says and I pray he can influence the powers that be to create what he envisions in this video:

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-dYM2RkSSU &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The realization of human rights does not involve only action by the government or freedom from unjust government interference or oppression; rather it requires the construction of a progressive social order from the ground level upwards. It demands a new awareness of the reality of human unity and the development among all peoples of an all inclusive notion of community that extends from the family, to villages, towns, cities and localities, to nations, and, most importantly, to the boundaries of the planet itself. Moreover, given that rights cannot exist without corresponding responsibilities, each member of a community has a responsibility to uphold the rights of the other members based on a recognition of their unity and interdependence."

Bahá'í International Community, 1993 Feb, *Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*

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Daily News About Obama : Best links about Obama - Tuesday, 21 April 2009 19:20 (2009-04-21 17:48:08)  
[...] Law and Terror [...]

Barney (2009-04-22 16:04:06)

Thanks for this interesting and thought-provoking post. The quotation from the Baha'i International Community statement on human rights and fundamental freedoms is particularly apt. I was at a meeting this morning in London at which Dominic Grieve MP, who is the Conservative Party's spokesman on justice and human rights (the Conservatives are currently the Opposition party in the UK Parliament) talk about how the Conservatives would be likely to develop human rights legislation if/when they come to power. They are concerned about the question of responsibilities too. Of course, one cannot make the holding of rights conditional on the observance of responsibilities, but, as the BIC statement says, we all have a responsibility to uphold the rights of others - a position that all political parties in the UK would subscribe to.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-23 19:24:53)

I've always found your intimate involvement with various levels of UK civic and governmental society extremely fascinating!

#### 2.4.8 Finding Bibi (2009-04-24 04:16)



I covered this story in two previous posts, [1] *Women, Stereotypes, and Truth* and [2] *Exuberant Emancipation !!!*.

Not only is it a forthcoming movie about rational rebelling but it also deals with breaking down the barriers to equality for women.

I recommend you check out one of the previous posts to watch the first trailer; then, return to watch the one in this post—they're similar but definitely not identical.

Also, check out news about [3]the movement forming around the film and make your voice heard...

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPX7AfbCVBY &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...there must be an equality of rights between men and women. Women shall receive an equal privilege of education. This will enable them to qualify and progress in all degrees of occupation and accomplishment. For the world of humanity possesses two wings: man and woman. If one wing remains incapable and defective, it will restrict the power of the other, and full flight will be impossible. Therefore, the completeness and perfection of the human world are dependent upon the equal development of these two wings."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 317

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2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/03/30/exuberant-emancipation/>

3. <http://www.mideastyouth.com/findingbibi/about/>

4. <http://ourevolution.freeforums.org/>

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Burdak MP (2009-04-24 08:41:38)

Hi Friend! Do You think some of your ideas are equal or greater than those of the notable thinkers of the present era and the last centuries and they have potential to change the world for the better. If so, you may have a right ventilator at my Blog. So come and check and put your ideas as comments to my questions at the address below. <http://thinkerspool.blogspot.com/>

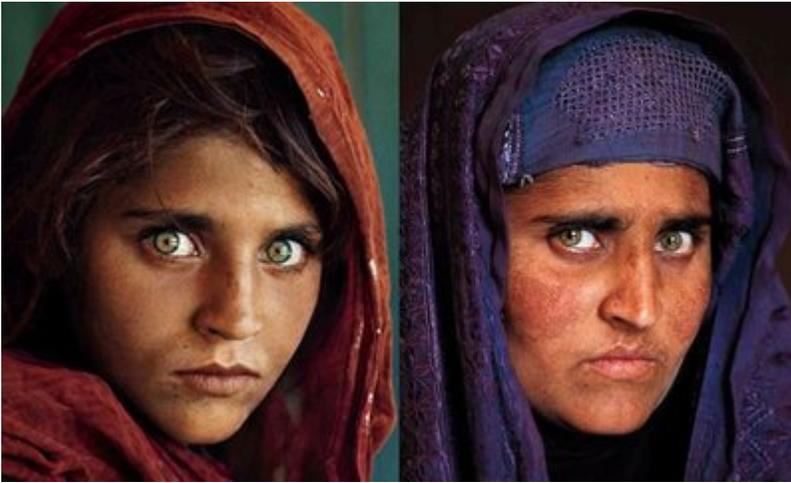
Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-24 08:48:32)

I checked out your blog and hope you continue to visit mine!

What Will You Rebel For ? &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-05-02 01:25:17)

[...] Finding Bibi [...]

## 2.4.9 The Girl Effect, Revisited . . . (2009-04-27 01:59)



[1]

[2]image credit

Both images (the same person) are from National Geographic. The one on the left taken in 1984, the right in 2002, in Afghanistan.

The woman was interviewed in 2002. Here's an excerpt:

Had she ever felt safe?

"No. But life under the Taliban was better. At least there was peace and order."

Had she ever seen the photograph of herself as a girl?

"No."

She can write her name, but cannot read. She harbors the hope of education for her children. "I want my daughters to have skills," she said. "I wanted to finish school but could not. I was sorry when I had to leave."

Education, it is said, is the light in the eye. There is no such light for her. It is possibly too late for her 13-year-old daughter as well, Sharbat Gula said. The two younger daughters still have a chance.

This is a story repeated far too often in our world but there is strong reason for hope!

One among many reasons for hope is a site called [3]The Girl Effect and I can't urge you strongly enough to click that link and at least watch the really awesome video !

Here is [4]a PDF file of their Fact Sheet and here's an excerpt from that Fact Sheet:

### The Ripple Effect

- When a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later and has 2.2 fewer children.
- An extra year of primary school boosts girls' eventual wages by 10 to 20 percent. An extra year of secondary school: 15 to 25 percent.
- Research in developing countries has shown a consistent relationship between better infant and child health and higher levels of schooling among mothers.
- When women and girls earn income, they reinvest 90 percent of it into their families, as compared to only 30 to 40 percent for a man.

### Population Trends

- Today, more than 600 million girls live in the developing world.

### Girls Count !

Here are two videos from their site:

[youtube=[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e\\_XemXxJQ4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e_XemXxJQ4)]

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFxcUT4oCxU>]

### *Spiritual Quotes:*

"The world of humanity has two wings – one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of women becomes equal to the world of men in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 288<

"As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 133

**Please leave *Your thoughts and feelings in the Comments.***

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3. <http://www.girleffect.org/#/home/>
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#### 2.4.10 Exploitation Is Rape !, Revisited (2009-04-29 13:06)



[1]

*This is a reprint of a post from Aug, 19, 2008. It's still very appropriate...*

People, traditionally suppressed in their complaint about exploitation, are rising up !

**From CommonDreams.Org:** [2][Chevron Lobbyist: 'We Can't Let Little Countries Screw Around With Big Companies'](#) "Chevron Hires Lobbyists To Squeeze Ecuador in Toxic-Dumping Case"

**From OneWorld.Net:** [3][Activists Applaud India Coke Plant Closure](#) "Coca-Cola has shut down its bottling plant in Sinhachawar, India following a vigorous community-led campaign that protested the factory's illegal occupation of land and exposed its "shocking" levels of pollution, reports a local corporate abuse watchdog."

First men, then corporations run by men. First women, then mother earth...

What supports us as a human family has been and is being raped. People with no discernable heart are walking on our hearts with filthy, greedy boots.

The little "boy", who used to dote on his "mother" and was her pride and joy, has reached "adulthood" and is threatening to sever relations with his best support.

Thank God all this is relatively temporary: people are rising up and saying no, mother earth is showing us some tough love, corporations that used to be free of opposition are facing tough times.

I feel today's quote will add perspective to the issue:

"A candid acknowledgement that prejudice, war and exploitation have been the expression of immature stages in a vast historical process and that the human race is today experiencing the unavoidable tumult which marks its collective coming of age is not a reason for despair but a prerequisite to undertaking the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world. That such an enterprise is possible, that the necessary constructive forces do exist, that unifying social structures can be erected, is the theme we urge you to examine."

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 Oct, [4][The Promise of World Peace](#), p. 1

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4. <http://info.bahai.org/article-1-7-2-1.html>
5. [http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog\\_comments\\_still\\_matter.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/blog_comments_still_matter.php)
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Marilyn (2009-04-29 22:18:40)

What a way you have with words, Alex! And I say "YES!" If we do not defend our dear mother, ours will be (and is) the loss.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-04-29 22:25:09)

So good to have your comment! Words? It's said they can clothe the maids of heaven with meaning. I attribute any word-crafting I do that succeeds in carrying meaning to Bahá'u'lláh...

## 2.5 May

### 2.5.1 What Will You Rebel For ? (2009-05-02 01:24)



If three times is a charm, what's four times?

A done deal?

I've posted about Bitá Haidarian and her upcoming film, Finding Bibi, three times so far (check out the links for two trailers of the film !):

- [1]Exuberant Emancipation !!!
- [2]Women, Sterotypes, and Truth
- [3]Finding Bibi

For this fourth post, since the Movement that's evolving around the film is reaching a peak of excitement, I'll publish the latest press release:

Finding Bibi

Austin, TX

New York, NY

[4][www.FindingBibi.com](http://www.FindingBibi.com)

Founded by Bitá Haidarian in 2009

Contact: Todd Brogan ([todd@findingbibi.com](mailto:todd@findingbibi.com)), Head of Creative Expansion

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 30, 2009  
FILMMAKER'S FANS MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD  
Voters to Decide New Organization's First Project

Iranian-American documentary filmmaker Bitá Haidarian, whose work has been described as "the best hope for film and politics in Australia," launched a groundbreaking organization in March, and her democratic approach is already bearing fruit.

More than 200 fans voted in round one to decide the organization's first-ever project. The three winning submissions vary widely, though all share the stories of women striving for empowerment. One idea suggests providing cameras to individuals participating in empowerment programs, which

they would use to create short films on topics of their choice. Another idea proposes that Finding Bibi organize “hijab flashmobs” as a show of solidarity with women discriminated against for wearing head coverings. The final proposal would have Finding Bibi recruiting young women and girls to become journalists, reporting on the status of women in their region and having those reports carried on major networks.

Haidarian and her volunteer staff closed the site to new submissions and reviewed the top three ideas. This morning, they submitted the proposals (with notes added) to fans for one last round of voting. The polls will close in two weeks, at which point Haidarian will announce the winning project and her plans for making it a reality. Fans can vote by visiting [5]FindingBibi.com and clicking ‘Discuss’.

The project contest and the organization were announced in March, both rooted in the spirit of Haidarian’s upcoming film Finding Bibi, which follows her on a journey of self discovery and in search of a “great female story.” Haidarian, the daughter of Baha’i religious refugees from Iran, gave her fans a deciding voice in the new initiative from the start. Fans submitted 20 ideas using the ranking site Slinkset, similar to applications used in social bookmarking sites like Digg. They were then able to vote for or against each other’s ideas.

“We are inspired by so many of the ideas that were submitted, and we’re especially pleased with those that won the first round,” said Haidarian. “We’re hoping for more votes in the final round, and looking forward to input from an even more diverse crowd.” The website, FindingBibi.com, also features updates on the film and its most recent trailer, as well as regular blog posts on the constantly innovating organization. The film is slated for completion late this year.

# # # If you would like more information about Finding Bibi the film or organization, please direct all questions to Todd Brogan at [todd@findingbibi.com](mailto:todd@findingbibi.com).

*Spiritual Quote:*

”That men and women differ from one another in certain characteristics and functions is an inescapable fact of nature and makes possible their complementary roles in certain areas of the life of society; but it is significant that ’Abdu’l-Bahá has stated that in this Dispensation ’Equality of men and women, except in some negligible instances, has been fully and categorically announced’.”  
The Universal House of Justice, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 7

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3. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/04/24/finding-bibi/>
4. <http://findingbibi.com/>

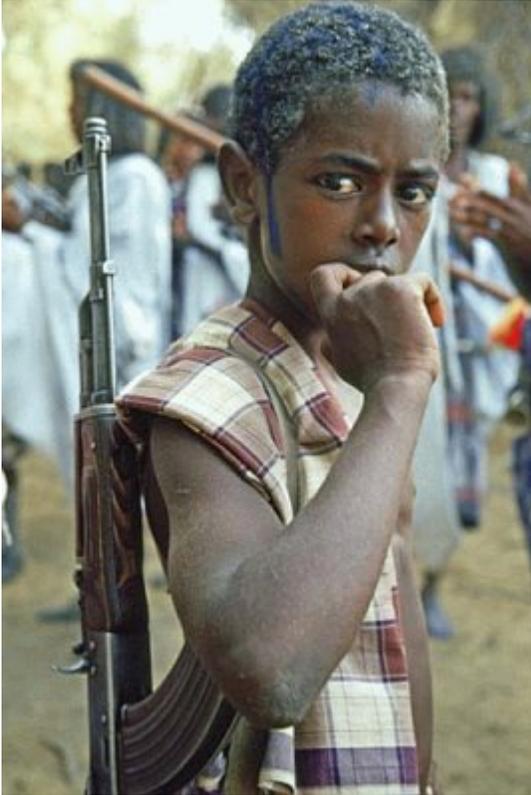
5. <http://findingbibi.com/>

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## 2.5.2 Child Soldiers, Updated (2009-05-05 14:40)

[1]Image Credit



In a recent report from TerraViva-Europe, [2]RIGHTS: RECRUITERS OF CHILD SOLDIERS DEFY UN PRESSURE, I found this statement about attempts to eradicate the use of child soldiers:

”Asked how the United Nations could remedy the situation, or rein in non-state armed groups, Joost R. Hiltermann of the International Crisis Group told IPS there is ‘no easy answer’ to the question.

”I doubt the United Nations could do anything about it other than highlighting the issue and reinforcing the ban on the use of children in conflict, especially for such nefarious purposes,’ he said, referring specifically to suicide bombers in Iraq.”

That report made me have to revise and reprint this post from February 4th:

Imagine a child deciding to join an army because it’s the only choice that will assure food every day...

Imagine a male child being abducted to fight a war or a female child being abducted to be a sex slave for the male child-soldiers...

Now, Imagine more than 300,000 such children...

This is an extremely sobering fact about our human family.

In 1959, 50 years ago, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations published a Declaration of the Rights of the Child and yet, today, we can read in a report from the U. S. Department of State:

"Some children have been forced to commit atrocities against their families and communities. Child soldiers are often killed or wounded, with survivors often suffering multiple traumas and psychological scarring. Their personal development is often irreparably damaged. Returning child soldiers are often rejected by their home communities."

Imagine a country in which [3]"...shooting video, owning a video, speaking in a video, sharing a video, or even shouting out in glee after watching television, can earn you years in jail."

That country is Burma...

Imagine a web site that uses video to not only bring international crimes to the public's attention but is noted for having its videos become central to the arrest of a warlord in Africa that is alleged to have used child soldiers in his conflicts.

That site is [4]The Hub, "The global platform for human rights media and action: See It - Film It - Change It."

That warlord is Thomas Lubanga Dyilo and his trial is the first for the [5]International Criminal Court, "... the first permanent, treaty based, international criminal court established to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community."

You can follow the trial at [6]*The Lubanga Trial at the International Criminal Court*.

Often, in my scanning the news for current issues and crises of our global human family, I'm totally devastated by what I find...

This is one of those occasions.....

All I can add to this report is:

*A Spiritual Quote:*

"O Thou kind Lord! These lovely children are the handiwork of the fingers of Thy might and the wondrous signs of Thy greatness. O God! Protect these children, graciously assist them to be educated and enable them to render service to the world of humanity. O God! These children are pearls, cause them to be nurtured within the shell of Thy loving-kindness.

"Thou art the Bountiful, the All-Loving."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Compilations, *Baha'i Prayers*, p. 34

Please leave *Your* thoughts and feelings in the Comments.

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### 2.5.3 Women, Rights, and Water (2009-05-07 20:49)

[1]image credit



Women are important.

Rights are important.

Water is important.

So, why are so many women so challenged when it comes to getting water? (to see some fascinating yet chilling visual evidence, click on "image credit" at the top of this post)

[2]From OneWorld.Net: "Women and girls in developing countries bear significant economic, physical, and health burdens to provide water for their families on a daily basis – 'this is the forgotten glass ceiling', write sustainable water experts John Sauer and Andra Tamburro."

The article goes on to say:

"Women in poor communities across Asia, Africa, and South America typically walk an average of 3 miles a day to fetch water for their households, often from contaminated sources such as rivers, unprotected springs, and shallow wells...The time this takes could be spent instead on income-generating activities, education, and caring for the family. Moreover, the quality of water that women in developing nations must bring home puts people at risk of deadly diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and amoebic dysentery, diarrheal diseases that kill more children under five than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined."

Why is this happening?  
What can be done about it?  
How will worsening climate change affect the situation?

Some of the answers can be found at OneWorld.Net's [3]Water and Sanitation guide.

The intro to the guide states:

"The achievement of providing 1.6 billion people with access to safe drinking water since 1990 is potentially jeopardised by the absence of matching investment in sanitation. The lack of hygienic facilities experienced by 2.5 billion people is a fundamental cause of disease which leads to 1.5 million deaths of children each year. Climate change uncertainties cast a menacing shadow over the efforts of developing countries to honour their citizens' rights to safe water and sanitation."

It continues with these topics (along with many links to further information):

Millennium Development Goals and Water and Sanitation  
The Sanitation Deficit  
The Benefits of Water and Sanitation  
The Right to Water and Sanitation  
Water and Sanitation in Global Politics  
Local Governance of Water and Sanitation  
Water is a Finite Resource  
Climate Change and Water

Like most of the problems afflicting humanity, nothing significant will happen to rectify the situation until the people in-charge and the people affected attain some measure of Unity...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Women have equal rights with men upon earth; in religion and society they are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 133

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1. <http://www.sacbee.com/static/weblogs/photos/2009/03/020938.html>
2. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/362103-undo-water-burden-placed-women>
3. <http://uk.oneworld.net/guides/water>
4. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Lauren (2009-05-07 22:52:12)

Alex, I so admire the breadth of the work you are doing, and reading this post, and others on the abuses of woman and children, I ask myself how can astrology benefit such devastation to so many members of our human family? On May 27 Jupiter, Neptune, and Chiron conjoin in Aquarius shortly before each celestial body stations retrograde; Neptune and water, Jupiter and justice, Chiron and healing; all three in the sign of Aquarius offering an awakening in human consciousness. I follow the wisdom of Krishnamurti and feel that change in consciousness comes from within each individual .....do you feel a change in human consciousness in the air? Lauren

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-07 22:57:07)

I absolutely know a change in human consciousness is in the air and in more and more people's minds and hearts. You may have noticed from this blog that I'm a Baha'i. I was the child of ministers and for most of my life I avoided organized religions; yet, the way the Baha'i Faith is organized, service for humanity is considered a form of worship. Can't fall asleep in the pew if you're busy helping others, eh?

Marilyn (2009-05-07 23:02:45)

Alex, This one is especially timely. I agree with Lauren about the great and significant breadth of your blogging. I'll share it with my students who are studying Millennium Development Goals and wondering what they can do to heal the planet and awaken people to their potential. Yesterday I found and showed them an amazingly hopeful video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5pbw1Lf49c> &feature=related

Marilyn (2009-05-07 23:04:09)

PS. Did you know that the country with the highest percentage of women involved in parliamentary positions is Rwanda? It represents a turn-around we could all be considering!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-07 23:13:52)

Thank you, Marilyn, for pointing out that video!! I'm going to make it the focus of my next blog post!!! Also, I appreciate your sharing the post with your students but I hope you'll share what they think...

Jose Sinclair (2009-05-08 21:59:39)

Great blog, nice design, good writing and I like the issues you are promoting. Great work all around! It's time we took care of each other rather than giving all our money to corporations who think nothing of walking over individuals to achieve temporary profits. When we are all healthy and safe, worldwide, then we will achieve progress and a better standard of living for everyone - until this happens the human tragedy is unmeasurable. We are letting our present-day Da Vincis and Einsteins die before they can grow up and contribute. Re: change of consciousness in the air - "The only constant is change" - Alan Watts (there's ALWAYS a change in consciousness going on, I think we call this evolution of mind and spirit over time) Great work, peace, Jose Sinclair <http://wmsinclair.blogspot.com> <http://nationalrage.blogspot.com>

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-09 12:57:56)

Thanks for your insight on constant consciousness change!

#### 2.5.4 We Really Are One Big Family (2009-05-10 01:33)



One of the comments to our last post, from a good friend of mine from Japan, said I was being "timely" in posting about Women, Rights, and Water; then, she left a link for a delightful video which is below.

The video made me review my understanding of the  
Millennium Development Goals.  
Don't know what they are?

They're a huge commitment by lots of people to resolve a host of Our Family's problems...

Below is a list of the goals and each listing is a link. Check out the one that attracts you most... Then check out the rest so you can tell others about them!

MILLENNIUM  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- [1]End Poverty and Hunger
- [2]Universal Education
- [3]Gender Equality
- [4]Child Health
- [5]Maternal Health
- [6]Combat HIV/AIDS
- [7]Environmental Sustainability
- [8]Global Partnership

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5pbw1Lf49c]

*Spiritual Quote:*

”The modern national state came into existence as a unifier of diverse races and peoples. It has been a social truce observed by or enforced upon communities previously separate, independent and hostile. Historically the nation represented a great moral victory, a definite and important stage in human progress. It has raised the condition of the masses of people, substituted constitutional law for the arbitrary authority of the tribe, extended education and knowledge, mitigated the effect of sectarian disputes, and enlarged the social world of the average man. It provided conditions under which natural science could develop, inventions be put into operation, and industrialization give man mastery over nature.

”The new powers and resources made possible by the nation could not be confined within the national boundary but produced an internationalism of cause and effect in social relationships which no nation could control. The national state has reached the limits of its development as an independent, self-directed social body. A world science, a world economy and a world consciousness, riding the wave of a new and universal movement of spiritual evolution, lay the foundations of world order. Conceived of as an end in itself, the national state has come to be a denial of the oneness of mankind, the source of general disruption opposed to the true interests of its people. From the depths of man’s divine endowment stirs response to the affirmation of oneness which gives this age its central impetus and direction. Society is undergoing transformation, to effect a new order based on the wholeness of human relationships.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1947 Feb, A Baha’i Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights

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1. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml>
2. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/education.shtml>
3. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/gender.shtml>
4. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/childhealth.shtml>
5. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/maternal.shtml>
6. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/aids.shtml>
7. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/environ.shtml>
8. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/global.shtml>
9. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Lauren (2009-05-10 02:38:02)

Hi Alex, Thank you for a wonderful post. A fabulous testimony of human love and care in the world. No sleeping in the pew! The ending of the quote from the Baha'i International Community reminds me of the lesson offered Saturn in Virgo.... a society based upon the wholeness of human relationships.....that is a goal definitely worth working to achieve. Lauren

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-10 03:12:19)

Right on: "No sleeping in the pew" especially when working to establish "a society based upon the wholeness of human relationships" !!

rainforestrobin (2009-05-11 00:44:45)

Hi Dear Alex, You have some highly important posts here. I've just been scrolling back through several of them and am proud of you for making us all more aware. I've was watching the Bibi trailers and reading about women and water, which I've previously read about. So it was so good to see it here. I am humbled by your commitment to awaken those around you. You are one person making a difference. And I am deeply grateful as well as proud to know you and connect. Hugs, Robin

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-11 01:14:57)

Let's keep the praise-ledger balanced, sister... ;-) "You have some highly important posts here." Yeah, well what about your posts on Naked in Eden? <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/> "...am proud of you for making us all more aware." Ditto, sweetie!! You're the Goddess of Awareness!! "I am humbled by your commitment to awaken those around you. You are one person making a difference." Hmm... I've noticed your commitment to awakening. And, between you and me, there's two of us making some kind of difference... "I am deeply grateful as well as proud to know you and connect." I'm so grateful and proud of you that I'm bestowing you with the Magic Bunny Award!!! (\ - -/) (='. '=) (") \_(")

Robin Easton (2009-05-12 21:39:43)

Oh Alex, this is simply lovely and loving what you wrote here. I am very touched. And I laughed over the Magic Bunny Award. Sending you a great BIG hug. Robin

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-13 03:19:12)

You deserve all the praise I offer and much more, Robin!

## 2.5.5 Blogging Is A Crime ? (2009-05-14 13:39)



Blogging is a crime in certain countries: Burma, Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Egypt, China, Vietnam, Cuba, and Turkmenistan.

I knew that blogging and certain other online activities were considered criminal but I have to thank my friend George at [1]*Bahá ĭ Views* for posting about the site [2] Committee to Protect Journalists.

In a recent Special Report, they say:

“Bloggers are at the vanguard of the information revolution and their numbers are expanding rapidly,” said CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon. “But governments are quickly learning how to turn technology against bloggers by censoring and filtering the Internet, restricting online access and mining personal data. When all else fails, the authorities simply jail a few bloggers to intimidate the rest of the online community into silence or self-censorship.”

I happen to live in the United States and we certainly have issues to deal with in terms of freedom of expression but I would still be a blogger in any of the countries mentioned because I’m sure I would find out about [3]Reporters Without Borders and their well-documented methods to circumvent repression and restraint against freedom of speech.

Just before I include my Spiritual Quote for this post, I want to reproduce the pictures from CPJ’s article to add the color of the human dimension to these very black words...



Turkmen soldiers guard an Internet cafe in Ashgabat. (Reuters)



Sánchez's Generación Y is among a small but emerging group of independent Cuban blogs. (CPJ)



Zarganar is serving a 59-year prison term. (AP)



Amer is jailed for insulting the president and Islam. (Reuters)

*Spiritual Quote:*

16 June 1912 Talk at Central Congregational Church Hancock Street, Brooklyn, New York

"This is a goodly temple and congregation, for—praise be to God!—this is a house of worship wherein conscientious opinion has free sway. Every religion and every religious aspiration may be freely voiced and expressed here. Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled, whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail—that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs—development and growth are inevitable. Therefore, this is a blessed church because its pulpit is open to every religion, the ideals of which may be set forth with openness and freedom. For this reason I am most grateful to the reverend doctor; I find him indeed a servant of the oneness of humanity." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 197

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1. <http://www.bahaiviews.net/2009/05/11/on-the-10-worst-places-in-the-world-to-blog-be-grateful-if-you-can-post-freely/>
2. <http://cpj.org/reports/2009/04/10-worst-countries-to-be-a-blogger.php>
3. [http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id\\_rubrique=20](http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=20)
4. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

isabella mori (2009-05-14 14:35:43)

that image of the soldiers patrolling the internet cafe is chilling. yes, with all the BS that's going on in the western world, democracy still seems to be the best option. and as HL mencken said, "the cure for the evils of democracy is more democracy".

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-14 17:43:32)

Thanks for the comment, isabella! The whole issue is "chilling" to me. Living in a relatively free nation, my heart goes out to those who still must struggle, greatly, to express themselves...

Catherine. (2009-05-15 02:21:33)

The bloody truth well spoken,how terribly sad,again I say..a never ending battle,it keeps on going on and on,when will there be peace for humanity?I hope that my achievements in life shall be these: that I will have fought for what was right and fair,risked for that which mattered,given help to those where in need, and that I will have left the earth a better place for what I've done and who I;ve seen.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-15 02:32:15)

Very Noble Words, very Well-spoken, Catherine !

Bob (2009-05-15 18:17:40)

Thank God we still stand for freedom, equality and justice for all.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-15 18:26:25)

At least that's pretty much true....

Tomas (2009-05-16 06:34:52)

Your post releases the reader from the slavery to the empty words. Thank you. The photos disciplined my tongue: while viewing "Turkmen soldiers guard an Internet cafe in Ashgabat", I was reminded about the responsibility for the content we are sharing on the Internet (for what is flowing from the depth of our hearts). While reading your post I was sinking how we use our freedom to talk... Unfortunately, our mail is overloaded with spam... so to say, there is a little to boast about. In other words, the bloggers, who are judged as the criminals by their government, teach us the cost of the word. I bow to them and thank you for the reminder of the people who fight for their ideals - for the example we all should follow.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-16 14:02:58)

"The photos disciplined my tongue..." What a fascinatingly beautiful phrase!!!

## 2.5.6 Morality's Downfall . . . (2009-05-16 15:54)



I'm a Bahá'í...

I've been a Bahá'í for a little over 20 years...

I'm a more moral person now but it took a tremendous effort to will myself to become subservient to the principles of my Faith...

That word, subservient, may sound like I've given up my freewill. Yet, what I've worked hard to do (and still am definitely not perfect at) is to use my freewill to adhere to principles of morality that aren't just in my Faith but all Faiths.

For example, would choosing to have your ego become subservient to honesty be a weakness?

Enough about me. It's what's happening to my fellow believers in Iran that has me troubled. Actually, because of the ominous portent and the fact that the crimes committed by Iranian government officials are just the rudely boldest of more insidious moral crimes committed by most of the world's leaders, this one-year anniversary of the incarceration of Iran's Bahá'í Leadership, with no access to legal counsel, should concern anyone who strives to be more good than bad...

The "informal" charges laid against these Bahá'ís in Iran were: espionage for Israel, insulting religious sanctities, and propaganda against the Islamic Republic. Now, after one year in prison another "informal" charge has been leveled: spreading corruption on earth. This, by the way, was the charge against the Bahá'ís in Iran who were summarily executed back in the 80's—murdered for their beliefs—for working hard to be moral...

This video, from Iranian.com, is about the burning of Bahá'í homes in Egypt but it's happening in Iran, too. And, the perpetrators are ordinary citizens incited by their government:  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vn-iT70e8bU &feature=player\_embedded]

Here's another video from Iran Press Watch that compares the attitude of the Iranian government to that of Nazi Germany:  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtYrGR8\_DfM &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"At the heart of the global crisis currently afflicting humanity, there exists a pervasive lack of moral leadership in all sectors of human society. The lack of moral leadership is demonstrated in the continuous uncovering of unethical behavior at all levels of society in all parts of the world. No sphere of human endeavor, from the family to the highest corridors of power, remains unaffected. Often, moral leadership is hard to identify because society presents too many conflicting messages about what is meant by leadership...it would be helpful to identify a few fundamental capabilities that characterize effective moral leadership and to set in motion a systematic learning process that will foster the development of these capabilities within the institutions that serve human society....

"Autocratic, paternalistic, manipulative and 'know-it-all' modes of leadership, which are found in all parts of the world, tend to disempower those whom they are supposed to serve. They exercise control by over-centralizing the decision making-making process, thereby coercing others into agreement. If humanity is to move out of its collective adolescence and enter its age of collective maturity, if it is to reap long term benefits from the Earth Summit process, we have to ask ourselves some pertinent questions. First, are the currently-prevalent models of leadership capable of producing leaders who are able to address, with integrity and justice, the essential global issues facing humanity? Second, are the institutions which are brought into being by the currently-prevalent models of leadership, capable of creating a sustainable world civilization? Third, are we ourselves, ready to abandon our outmoded practices and old loyalties and explore a new model of moral leadership? Fourth, what would such a new form of leadership look like?

"The leadership model which is being proposed, is unequivocally centered on service to others. Therefore, one of the prerequisites for moral leadership is the spirit of service - service to one's family, community, and nation. This spirit of service does not in any way negate individual drive or initiative, nor does it stifle individual creativity. Rather, it calls for a model of leadership which will release the potential of the individual while safeguarding the well-being of the whole. Those who emerge as leaders would likely combine a spirit of service with a drive for excellence. The institutions which would emerge from a service-centered leadership would promote the well-being of the whole community while safeguarding the rights, freedoms and initiatives of each individual. These institutions would preserve human honor which would lead to a civilization which deeply cares for the beauty of nature and all beings on the planet."

Bahá'í International Community, United Nations Office, Moral Leadership, June 1992

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1. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Emily (2009-05-16 18:49:17)  
Good post. Like your style.

Marilyn (2009-05-16 23:42:47)  
Please God we may achieve it!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-17 02:28:10)  
Concisely Apropos...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-16 20:11:13)  
Thank you, Emily ! Yours is pretty cool, too... Hey folks, visit Emily at: <http://emilylee19.com/>

Catherine. (2009-05-17 05:59:43)  
The real measure of a man's weath is what he has invested in eternity.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-17 06:03:35)  
I totally agree with the appropriateness of your comment to this post. Also, if a person hasn't invested in eternity, their actions on earth will fall short of the morality all the religions recommend...

Marley (2009-05-17 10:51:27)  
An effective leader knows what to follow. The golden rule, found in all cultures, would be a great start.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-17 12:09:35)  
We humans so over-complicate our lives when we follow our own devices. The simple truths, like the Golden Rule, pack up and hide when we blind ourselves with our own little minds...

Nadim (2009-05-18 16:47:19)  
Really enjoyed this piece... thanks Alex!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-18 16:58:00)  
And, thank you for liking it... I've been slowly transitioning how I treat posts in the blog...

## 2.5.7 Playing For Change (2009-05-18 23:50)



Not gonna say much this time...  
Want to {always want to } encourage and uplift...  
Can you remember?  
Singing your troubles away...  
Dancing through the pain...  
Loving because You are Love...  
Let's join musicians around the world and  
Be the Change...  
All these videos are from [1]Playing for Change:

Stand By Me

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us-TVg40ExM &feature=channel]

One Love

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xjPODksI08 &feature=channel]

Don't Worry

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAjFnJuk1Aw &feature=related]

*Spiritual Quote:*

**Henceforward we shall always be together, heart and soul and spirit, pressing forward in the work till all men are gathered together under the tent of the Kingdom, singing the songs of peace.”**

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 40

**Please leave *Your* thoughts and feelings in the Comments.**

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**[2]Subscribe Free**

**in a reader or your email**

1. <http://www.youtube.com/user/PlayingForChange>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Imelda / GreenishLady (2009-05-19 15:01:23)

Thanks for sharing these, and that wonderfully apt quote, Alexander. I don't often comment, but I am frequently given pause by your offerings here, and really appreciate them. Thank you.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-19 15:16:28)

Good to know you're still out there and comforting to know you find my blog worth appreciating. Please know I'm following your blogging adventures as well...

Lauren (2009-05-19 16:27:01)

words fail me..... i feel my heart as one. Alex you bring much light, laughter, joy, and love to life. thank you.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-19 16:43:39)

"Alex you bring much light, laughter, joy, and love to life." It comes from much darkness, tears, sadness, and loneliness...

Lauren (2009-05-19 17:22:08)

i understand and i am sorry for your past suffering. is it possible to have the depth of your sensitivity, the expanse of your heart, without having suffered? perhaps but then again, "our pain is the breaking of the shell of our understanding" Kahlil Gibran getting to know you touches my heart, L.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-19 18:23:17)

Gibran had it perfectly right...

rainforestrobin (2009-05-21 15:52:12)

Dear Alex, You KNOW I love this post. But I'd only seen the first video so I am about to watch the other two. I was thrilled to see them here. More importantly, I LOVE your quote on love. "Loving because You are Love..." WOW!!! Now that I seriously relate to and understand. I was thrilled to read that this morning. Yes! Also, re: pain and suffering. It was the same for me. They were my most powerful, all consuming, demanding my FULL attention, demanding that I awaken...fully. They were ruthless (in a powerful wonderful way) that made a clean sweep of my soul, like heavy rain cleaning the forest. I no longer consign my painful times to a negative context. It's ALL Life. Thank you my wise friend. Hugs, Robin

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-21 18:32:41)

Thank you, Robin, for your always welcome loving attitude !

Judie (2009-05-23 18:10:36)

That was so inspiring! Thank you. I was sitting here feeling alone and sad. These videos reminded me I'm not alone and need not be sad.

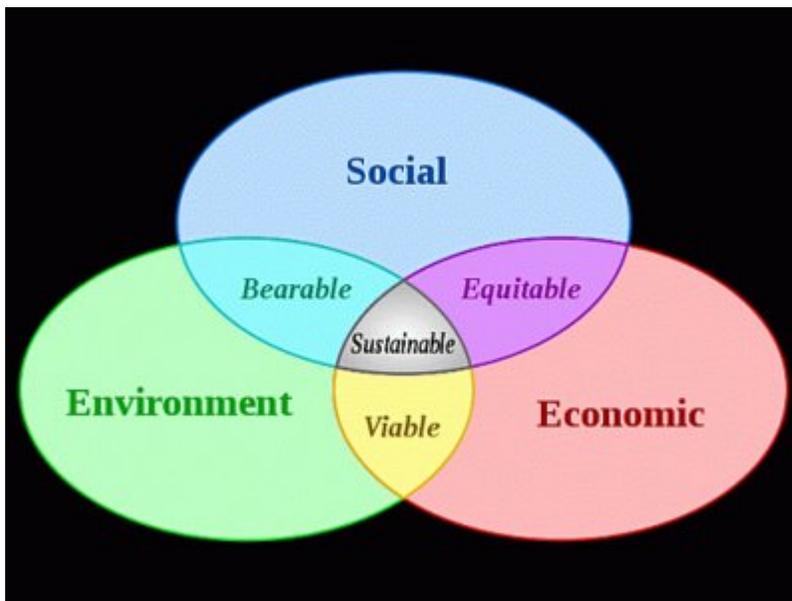
Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-23 18:17:15)

So glad my post helped you not be sad and alone !!!

Bon Jovi Sings for Iran &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-06-29 05:48:02)

[...] Jovi Sings for Iran In our previous post titled, Playing for Change, there was a wonderful rendition of the song Stand By Me. With the recent violent actions against [...]

## 2.5.8 Sustainable Development (2009-05-21 19:43)



Ever had a theme song? You know, where a song just IS a huge part of your attitude and you "adopt" it as Yours?

My current theme song is below the links I'll offer in this post that relate to various aspects of Sustainable Development. It just happens to be from my last post and I wish I could put it in every post... Have everyone singing it, all the time... Make it the Spirit of the stupendous effort we all must make to turn greedy and immoral world-wide practices into a sustainable way of life... for our Whole Human Family...

[1]Bahá'ís Participate In U.N. Sustainable Development Session

[2]Smaller But Stronger

[3]Global Economic Crisis: Time for a Cultural Shift?

[4]Trento Festival of Economics

[5]Wikipedia Article On Sustainable Development

[6]Sustainable Development on *Global Issues WebSite*

And, to show that, even with all the information laid on the table, planners and government players still have a long distance to travel before they're also playing the Sustainable Development Game, here's an article from 2002:

[7]Baha'is to stress spiritual values at World Summit on Sustainable Development

And, Now , what I hope will be Your Theme Song, too !!!

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAjFnJuk1Aw &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Unity is essential if diverse peoples are to work toward a common future. The [8]Earth Charter might well identify those aspects of unity which are prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development. In the Bahá'í view, 'The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established'.

"The unrestrained exploitation of natural resources is merely a symptom of an overall sickness of the human spirit. Any solutions to the environment/development crisis must, therefore, be rooted in an approach which fosters spiritual balance and harmony within the individual, between individuals, and with the environment as a whole. Material development must serve not only the body, but the mind and spirit as well.

"The changes required to reorient the world toward a sustainable future imply degrees of sacrifice, social integration, selfless action, and unity of purpose rarely achieved in human history. These qualities have reached their highest degree of development through the power of religion. Therefore, the world's religious communities have a major role to play in inspiring these qualities in their members, releasing latent capacities of the human spirit and empowering individuals to act on behalf of the planet, its peoples, and future generations."

Bahá'í International Community, 1992 June 06, Earth Charter

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1. <http://news.bahai.org/story/714>

2. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/363112-women-weather-economic-crisis-peru>

3. <http://us.oneworld.net/article/363227-identity-and-global-economic-crisis>

4. <http://2009.festivaleconomia.eu/programma/list/en>

5. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable\\_development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_development)

6. <http://www.globalissues.org/issue/367/sustainable-development>

7. <http://news.bahai.org/story/170>

8. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/05/earth-charter.doc>

9. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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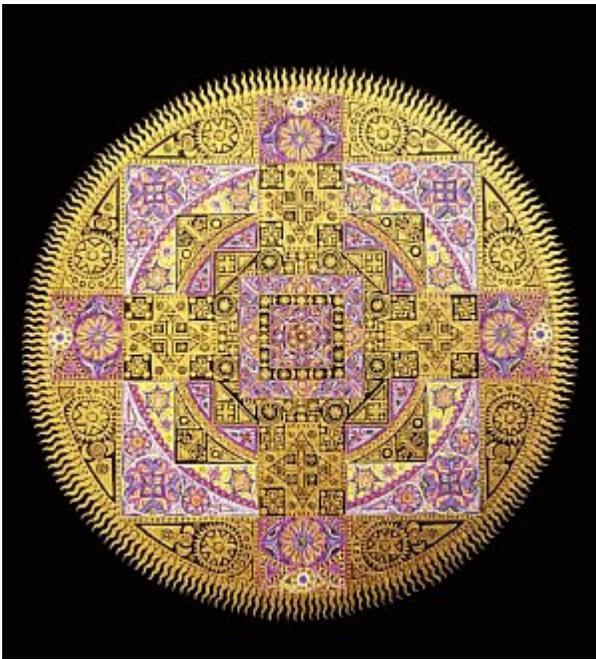
Catherine. (2009-05-22 03:35:45)

Physical strength is measured by what we can carry; Spiritual by what we can bear. Ability may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there. Today, many will break through the barriers of the past by looking at blessings of the present. Why not you? We must steady enough in ourselves, to be open and to let the winds of life blow through us, to be our breath, our inspiration. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-22 05:11:13)

I found your words particularly apt when you said, "Today, many will break through the barriers of the past by looking at blessings of the present. Why not you?"

## 2.5.9 The Science of Religion . . . (2009-05-24 05:34)



"Who, me? Religious? No thanks! I'm pretty spiritual but religion really turns me off."

Ever heard someone say something like that? Ever said it yourself?

So what is it with this spiritual/religious divide? What makes what used to go together fall so far apart? Is it related to the idea that living-together seems to have more appeal than marriage?

"Who, us? Get married? No thanks! We're pretty compatible but marriage really turns us off."

What's wrong with commitment? And, what does science have to do with any of this?

”Who me? Be scientific? No thanks! I’m pretty rational but exposing my ideas to the possibility of being disproven really turns me off.”

Just because some people get away with having their ideas accepted even when they aren’t true doesn’t make science invalid.

Just because some people get along famously living-together doesn’t invalidate marriage.

Just because engaging in spiritual activities makes a person more loving doesn’t make religion reprehensible.

It’s what people have made of marriage that makes many shy from it.

It’s what people have done to the use of the mind that has fostered less than rigorous thinking.

It’s what folks do in the name of religion that sends people running...

Marriage is an institution that makes a relationship more than being pretty compatible.

Science is an institution that makes thought more than pretty rational.

Religion is an institution that makes spirituality more than being a nice person...

There is also a science to marriage—a method of perfecting the living-together.

A science of religion?

I’ll leave you with a statement from the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá’í Faith.

*Spiritual Quote:*

”Consider the rational faculty with which God hath endowed the essence of man. Examine thine own self, and behold how thy motion and stillness, thy will and purpose, thy sight and hearing, thy sense of smell and power of speech, and whatever else is related to, or transcendeth, thy physical senses or spiritual perceptions, all proceed from, and owe their existence to, this same faculty. So closely are they related unto it, that if in less than the twinkling of an eye its relationship to the human body be severed, each and every one of these senses will cease immediately to exercise its function, and will be deprived of the power to manifest the evidences of its activity. It is indubitably clear and evident that each of these afore-mentioned instruments has depended, and will ever continue to depend, for its proper functioning on this rational faculty, which should be regarded as a sign of the revelation of Him Who is the sovereign Lord of all. Through its manifestation all these names and attributes have been revealed, and by the suspension of its action they are all destroyed and perish.”

Bahá’u’lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh, p. 163

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Lauren (2009-05-24 19:36:17)

I admit to being one whom you describe as shying from religion and marriage..... how fitting an inquiry on the eve of a New Moon garnering our attention to how we think and communicate with each other. Thank you for your questioning.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-24 19:56:47)

The series-of-questions format of this post was sparked by our conversation about engaging the reader...

Jose Sinclair (2009-05-25 02:02:03)

I think the issue is with "organized" religions, which seem to be run like tax-exempt businesses, not anything spiritual in nature. as George Carlin said, "our religion is based on an invisible man in the sky who's so bad with finances that he needs our money" the origins of the word "religion" mean "return to God", hence the need for a religion means you feel separate from God - is this "rational" or logical? Heard a televangelist on tv say that "rationality" was the enemy of God, which was all "revelation"! too funny - when this guy gets a brain tumor does he want a rational, educated surgeon or someone relying on "the revelation of the holy ghost" to perform? Great blog - I subscribe..! Jose metaphysics: <http://bibledecoded.blogspot.com> artwork: <http://josesinclair.blogspot.com>

Catherine. (2009-05-25 03:29:23)

The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice...What we ponder and what we think or belief sets the course of our life.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-25 16:09:02)

Growth does lie in choice—strong choice, choice which is made in spite of the ego's wishes is the best choice...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-25 16:13:38)

Thank you for commenting. The comment was in my spam but only because it had two links in it. I approved it since you did make a valuable comment... All I would add to your comment is that most of what's said about "organized" religion is said about what I perceive as a perversion of Real Religion...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-25 16:15:18)

By the way, you are an extremely fine artist !

Jose Sinclair (2009-05-25 20:42:49)

Thanks, re the art..! I wish I was as good a writer. I first had a journalism scholarship at college, then got one offered in art as well and I switched. I often wish I'd gone the route of Henry Miller, who also did both

but wrote a lot more, thankfully. Great blog, one of my favorites! - Jose

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-25 20:56:41)

The drawing called Maureen on <http://joesinclair.blogspot.com> is the most compelling, life-like one I've may have ever seen.

## 2.5.10 Happy Memorial Day . . . (2009-05-25 15:58)



I'm a veteran.

Today, May 25th, in the United States, people celebrate the brave, dead veterans...

I'm still alive.

The best gift I can give my readers on this misbegotten holiday is this story by Mark Twain:

### **The War Prayer**

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy

emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest deeps of their hearts, and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpourings of fervid eloquence which moved every listener. It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety's sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came—next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their young faces alight with martial dreams—visions of the stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender! Then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag, or, failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation

God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest! Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

Then came the "long" prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was, that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our noble young soldiers, and aid, comfort, and encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them, shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril, bear them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them to crush the foe, grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory—

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher's side and stood there waiting. With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued with his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal,

"Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside—which the startled minister did—and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne—bearing a message from Almighty God!" The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. "He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have

explained to you its import—that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of—except he pause and think.

”God’s servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two—one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this—keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbor at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor’s crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.

”You have heard your servant’s prayer—the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it—that part which the pastor—and also you in your hearts—fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: ’Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!’ That is sufficient. the whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory—must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

”O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle—be Thou near them! With them—in spirit—we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it—for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen.

(After a pause. ) ”Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits!”

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.

*Spiritual Quote:*

”And if, confirmed by the Creator, the lover escapes from the claws of the eagle of love, he will enter THE VALLEY OF KNOWLEDGE and come out of doubt into certitude, and turn from the darkness of illusion to the guiding light of the fear of God. His inner eyes will open and he will privily converse with his Beloved; he will set ajar the gate of truth and piety, and shut the doors of vain

imaginings.

"He in this station is content with the decree of God, and seeth war as peace, and findeth in death the secrets of everlasting life. With inward and outward eyes he witnesseth the mysteries of resurrection in the realms of creation and the souls of men, and with a pure heart apprehendeth the divine wisdom in the endless Manifestations of God. In the ocean he findeth a drop, in a drop he beholdeth the secrets of the sea.

"Split the atom's heart, and lo!  
Within it thou wilt find a sun."

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, p. 11

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Lauren (2009-05-25 18:15:33)

Oh Alex, the spiritual quote filled my heart with the pathos of our human frailty overwhelmed with our fear of death we annihilate life - death and destruction our fearing of life. In March 1904 Jupiter in Aries made a square to Neptune in Cancer and today these same two planets preparing for a new cycle of birth in Aquarius plant a seed of potentiality for a humanitarian awakening in the sacred preserving of life....."in the ocean he findeth a drop, in the drop he beholdeth the secrets of the sea."

Catherine. (2009-05-26 18:11:51)

This was a great post..written by Mark Twain,I read the whole story of your' post,and many other writings as well by Mark Twain,thank you for this great post, Alex. There is a place in God's Sun for Youth's farthest down' who has the vision,the determination,and the courage to reach it..The most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-25 19:46:02)

I wonder how many folk will read the whole story, let alone notice Twain may have written it in 1904... Your words, "death and destruction our fearing of life", spoke volumes to me...

Astrology :: the art of awareness & War Prayer (2009-05-25 19:52:08)

[...] cycles and the unfolding of human consciousness I received a message announcing a new post on Our Evolution delivering a sobering reminding of the ennobling honoring of all war inhabiting the destruction, [...]

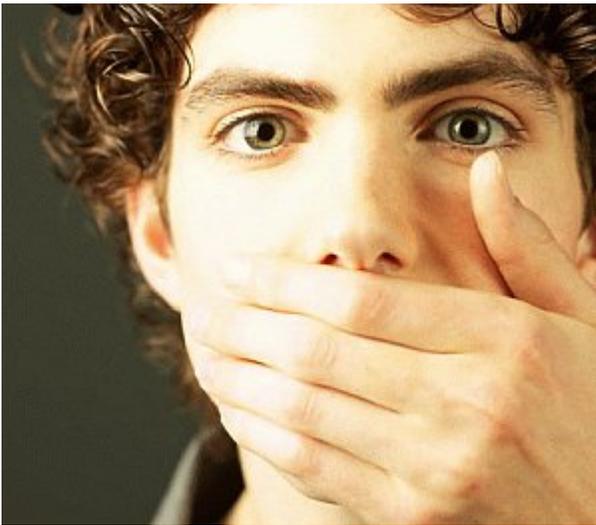
War Prayer & AstroDispatch.com & Astrology Around The Web (2009-05-25 20:00:53)

[...] cycles and the unfolding of human consciousness I received a message announcing a new post on Our Evolution delivering a sobering reminding of the ennobling of all war inhabiting the destruction, [...]

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-26 18:56:55)

Amen, Catherine. One of my fondest hopes is to inspire the Youth of our Human Family to rise up and shine their soul-fire on all the ills we witness these days...

### 2.5.11 Disclosure . . . (2009-05-26 17:28)



I'm so serious in this blog...

Well, the subject matter demands it...

Yet, I want you to relate to me; mostly because the presentation is my "take" on events and, no matter the facts, the perspective becomes part of the "truth" of what's communicated.

So...

I decided I'd upload some of my favorite music videos and introduce, through feelings, the man behind the words...

{update: Since I first posted this, I've changed a few and added two. }

**Enjoy!!!**

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6CEsZ8FktI &NR=1]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILJxICUIbCY]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0K2Q59eT2Us]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZY0xk0VeDs]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOcyTSKJrFA]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5V\_kZ8feWM]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH3GSrCmzC8]  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7p\_dHE5hQIA]  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHQv8McdDMg]  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHEZEVWIrA8]  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DehtqLVmdcA]  
[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTQDeHLlka8]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"We, verily, have made music as a ladder for your souls, a means whereby they may be lifted up unto the realm on high; make it not, therefore, as wings to self and passion. Truly, We are loath to see you numbered with the foolish."

Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, p. 38

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Kikolani (2009-05-26 23:09:51)

What a great way to add something personal about yourself here. Although readers do get a strong sense of the kind of person you are through the topics you cover so passionately, it is a nice revelation through music to other sides of you as well. Thanks for sharing your favorite tunes! Kristi

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-26 23:39:26)

Thank you for stopping by!!

Evita (2009-05-26 23:51:55)

Hi Alex Indeed the subject matter as you said demands that because you write about topics that stir today's world and impact many people's lives usually in very hard ways. But this is a great post indeed! I share your love for many of these songs and artists :)

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-26 23:59:40)

So nice to "see" you again! Very nice that you like some of the same music I do...

Catherine. (2009-05-27 22:43:05)

Approch to personal and interpersonal effectiveness means to start first with self; even more fundamentally, to start with the most in side part of self- with your paradigms, your character, and your motives, your inner contentment will reflect joy and sparkle to your personal and professional relationships..the music and clips from Annie Lennox especially touched me, a reminder to me like the late Edith Piaf sang late 50's.. Non rien de ne rien..( No rien de ne rien Non je ne regrette de ne rien.. )

Lauren (2009-05-27 03:32:14)

my soul transported in the realm of high..... Annie Lennox - Why broke me and kt tunstall blew me away..... i looked back in time and found Bond Duel my head swimming my heart pounding.....thank you for your gift of sight.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-27 03:41:30)

Bond Duel ! After I'd posted, I'd wished I'd put that video in !! It is \*totally\* one of my Favorites !!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-27 23:32:44)

Dear Catherine, I resonate to your reminding me that effectiveness comes from inner contentment that radiates out to others! I will have to make a point of listening again to Edith Piaf and note Annie's resonance with her... For those who don't speak French, here's my halting attempt to translate Edith's lyrics: No nothing, nothing, I do not regret anything.

Lauren (2009-05-28 16:23:17)

enjoyed your Ch-ch-ch-changes experiencing the magnetic spectacle orchestrated by Bond.....

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-28 16:49:58)

Ya know the first violinist, Hallie, is having a baby!

Liara Covert (2009-05-28 21:39:28)

Music is the creation of something immeasurable, timeless and all-knowing. It is a form of communication that does not require words. Yet, words can add another layer of harmony and knowledge. Thanks for sharing these videos. Each experience is another lesson provided by the light. When you ask, it is given. Whether you take it, and what you do with it, is completely up to you.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-29 02:34:08)

Thank you, Liara, for your astute and caring comment. These words, especially, affected me deeply: "Each experience is another lesson provided by the light."

Robin Easton (2009-05-30 18:01:39)

Hi dear Alex, I found this FASCINATING. I once taught voice, sound and music (although I don't read a note of music). One of things I learned with making sounds (had a women's group that did a lot of toning and chanting for several years - once a week) was that it could convey what words often couldn't. So many of the women said that sound went into them and moved them in ways that they couldn't let words in. More importantly was that we all felt deeply, profoundly connected even though I we often didn't say one word the whole two hour session. Our communal sound went through us all to join us as one being. I felt that sense here. Like I had experienced who you are. And by the way, I love your taste in music. What a truly endearing and moving way to share your soul. This means much to me. Hugs, Robin.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-30 21:22:28)

Robin, I very much appreciate what you relate about sound and bonding... Blogging can be a lonely adventure till someone makes a comment-I feel doubly blessed when that someone is another blogger I admire.....

## 2.5.12 What Should We Pay Attention To...? (2009-05-30 13:23)



A friend of mine, living in Mexico, sent me notice of a WebSite called [1]*THE PACHAMAMA ALLIANCE*.

For many people living in affluent countries who rarely think about the importance of every single member of our Human Family, this site would be one they just wouldn't care for—couldn't actually care for if they wanted to maintain their way of living, even if that way of living is a way of dying...

Here's a smidgen of information from that site's About page:

"The Pachamama Alliance believes that our ability to meet the challenges that face humanity as we make the transition to the next millennium, depends on our ability to successfully combine the best elements of...two worldviews into a single global vision, an alloy that blends the intellectual and scientific prowess of the modern world, with the deep and ancient wisdom of traditional cultures."

I can hear those affluent folk saying (if they ever got around to paying attention), "Why should I concern myself with what a bunch of primitives have to say?" Well, one reason would be because they're on the right track and you're not. Another would be because what they have to say can save your skins, or your affluent children's skins...

Here are a few of the front page news items from the site:

[2]Pachamama Stands in Solidarity with Indigenous Groups Over Strike in Peru

[3]Awakening The Dreamer Continues International Expansion

[4]Paul Hawken's 'Unforgettable Commencement Address', in which he says: "you are going to have to figure out what it means to be a human being on earth at a time when every living system is declining, and the rate of decline is accelerating. Kind of a mind-boggling situation... but not one peer-reviewed paper published in the last thirty years can refute that statement. Basically, the earth needs a new operating system, you are the programmers, and we need it within a few decades."

[5]The Century of The Rights of Mother Earth

*Spiritual Quote:*

"In order to reorient individuals and societies toward a sustainable future, we must recognize the following.

- Unity is essential if diverse peoples are to work toward a common future. The [6]Earth Charter might well identify those aspects of unity which are prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development. In the Bahá'í view, 'The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established'.

- The unrestrained exploitation of natural resources is merely a symptom of an overall sickness of the human spirit. Any solutions to the environment/development crisis must, therefore, be rooted in an approach which fosters spiritual balance and harmony within the individual, between individuals, and with the environment as a whole. Material development must serve not only the body, but the mind and spirit as well.

- The changes required to reorient the world toward a sustainable future imply degrees of sacrifice, social integration, selfless action, and unity of purpose rarely achieved in human history. These qualities have reached their highest degree of development through the power of religion. Therefore, the world's religious communities have a major role to play in inspiring these qualities in their members, releasing latent capacities of the human spirit and empowering individuals to act on behalf of the planet, its peoples, and future generations.

- Nothing short of a world federal system, guided by universally agreed upon and enforceable laws, will allow nation states to manage cooperatively an increasingly interdependent and rapidly changing world, thereby ensuring peace and social and economic justice for all the world's peoples.

- Development must be decentralized in order to involve communities in formulating and implementing the decisions and programs that affect their lives. Such a decentralization need not conflict with a global system and strategy, but would in fact ensure that developmental processes are adapted to the planet's rich cultural, geographic, and ecological diversity.

- Consultation must replace confrontation and domination in order to gain the cooperation of the family of nations in devising and implementing measures that will preserve the earth's ecological balance.

- Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavor, including environment and development, will the moral and psychological climate be created in which a

peaceful, harmonious, and sustainable civilization can emerge and flourish.

- The cause of universal education deserves the utmost support, for no nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens. Such an education should promote the consciousness of both the oneness of humanity and the integral connection between humankind and the world of nature. By nurturing a sense of world citizenship, education can prepare the youth of the world for the organic changes in the structure of society which the principle of oneness implies.”  
Bahá'í International Community, 1992 June 06, Earth Charter

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1. <http://www.pachamama.org/>
2. <http://www.pachamama.org/content/blogcategory/90/135/#1>
3. <http://www.pachamama.org/content/blogcategory/90/135/#2>
4. <http://www.charityfocus.org/blog/view.php?id=2077>
5. <http://www.pachamama.org/content/blogcategory/90/135/#3>
6. <http://amzuri.files.wordpress.com/2009/05/earth-charter.doc>
7. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Lauren (2009-05-31 15:09:19)

Hi Alex, Thank you for posting this on your wonderful blog - I participated in one presentation by The Pachamama Alliance and it was inspiring to learn of the the breadth of global commitment to integrate the wisdom of the indigenous cultures with the wisdom of western technology under the guiding effort of a diverse community of people mixing generation, ethnicity, socioeconomic, and spiritual experiences.....apparently the largest social revolution in the history of humankind is taking place in our life time!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-31 15:20:57)

”...apparently the largest social revolution in the history of humankind is taking place in our life time!” Yes! And, the first blush of dawn of this rebirth was in 1844.....

Lauren (2009-05-31 18:05:29)

.....and certain the generation born in 1945-46 dances in harmony with today's revolution!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-05-31 20:09:34)

I can definitely vouch for that!!

## 2.6 June

### 2.6.1 Economic Compassion (2009-06-01 18:40)



The current global economic crisis is only one part of a set of crises including a climate crisis, a crisis of deprivation of women and children, a crisis of violent terror, a crisis of nationalistic overweening pride, and a crisis of moral apathy, to name a few.

All these crises are interwoven and no emergency, quick-fix solutions will abate the suffering of humanity. Actually, none of the currently popular "solutions" has much of a chance at stemming the tide of woe engulfing our human family. And, most sadly, the "experts" are clueless—have proven their inability to resolve anything and are wallowing in the trough of denial...

The Real Solution, to all these crises, is embarrassingly simple and appallingly ignored: Recognizing the Oneness of Humanity...

I'm going to present two solutions to the economic crisis that offer extremely practical local and regional techniques for easing the current squeeze (as well as giving you a powerful motivation toward hope in the midst of crisis in the Spiritual Quote at the end of the post...).

The first site with solutions is [1]Common Security Club. Check out their site and watch this supremely educational video:

[youtube=[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTZnd\\_DuD4k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTZnd_DuD4k)]

The next site is yes! and their [2]31 Ways to Jump Start the Local Economy. Get together with a few friends and go over their list and I think you'll be amazed at the results!

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The question has been asked: Will the spiritual progress of the world equal and keep pace with material progress in the future? In a living organism the full measure of its development is not known or realized at the time of its inception or birth. Development and progression imply gradual stages or degrees. For example, spiritual advancement may be likened to the light of the early dawn. Although this dawn light is dim and pale, a wise man who views the march of the sunrise at its very beginning can foretell the ascendancy of the sun in its full glory and effulgence. He knows for a certainty that

it is the beginning of its manifestation and that later it will assume great power and potency. Again, for example, if he takes a seed and observes that it is sprouting, he will know assuredly that it will ultimately become a tree. Now is the beginning of the manifestation of the spiritual power, and inevitably the potency of its life forces will assume greater and greater proportions. Therefore, this twentieth century is the dawn, or beginning, of spiritual illumination, and it is evident that day by day it will advance. It will reach such a degree that spiritual effulgences will overcome the physical, so that divine susceptibilities will overpower material intelligence and the heavenly light dispel and banish earthly darkness. Divine healing shall purify all ills, and the cloud of mercy will pour down its rain. The Sun of Reality will shine, and all the earth shall put on its beautiful green carpet. Among the results of the manifestation of spiritual forces will be that the human world will adapt itself to a new social form, the justice of God will become manifest throughout human affairs, and human equality will be universally established. The poor will receive a great bestowal, and the rich attain eternal happiness. For although at the present time the rich enjoy the greatest luxury and comfort, they are nevertheless deprived of eternal happiness; for eternal happiness is contingent upon giving, and the poor are everywhere in the state of abject need. Through the manifestation of God's great equity the poor of the world will be rewarded and assisted fully, and there will be a readjustment in the economic conditions of mankind so that in the future there will not be the abnormally rich nor the abject poor. The rich will enjoy the privilege of this new economic condition as well as the poor, for owing to certain provisions and restrictions they will not be able to accumulate so much as to be burdened by its management, while the poor will be relieved from the stress of want and misery. The rich will enjoy his palace, and the poor will have his comfortable cottage.

"The essence of the matter is that divine justice will become manifest in human conditions and affairs, and all mankind will find comfort and enjoyment in life. It is not meant that all will be equal, for inequality in degree and capacity is a property of nature. Necessarily there will be rich people and also those who will be in want of their livelihood, but in the aggregate community there will be equalization and readjustment of values and interests. In the future there will be no very rich nor extremely poor. There will be an equilibrium of interests, and a condition will be established which will make both rich and poor comfortable and content. This will be an eternal and blessed outcome of the glorious twentieth century which will be realized universally. The significance of it is that the glad tidings of great joy revealed in the promises of the Holy Books will be fulfilled. Await ye this consummation."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 132

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1. <http://commonsecurityclub.org/>
2. [http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?id=3501&utm\\_source=may09&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=N4\\_31Ways](http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?id=3501&utm_source=may09&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=N4_31Ways)
3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

Catherine. (2009-06-02 02:47:55)

I just finished watching the clips..Common security Club,and Economic Compass... My little comment after watching all,is this ,The most powerful weapon on earth is the human Soul on fire.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-02 11:45:36)

"The most powerful weapon on earth is the human Soul on fire.!" Armed with that thought we all will succeed in solving our problems!!

## 2.6.2 Some Things Bear Repeating . . . (2009-06-02 16:07)



[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAjFnJuk1Aw>]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"O thou revered maidservant of God! Thy letter from Los Angeles was received. Thank divine Providence that thou hast been assisted in service and hast been the cause of the promulgation of the oneness of the world of humanity, so that the darkness of differences among men may be dissipated, and the pavilion of the unity of nations may cast its shadow over all regions. Without such unity, rest and comfort, peace and universal reconciliation are unachievable. This illumined century needeth and calleth for its fulfilment. In every century a particular and central theme is, in accordance with the requirements of that century, confirmed by God. In this illumined age that which is confirmed is the oneness of the world of humanity. Every soul who serveth this oneness will undoubtedly be assisted and confirmed.

"I hope that in the assemblies thou mayest sing praises with a sweet melody and thus become the cause of joy and gladness to all."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 113

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1. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2009-06-03 15:39:59)

Love these songs,about change,wondering when a change will come?? There are only two options regarding a change,you're either in or you're out. There's no such thing as life inbetween.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-03 16:12:08)

"Love these songs,about change,wondering when a change will come??" I feel we're at the early Morning of Change; the Dawn was in 1844; the Noon? Maybe my grandchild's children will see it-True Harmony and Peace!! "There are only two options regarding a change,you're either in or you're out. There's no such thing as life inbetween.!" So true, Catherine, So True!!!

### **2.6.3 Why is this woman in jail ? (2009-06-04 22:17)**



The Iranian authorities say this woman, "Haleh Rouhi Jahromi, [and her friends and co-workers] Raha Sabet Sarvestani and Sasan Taqva were each sentenced to three years' imprisonment for 'organizing illegal groups' and to an additional one year's imprisonment for 'propaganda on behalf of groups that are opposed to the Islamic system'."

From the site, [1]OneCountry.Org, we have this:

"Accounts that have emerged from Iran tell a far different story. According to Diane Ala'i, a Bahá'í International Community representative to the United Nations in Geneva, the three were in fact engaged in social service projects that most governments would praise.

"Far from working against the government, the Bahá'ís who were arrested in May 2006 were engaged in humanitarian projects aimed at helping underprivileged young people in the city of Shiraz,'..."

They continue, "In fact, it was a Muslim friend of one member of the group who suggested that the program be instituted to help school children in Katsbas, a poverty-stricken suburb of Shiraz. The project aimed specifically at tutoring children to help them prepare for their end-of-term school

examinations.” The group then “...decided to extend their services to include assisting the children to acquire social and moral skills so that they themselves could become the agents of advancement in their own lives and in the society.” The group decided to go even further and “...organized a weekly program offering art classes to young cancer patients at a hospital for children and youth in Shiraz.”

These activities were considered “organizing illegal groups” and “propaganda on behalf of groups that are opposed to the Islamic system”?

Why in the world...?

Because Haleh and Raha and Sasan are Bahá'ís and the current leadership of Iran hates Bahá'ís...



That's Haleh again and she stands in front of a portrait of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. The quote below is from Him...

*Spiritual Quote:*

”I now wish you to examine certain facts and statements which are worthy of consideration. My purpose and intention is to remove from the hearts of men the religious enmity and hatred which have fettered them and to bring all religions into agreement and unity. Inasmuch as this hatred and enmity, this bigotry and intolerance are outcomes of misunderstandings, the reality of religious unity will appear when these misunderstandings are dispelled. For the foundation of the divine religions is one foundation. This is the oneness of revelation or teaching. But, alas, we have turned away from that foundation, holding tenaciously to various dogmatic forms and blind imitation of ancestral beliefs. This is the real cause of enmity, hatred and bloodshed in the world—the reason of alienation and estrangement among mankind. Therefore, I wish you to be very just and fair in your judgment...”  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 407

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1. [http://www.onecountry.org/e192/e19208as\\_Three\\_imprisoned\\_in\\_Iran\\_story.html](http://www.onecountry.org/e192/e19208as_Three_imprisoned_in_Iran_story.html)

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Marilyn (2009-06-04 23:44:41)

Brilliant choice of quotes for today! Thank you for your work in advocating for those wronged by injustice. In seeking out truth, we'll find the path to unity, justice and peace. Marilyn

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-05 00:54:18)

"In seeking out truth, we'll find the path to unity, justice and peace." Seeking Out Truth—so Seemingly Simple—avoided like the Plague by Most— Seeking for Darkness—so Seemingly Safe—enjoyed by the Damned of our Race...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-05 15:54:02)

"it is easy to sit up and take notice, what is difficult is getting up and taking action.!" So, so True!!

Catherine. (2009-06-05 15:18:37)

Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Freedom exists only with power, it is easy to sit up and take notice, what is difficult is getting up and taking action.!

rainforestrobin (2009-06-06 22:21:11)

I am moved to tears by this young woman who looks like the epitome of kindness and love. How brave are the young (or elder) people are all over the globe who risk imprisonment or life to bring positive change into the world. That is profound courage, but often conditions are so bad that they have nothing left to lose. And yet, other times they may be doing very well themselves, but they cannot bear the oppression of others so they risk all comforts, safety, and even life to help those less fortunate. I find this one of the noblest forms of courage on the planet. Thank you Alex. Hugs, Robin

Lauren (2009-06-06 23:45:14)

Thank you Alex for the depth and breadth of Our Evolution which never fails to fill my mind and heart with the wonder and grace of human love - reading of the heartbreaking absurdities of life and the destruction of ignorance, the loving comments left, and your poem inspired me to leave a quote I had read minutes before from the Perspective of ISGP, in association with the Baha'i International Community; "What uniquely defines the human experience is the transcendent component of life. It is this dimension of existence that enriches, ennobles and provides direction to human beings. It is this dimension of life that unlocks the creative capacities within human consciousness and safeguards human dignity."

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-07 00:42:23)

Courage, yes!!! Comes from commitment to a Higher Purpose—so rare these days... Blogging can often seem like an environment in a vacuum—until someone like you appears and confirms the intention of the post—thank you for such honest confirmation!!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-07 00:57:12)

I'm assuming ISGP is Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity... Check this out: <http://bic.org/statements-and-reports/bic-statements/95-0303.htm>

Robin Easton (2009-06-07 15:02:06)

I am touched by your thoughts and insights here Alex. I also love what you wrote about a higher purpose. That is stunningly beautiful and pierces to the heart. Thank you SO much.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-07 17:00:55)

Robin, From reading your words and watching your videos on your blog <http://nakedineden.com/nakedinedenblog/> you are a person \*enveloped\* by an obvious Higher Purpose!!!

Shahnaz (2009-08-07 04:16:41)

Our prayers are with Haleh, Raha, Sasan and all other Baha'is in confinement at this very moment. We will all do our best to serve mankind, as they were doing, where ever we live and not sit still. I am sure they are praying for all of us in their solitary confinements. We all love U. Ya Baha ul Abha.

#### 2.6.4 Earth - Our Home; for Now . . . (2009-06-07 18:48)



Won't say much myself in this post...

The movie trailer, the movie itself, and the Spiritual Quote say more than enough!

Just a bit from the site that has the whole movie:

A Hymn for The Planet

"HOME is an ode to the planet's beauty and its delicate harmony. Through the landscapes of 54 countries captured from above, Yann Arthus-Bertrand takes us on an unique journey all around the planet, to contemplate it and to understand it. But HOME is more than a documentary with a message, it is a magnificent movie in its own right. Every breathtaking shot shows the Earth - our Earth - as we have never seen it before. Every image shows the Earth's treasures we are destroying and all the wonders we can still preserve. 'From the sky, there's less need for explanations'. Our vision becomes more immediate, intuitive and emotional. HOME has an impact on anyone who sees it. It awakens in us the awareness that is needed to change the way we see the world. (HOME embraces the major ecological issues that confront us and shows how everything on our planet is interconnected.)"

Here's the trailer...

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8IozVfph7I]  
And, you can [1]Watch The Whole Movie Here!

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Nature is God's Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise. Were anyone to affirm that it is the Will of God as manifested in the world of being, no one should question this assertion. It is endowed with a power whose reality men of learning fail to grasp. Indeed a man of insight can perceive naught therein save the effulgent splendour of Our Name, the Creator. Say: This is an existence which knoweth no decay, and Nature itself is lost in bewilderment before its revelations, its compelling evidences and its effulgent glory which have encompassed the universe."  
Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 141

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**[2]Subscribe Free**

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1. <http://www.youtube.com/homeproject>
2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2009-06-08 16:01:27)

I loved seing this movie again,and want to add: this comment. The difference between whether you say,I wish, I would have,or I'm glad I did,at the end of your life is whether or not you take DECIVE ACTION during your life!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-08 19:45:30)

Very appropriate and very powerful comment, Catherine!!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-10 18:00:04)

Thank you for your comment and, especially, for that marvelous quote from the Buddha!!

Garret (2009-06-10 17:43:21)

Wonderful film. "Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment." Buddha

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-12 13:05:01)

Thanks for the positive feedback! Also, please do watch the movie—do yourself that favor...

Dragon Blogger (2009-06-12 01:14:46)

I haven't seen the movie, but I know that what you say in the post rings true about earth. Btw, I like your blog's culture and spiritual theme, nice easy layout and quality posts.

### 2.6.5 Voice Your Opinion . . . (2009-06-10 17:37)

**You can select multiple answers and add your own responses:**

[polldaddy poll=1695853]

*Spiritual Quote:*

2 May 1912

Talk at Hotel Plaza

Chicago, Illinois

"In this Cause consultation is of vital importance, but spiritual conference and not the mere voicing of personal views is intended. In France I was present at a session of the senate, but the experience was not impressive. Parliamentary procedure should have for its object the attainment of the light of truth upon questions presented and not furnish a battleground for opposition and self-opinion. Antagonism and contradiction are unfortunate and always destructive to truth. In the parliamentary meeting mentioned, altercation and useless quibbling were frequent; the result, mostly confusion and turmoil; even in one instance a physical encounter took place between two members. It was not consultation but comedy.

"The purpose is to emphasize the statement that consultation must have for its object the investigation of truth. He who expresses an opinion should not voice it as correct and right but set it forth as a contribution to the consensus of opinion, for the light of reality becomes apparent when two opinions coincide. A spark is produced when flint and steel come together. Man should weigh his opinions with the utmost serenity, calmness and composure. Before expressing his own views he should carefully consider the views already advanced by others. If he finds that a previously expressed opinion is more true and worthy, he should accept it immediately and not willfully hold to an opinion of his own. By this excellent method he endeavors to arrive at unity and truth. Opposition and division are deplorable. It is better then to have the opinion of a wise, sagacious man; otherwise, contradiction and altercation, in which varied and divergent views are presented, will make it necessary for a judicial body to render decision upon the question. Even a majority opinion or consensus may be incorrect. A thousand people may hold to one view and be mistaken, whereas one sagacious person

may be right. Therefore, true consultation is spiritual conference in the attitude and atmosphere of love. Members must love each other in the spirit of fellowship in order that good results may be forthcoming. Love and fellowship are the foundation.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 72

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1. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine. (2009-06-11 05:38:11)

Peace has his victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.No matter what circumstances life may present.!

Lauren (2009-06-14 23:44:12)

1912- a hundred years past echoing the voice of today and still so many shadows darkening our love of Life.....a loving heart is one without conditions.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-15 00:37:03)

Catherine and Lauren, Thank you for commenting and adding the ”bravery of love” (Catherine) and the ”victory of selflessness” (Lauren)...

Our Human Family’s Water Crisis & Our Evolution (2009-06-18 17:20:40)

[...] Human Family’s Water Crisis From the results of our last survey, the global water crisis was the top urgent concern of readers. This post will give you a number of [...]

Marley (2009-06-16 16:52:46)

”The prime requisites for them that take counsel together are purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His Divine Fragrances, humility and lowliness amongst His loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties and servitude to His exalted Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to acquire these attributes, victory from the unseen Kingdom of Baha shall be vouchsafed to them.”– Abdu’l-Baha –We need to work toward acquiring these prime requisites for consultation, individually and collectively.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-17 01:05:19)

Marley, To say I completely agree with you would be an understatement!

Oppression Must Stop . . . & Our Evolution (2009-06-21 08:04:00)

[...] is the second post in direct response to a recent survey (”What Should Be Our Greatest [...]

## 2.6.6 What Should Be Our Greatest Concern? (2009-06-17 03:05)



For the last week, this blog has had a survey up called, What Should Be Our Greatest Concern?

It's time to tally the votes from our readers.

First though, let me state that 48 % of this blog's readers come from the United States; however, that means that 52 % are from a wide diversity of other countries...

I should also say that the way the Internet and Blogs work the survey will likely receive more voters and I may revisit the results in the future.

For now though, here are what readers feel should be our greatest concerns.

The Top Concern with 11 % of the vote:

Clean Water

The set of next greatest concerns, each carrying 9 % of the vote:

Children's Rights

Climate Change

Human Rights

The next set, each with 8 %:

Moral Development

War

Starvation

All of the Above...

Next, each with 6 %:  
Epidemic Disease  
Rainforests  
Women's Rights  
Next, each with 4 %:  
Economic Collapse  
Terrorism  
Religious Fanaticism  
And, finally, with 2 %:  
Wetlands

I'll be using this survey of Greatest Concerns for the next series of posts—doing research and providing links so you can explore the issues...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

"We can well perceive how the whole human race is encompassed with great, with incalculable afflictions. We see it languishing on its bed of sickness, sore-tried and disillusioned. They that are intoxicated by self-conceit have interposed themselves between it and the Divine and infallible Physician. Witness how they have entangled all men, themselves included, in the mesh of their devices. They can neither discover the cause of the disease, nor have they any knowledge of the remedy. They have conceived the straight to be crooked, and have imagined their friend an enemy."  
Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 212

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Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-17 05:27:48)

Thanks, isabella! Say, Think there's any way to get your environmental friend's ideas for the next post here?

isabella mori (2009-06-17 05:11:58)

very good! i agree. water and air are our most precious resources. we're going to run out of water loooooong before we run out of air. what am i saying - lots of people ARE already running out of water! passed this on to a friend of mine, who is an anvironmental scientist specializing in water.

Catherine (2009-06-18 04:40:25)

None of us is smart as all of us together,lets try and work all together to help in finding some solution of what is yet to come present and future.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-18 13:43:08)

That's so true, Catherine–unity in our endeavors is the only way to heal humanity!

Raul (2009-06-19 18:14:27)

Hi Alexander, Thanks for the question - I think that water scarcity and lack of appropriate coverage for wastewater treatment are real concerns.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-19 19:09:32)

Thanks for your supportive comment! The more awareness of problems that we share, the more likelihood there is that constructive action will be taken...

## 2.6.7 Our Human Family's Water Crisis (2009-06-18 17:20)



From the results of [1]our last survey, the global water crisis was the top urgent concern of readers. This post will give you a number of resources to explore the crisis and its possible solutions.

Here are some daunting facts from the Wikipedia article called [2]Water Crisis:

> Inadequate access to safe drinking water for about 884 million people

- > Inadequate access to water for sanitation and waste disposal for 2.5 billion people
- > Groundwater overdrafting (excessive use) leading to diminished agricultural yields
- > Overuse and pollution of water resources harming biodiversity
- > Regional conflicts over scarce water resources sometimes resulting in warfare

From the [3]World Water Council site we have:

”While the world’s population tripled in the 20th century, the use of renewable water resources has grown six-fold. Within the next fifty years, the world population will increase by another 40 to 50 %. This population growth - coupled with industrialization and urbanization - will result in an increasing demand for water and will have serious consequences on the environment.”

At [4]Water Partners International there are many more facts about the crisis as well as a strong reminder that a Water Crisis induces a Sanitation Crisis...

And, for an interesting view on how the water crisis is also inducing more strain on the economic crisis see the story, [5]Preventing a water crisis, at The Boston Globe.

*Spiritual Quote:*

”The conservation and protection of the environment must be addressed on the individual and societal levels. Shoghí Effendí, in a letter written on his behalf, states:

We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions.”

Conservation of the Earth’s Resources, Compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, p.101.

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/10/voice-your-opinion/>
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water\\_crisis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_crisis)
3. <http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=25>
4. <http://www.water.org/waterpartners.aspx?pgID=916>
5. [http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2009/03/09/preventing\\_a\\_water\\_crisis/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/03/09/preventing_a_water_crisis/)
6. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

Lauren (2009-06-20 01:35:22)

....."Man is organic with the world. His inner life molds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions." there is so much good in the world and reading this quote reminds once again that the evolution of humanity resides within each individual heart.....thank you for the hope you garner in life.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-20 01:59:11)

Hope would be lonely without the support of people like you!

Roger (2009-06-21 04:15:15)

We battle over oil and gold but these wars will pale compared to what we could see as the battles turn to available water. We have to do a better job at convincing people that this is a real crisis. Thank you for highlighting its importance. Namaste

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-21 06:39:46)

Roger, Thank you for an astute comment! It's very true that people can make do with a little less money or energy but don't let them drink water and they'll go crazy...

## 2.6.8 Oppression Must Stop . . . (2009-06-21 08:03)



This family is from another era but what they were suffering is still going on—oppression of most of the population by those in authority, whether governmental or corporate.

This is the second post in direct response to [1]a recent survey ("What Should Be Our Greatest

Concern?").

Our last post explored the Global Water Crisis—number one concern of readers taking the survey. This post will bring two issues together: one from the second greatest concerns—Human Rights; and, one from fifth place—Economic Collapse.

The following two-part video set brings those concerns together  
in sharp focus...

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tj200NUQOFo]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRFF1Uo46VI]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Bahá'u'lláh set forth principles of guidance and teaching for economic readjustment. Regulations were revealed by Him which insure the welfare of the commonwealth. As the rich man enjoys his life surrounded by ease and luxuries, so the poor man must likewise have a home and be provided with sustenance and comforts commensurate with his needs. This readjustment of the social economic is of the greatest importance inasmuch as it insures the stability of the world of humanity; and until it is effected, happiness and prosperity are impossible.

"Bahá'u'lláh teaches that an equal standard of human rights must be recognized and adopted. In the estimation of God all men are equal; there is no distinction or preferment for any soul in the dominion of His justice and equity."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 240

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/10/voice-your-opinion/>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

## 2.6.9 Neda! Stay With Us . . . (2009-06-23 20:02)



This woman was recently murdered in Iran...

She's now called Iran's "Angel of Freedom"...

She was walking with her singing teacher (women in Iran are prohibited from singing in public), while the current struggle for human rights was being waged around them, when a single malicious bullet found its home in her heart...

She was a student of philosophy and is now a symbol of the egregious waste that oppression of human freedom spreads over not just Iran but our whole earthly Home...

Why such brutal waste of human potential?

Why should beauty be viciously twisted into the horror of senseless death.

Why should those created in God's image take on the venomous visage of satanic insanity?

People are murdered, young beauty is effaced, humans become devils because the Principle of the Oneness of Humanity is buried under ages of egoistic debris...

The Spiritual Quote at the end of this post contains a solution for this Crime...

I've posted [1]an image and video of Neda's final moments on one of my other blogs. Why in the world would you want to go there and actually watch this sweet, young woman die? I'll let Aylar Macky, who represented Calgary in the recent Miss Universe Canada competition, who had never been involved in any social causes, then turned into a strident activist, give you one possible reason

why you might watch Neda die.

In her words, from the [2]Calgary Herald :

"I watched the video of Neda over and over....I just couldn't stand by helplessly after that....This isn't just about Iran, it's about all of humanity."

*Spiritual Quote:*

"This is a new cycle of human power. All the horizons of the world are luminous, and the world will become indeed as a garden and a paradise. It is the hour of unity of the sons of men and of the drawing together of all races and all classes. You are loosed from ancient superstitions which have kept men ignorant, destroying the foundation of true humanity.

"The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers.

"In the days of old an instinct for warfare was developed in the struggle with wild animals; this is no longer necessary; nay, rather, co-operation and mutual understanding are seen to produce the greatest welfare of mankind. Enmity is now the result of prejudice only.

"In the Hidden Words Bahá'u'lláh says, 'Justice is to be loved above all'. Praise be to God, in this country the standard of justice has been raised; a great effort is being made to give all souls an equal and a true place. This is the desire of all noble natures; this is today the teaching for the East and for the West; therefore the East and the West will understand each other and reverence each other, and embrace like long-parted lovers who have found each other."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 19

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**in a reader or your email**

1. <http://benedharmex.blogspot.com/2009/06/neda.html>

2. <http://www.calgaryherald.com/News/just+couldn+stand+after+shooting+Neda/1723341/story.html>

3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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re: turn on (2009-06-24 03:37:46)

I'm deeply affected by the death of Neda on video. On the one hand I feel like a voyeur to a moment most intimate. On the other hand this video may be the most effective means of conveying the black heart of the so-called Islamic Republic of Iran. I've seen death in real life, yet this is almost too much to bear. The way she looks at the camera makes me feel like she's looking me in the eye. Like she's imploring me to do something. Or imploring me to look away. The death of Neda is now film as history, like Zapruder's film of

the JFK assassination. Its more than just a record of history, it will define history. Irrespective of whether the protesters succeed or not, she'll always remain emblematic of the struggle. The West will either see her as a martyr to change or fascism.

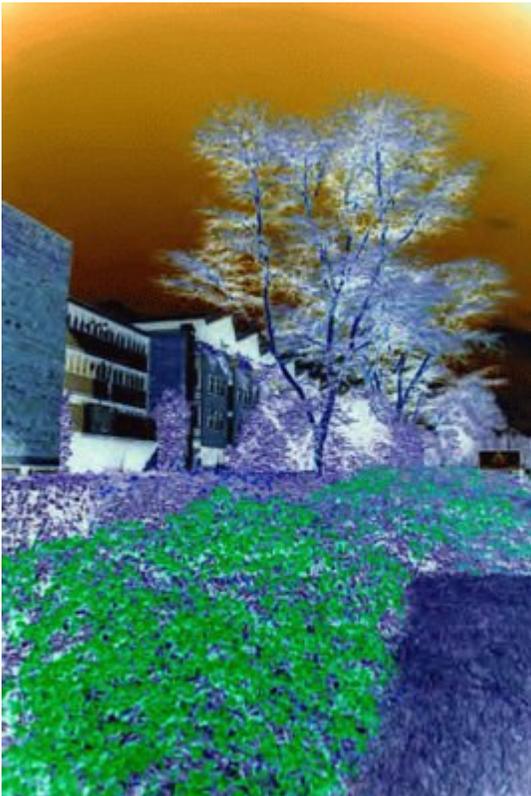
Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-24 04:02:00)

I was also very moved by Neda's staring at the camera. I am completely disturbed and emotional wrought by her death. I certainly have my judgements of the Iranian regime and there have certainly been many other tragic deaths—in Iran and all over our globe. Still processing why Neda's death has so moved me...

18 Tir = 9 July &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-07 17:56:45)

[...] shouting 'Ya Zahra', and causing several deaths including Ezzat Ebrahim Nezhad who, much like Neda, became a symbol of [...]

### 2.6.10 Climate Change and Social Justice (2009-06-26 15:21)



In a [1]recent survey on this blog, Climate Change was considered one of the most important concerns we humans have.

There are many ways to perceive possible solutions to this global crisis.

Two particular perspectives that I've recently come across show promise for lending great support to any possible solutions.

The first is on [2]smartMeme and is best summed up in their own words:

"You've probably heard about last week's official report from the Whitehouse, confirming that climate change is serious, and that 'changes are unavoidable'. So, we're wondering, 'What kind of changes are we talking about'?"

"Will we keep blasting the Appalachian mountains for the sake of "clean coal"? Will we privatize water in order to "preserve" it? Will climate change stand in as an excuse for lax labor practices and corporate greenwashing?"

Here's the way smartMeme works: "Organizing - at the heart of it - has always been about building relationships through telling our stories. What smartMeme is doing is upgrading methods for the information age, and cutting through the clutter of the modern media climate with clear calls for justice that spread as viral memes."

In case you're not familiar with the term, a Meme, from [3]Wikipedia, is:

"...a postulated unit or element of cultural ideas, symbols or practices, and is transmitted from one mind to another through speech, gestures, rituals, or other imitable phenomena."

The second perspective is called *The Transition Initiative*. Rather than being a way to induce more action to stem the tide of climate change, The Transition Initiative is a way for communities to prepare for sustainability even if, as seems likely, governments and corporations don't take swift enough action.

I feel their methods were spawned by the consideration that there are already enough changes in the environment that even a full-out program to reverse changes cannot keep up with change already induced...

You can find out about The Transition Initiative at the site, [4]Transition Culture. I do recommend, though, that you also read the fine essay at [5]Orion Magazine to gain a deep understanding of why such an Initiative is necessary...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The current process for creating international environmental legislation, which addresses only one problem at a time, is fragmented and unsystematic. Conventions, treaties, and protocols, have been adopted on such diverse issues as the protection of the ozone layer and control of international traffic in hazardous wastes. Other conventions are being negotiated on climate change and on biological diversity. Still others have been suggested on such subjects as land-based sources of marine pollution. No one body is responsible for drafting international environmental legislation. Nor have the nations of the world agreed on a set of principles upon which environmental legislation can be based. Moreover, the countries signing the various legislative instruments are rarely identical. Thus, it is almost impossible to harmonize or combine agreements.

"The international legislative process is well known to be slow, cumbersome, and expensive. Once a problem is identified, meetings of experts are called to prepare a draft agreement. The agreement is negotiated by interested governments and signed at a plenipotentiary meeting. After what is often a lengthy period of ratification and accessions, the legislation comes into force, but only in those states which have signed it. A secretariat is generally established to facilitate and monitor

the convention's implementation. If legislation has to be modified, as in the case of the Montreal Protocol, where increased ozone deterioration outstripped the protocol's provisions, updating can be as slow as adoption. Many countries with limited numbers of diplomats and experts cannot cope with such time-consuming and expensive procedures, particularly as the number of negotiations is increasing to respond to pressing global environmental problems.

"The present ad hoc process for environmental legislation can only become more unmanageable. Numerous proposals have been offered to provide global mechanisms to create and support a sustainable pattern of development. Some experts advise strengthening the existing UN system by upgrading the mandates of agencies such as the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), reconfiguring the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), or using the Trusteeship Council to administer certain global resources. Others suggest creating new bodies such as an environmental security council, a World Court of environmental justice, or an international environmental negotiating body to prepare, adopt, and revise international legislation on issues requiring global action.

"However well motivated and helpful such proposals are, it seems apparent to the Bahá'í International Community that the establishment of a sustainable pattern of development is a complex task with widespread ramifications. It will clearly require a new level of commitment to solving major problems not exclusively associated with the environment. These problems include militarization, the inordinate disparity of wealth between and within nations, racism, lack of access to education, unrestrained nationalism, and the lack of equality between women and men. Rather than a piecemeal approach conceived in response to the needs of the nation-states, it seems clearly preferable to adopt an umbrella agreement under which specific international codes could be promulgated.

"Long-term solutions will require a new and comprehensive vision of a global society, supported by new values. In the view of the Bahá'í International Community, acceptance of the oneness of humanity is the first fundamental prerequisite for this reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind. Recognition of this principle does not imply abandonment of legitimate loyalties, the suppression of cultural diversity, or the abolition of national autonomy. It calls for a wider loyalty, for a far higher aspiration than has so far animated human efforts. It clearly requires the subordination of national impulses and interests to the imperative claims of a unified world. It is inconsistent not only with any attempt to impose uniformity, but with any tendency towards excessive centralization. Its goal is well captured in the concept of 'unity in diversity'."

Bahá'í International Community, 1991 Aug 13, International Legislation for Environment Development

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/17/what-should-be-our-greatest-concern/>
2. <http://smartmeme.org/>
3. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meme>

4. <http://transitionculture.org/>
5. <http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/4792>
6. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Michael Hoo (2009-06-29 17:40:46)  
Global warming is approaching....

### 2.6.11 Jon Bon Jovi Sings for Iran (2009-06-29 05:47)

In our previous post titled, [1]Playing for Change, there was a wonderful rendition of the song Stand By Me. With the recent violent actions against human rights in Iran, it only seemed appropriate to give you

Jon Bon Jovi and Andy Madadian's recent version:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RASKaZFZtS8> &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"O God! Refresh and gladden my spirit. Purify my heart. Illumine my powers. I lay all my affairs in Thy hand. Thou art my Guide and my Refuge. I will no longer be sorrowful and grieved; I will be a happy and joyful being. O God! I will no longer be full of anxiety, nor will I let trouble harass me. I will not dwell on the unpleasant things of life.

"O God! Thou art more friend to me than I am to myself.  
I dedicate myself to Thee, O Lord."

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/05/18/playing-for-change/>
2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Emily (2009-06-30 02:01:37)  
Good stuff!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-30 02:02:51)  
Yep, real good stuff...

Catherine (2009-06-30 06:32:38)

Excelent songs and music..first playing for change then a addition with a new sentemantal journey of of selection to listen to J.Bonjovi & Andy Mandadion of the song stand by me..truly very great songs. A comment.. The world cares very little about what a man or women knows;it is what the man or women is able to do that counts.!

catherine (2009-06-29 06:19:35)

Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose? I loved the old song stand by me..for many years, we all need someone to stand by us, wonder who huh??

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-29 06:30:41)

"...we all need someone to stand by us, wonder who huh??" My best answer is God...

Alexander Zoltai (2009-06-30 14:42:51)

Thanks for that perceptive comment, Catherine. Very true that what counts isn't what we know but what we do!

## 2.7 July

### 2.7.1 Blogging Yourself To Death . . . (2009-07-01 13:56)

This post isn't about blogging so much you die from it. It's about blogging in the wrong country. That country is Iran and the blogger was Omid Reza Mirsayafi. He was jailed for blogging and died in prison. There's a special site dedicated to making him the last blogger to die in prison, [1]OR318.

Here's a special video about the movement:

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLZ5eNX1pOE &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled, whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted, the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail—that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs—development and growth are inevitable."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 197

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1. <http://www.march18.org/>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

catherine (2009-07-02 02:28:10)

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness,you are more blessed the million people who will not survive the week,If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people around the world.You are more blessed than almost three billion people in the world.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-02 03:33:19)

Supremely and poetically stunning comment, Catherine !!!

## 2.7.2 Young Powerhouse . . . (2009-07-02 08:21)

Feel downhearted about Humanity?

Think there's no good reason to hope for the future?

Pretty much fed up with all the portrayals of humans as inept, powerless cogs in a wheel that's stopped turning?

The three videos in this post should cure you of all those ills!

Thia Megia

She appeared on America's Got Talent at 14 year's old and wowed them!

The following videos show her at 12—amateur videos that capture a Polished Soul showing us how to Live Life!!!

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bt84tBeyjnk &feature=player\_embedded]

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0PjCnVK308 &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"We applaud those youth who, in respect of this period, have already engaged in some activity within their national and local communities or in collaboration with their peers in other countries, and call upon them to persevere in their unyielding efforts to acquire spiritual qualities and useful qualifications. For if they do so, the influence of their high- minded motivations will exert itself upon world developments conducive to a productive, progressive and peaceful future."

The Universal House of Justice, 1985 May 08, Bahá'í Youth of the World

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**[1]Subscribe Free**

**in a reader or your email**

1. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-03 06:42:23)

Yes! And, since youth are are future, what they do today determines where we'll all be tomorrow...

Catherine (2009-07-03 05:38:56)

Please understand my friend,that where you find yourself tomorow is a function of the positive decisions and actions you take today.!

### 2.7.3 An Anthem for Iranians (2009-07-02 18:29)

#### An Anthem for Human Rights in Iran from [1]The Freedom Glory Project

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrsSt0i5vTE &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:*

”The source of human rights is the endowment of qualities, virtues and powers which God has bestowed upon mankind without discrimination of sex, race, creed or nation. To fulfill the possibilities of this divine endowment is the purpose of human existence.

”Human rights can be established in terms of social status when members of the community realize that the gift of life and conscious being obligates them to meet responsibilities owed to God, to society and to self. Mutual recognition by members of the community of the truth that their lives emanate from one and the same universal Source enables them to maintain ordered relationships in a common social body.

”The social body does not create essential human rights. Its office is that of trustee under appointment to act for the community in the preservation of the relationships which represent the moral achievement of the members, and to cherish and protect that unity of spirit which is their highest mutual obligation.

”No social body, whatever its form, has power to maintain essential human rights for persons who have repudiated their moral obligation and abandoned the divine endowment distinguishing man from beast. Civil definitions of political and economic status, if devoid of moral value and influence, are not equivalent to essential human rights but express the expedients of partisan policy. An ordered society can only be maintained by moral beings.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1947 Feb, A Bahá’í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights

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**[2]Subscribe Free**

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1. <http://www.freedomgloryproject.com/>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

## 2.7.4 For America's Spiritual Growth . . . (2009-07-03 22:27)



This is not a 4th of July post.  
That particular celebration commemorates the  
Declaration of Independence.

That document includes this statement: "... as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War..." Also, certain traditional songs used at the celebration "recall images of the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812 [Wikipedia].

Our last post was about [1]human rights in Iran and this one is about America's spiritual destiny... Many are unaware of the vastly important spiritual future of Iran and the United States and current events are certainly, to say the least, confusing on that score. One of the Spiritual Quotes below addresses a future relation between Iran and the United States...

This video is a song about America that uses the words from the other Spiritual Quote...  
[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMLJfK24UGI> &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quotes:*

"Some of the creatures of existence can live solitary and alone. A tree, for instance, may live without the assistance and cooperation of other trees. Some animals are isolated and lead a separate existence away from their kind. But this is impossible for man. In his life and being cooperation and association are essential. Through association and meeting we find happiness and development, individual and collective.

"For instance, when there is intercourse and cooperation between two villages, the advancement of each will be assured. Likewise, if intercommunication is established between two cities, both will benefit and progress. And if a reciprocal basis of agreement be reached between two countries, their individual and mutual interests will find great development. Therefore, in the unity of this radiant assemblage I behold the link between Orient and Occident. Such unity is the means and instrument

of cooperation between the various countries of the East and West. It is evident, then, that the outcomes from this basis of agreement and accord are numberless and unlimited. Surely there will be great harvests of results forthcoming for Persia and America. In Persia advanced material civilization will be established and the doors thrown open wide to American commerce.

”Above and beyond all this, a great love and fountain of affection shall bind and blend these two remote peoples, for Bahá’u’lláh has proclaimed to the world the solidarity of nations and the oneness of humanity. Addressing all mankind He has said, ‘Ye are all leaves of one tree and the drops of one sea’. The world of humanity has been expressed by Him as a unit—as one family. It is, therefore, hoped that the American and Persian nations may be conjoined and united in reciprocal love. May they become one race endowed with the same susceptibilities. May these bonds of amity and accord be firmly established.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 35

”O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of Thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to Thee through Thy bounty and bestowal.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í Prayers*, p. 23

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/07/02/an-anthem-for-iranians/>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Who Are The Iranians ? &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-17 11:26:14)

[...] previous post, For America’s Spiritual Growth... explored some deep connections between the two [...]

## 2.7.5 18 Tir = 9 July (2009-07-07 17:49)



The image is of Cyrus the Great, an ancient ruler of Persia—modern-day Iran.

[1]”It is said that, in universal history the role of the Achaemenid empire founded by Cyrus lies in its very successful model for centralized administration and **establishing a government working to the advantage and profit of its subjects...**”

This year, 18 Tir in Iran

(9 July in the Gregorian calendar) is said to be planned to be a day for major protest.

From Tehran Bureau : ”As the atmosphere in Iran continues to thicken, with the number of arrests rising daily, and several hangings (reportedly on the charge of having been involved in protests), everyone is looking towards the anniversary of the 1999 student uprising at Tehran University on 18th Tir (9 July). Exactly ten years ago, the students of Tehran University began to protest against the regime’s policy on social freedoms. In reply, scores of Basij militia raided the university halls of residence with the sole aim of extinguishing the protest, beating students, throwing tear gas, throwing people from the third floor windows shouting ‘Ya Zahra’, and causing several deaths including Ezzat Ebrahim Nezhad who, much like [2]**Neda**, became a symbol of injustice.”

[important update (9 July): [3]unrest continues...]

Video Update:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCfr91mWXdk> &feature=player\_embedded]

Here’s another video... Notice the prominence of women...

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGLGEvWzEFw> &feature=player\_embedded]

Also on July 9th, the Bahá'ís of non-Middle Eastern countries will hold memorials for the Martyrdom of the Báb—a profound Holy Day. For members of the [4]Bahá'í Faith in Iran (the country's largest religious minority), who are being viciously persecuted, the Martyrdom of the Báb is observed this year on August 20th, due to Lunar Calendar reckoning. The Iranian Bahá'ís will most likely hold their memorial services in secret...

From [5]**Planet Bahá'í** : "The Martyrdom of the Báb took place on July 9, 1850 at noon. An event with no parallel in history save the crucifixion of Jesus, it is commemorated as a solemn Holy Day by Bahá'ís around the world."

I would love to be able to walk the streets of Iran on that day, when citizens march for their rights, Iranian Bahá'ís pray for their fellow citizens' safety, and Bahá'ís in other countries pray for all Iranians...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Thus, after the martyrdom of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh appeared. The government arose against Him. The priesthood in Persia opposed Him, subjecting Him to severe persecution. His possessions were confiscated, His relatives and friends were killed, and He was placed in a dungeon. For a long period He was imprisoned, chained and subjected to severest suffering. Afterward, He was exiled to Iraq, or Mesopotamia, from thence to Constantinople, then transferred to Adrianople and finally to 'Akká in Syria. He spent twenty-four years in the prison of 'Akká, where He underwent the severest ordeals and privations without a day or night of relaxation and repose. Notwithstanding this imprisonment and suffering, He manifested utmost spiritual power and majesty. Although imprisoned, He withstood two tyrant kings and eventually overcame both."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 371

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1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus\\_the\\_Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_the_Great)
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/23/neda-stay-with-us/>
3. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/07/09/iran-uprising-blogging-th\\_n\\_228454.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/07/09/iran-uprising-blogging-th_n_228454.html)
4. <http://iran.bahai.us/>
5. <http://www.planetbahai.org/cgi-bin/articles.pl?article=30>
6. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine (2009-07-08 00:26:08)

Dream what you want to dream,go where you want to go,be what you want to be,because you have only one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do.When the only tool you have is a hammer,every problem begins to resemble a nail.!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-08 00:31:59)

Thank you, Catherine.

Ahang Rabbani (2009-07-08 15:40:50)

Excellent essay. However, the Baha'is of Iran observe the anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Bab according to a lunar calendar and as such will not be observing it on July 9th. But the rest of the Baha'is throughout the world, will be holding prayer sessions in memory of the execution of the Bab and tens of thousands of such gatherings will take place throughout ever town in the planet.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-08 15:59:54)

Thank you so much for the correction. I want to incorporate it into an update of the post. What Gregorian day does the Martyrdom of the Bab fall on this year?

## 2.7.6 United Breaks Guitars (2009-07-11 02:38)

There are many ways to complain about unjust treatment.

Case in point, from the [1]Huffington Post: "United Breaks Guitars, the sudden viral hit produced by distraught United Airways passenger Dave Carroll and his band, broke 1M views a mere 4 days after he posted it on YouTube."

This video is the most creative complaint I've ever seen:

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YGc4zQozo &feature=player\_embedded]

[2]Detailed description of the incident

Also from the [3]Huffington Post: "Carroll's goal was to get one million views in one year but he did more than just that. Remarkably, in these brief 4 days he changed United's Google search results page – something marketers take great pains to protect. In web marketing it's often said, "You are what Google says you are," and right now 4 of the Google results on the first page for "United Airlines" point to this video. Seven of the first 10 results for a Google video search of United Airlines are damaging to the brand."

Mr. Carroll's response to United's attempt at restitution is amazing:

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ay7hFIYQFnw &feature=player\_embedded]

Song Two certainly should be fascinating...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"O SON OF SPIRIT!

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbor. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes."

Bahá'u'lláh, The Arabic Hidden Words

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1. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-cherwenka/united-airlines-complaint\\_b\\_229240.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-cherwenka/united-airlines-complaint_b_229240.html)
2. <http://www.davecarrollmusic.com/story/united-breaks-guitars/>
3. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-cherwenka/united-airlines-complaint\\_b\\_229240.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-cherwenka/united-airlines-complaint_b_229240.html)
4. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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S.M. (2009-07-11 04:35:59)

It seems, avoiding the responsibilities is a very feature of the United Airlines (see: M. Kerjman v United Airlines <http://mkwrk2.livejournal.com/>).

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-11 12:06:05)

Thanks for directing us to your story!

Robin Easton (2009-07-12 18:37:39)

Hi Dear Alex, this is an amazing story and what a delightful and powerful way he dealt with this. It not only goes to show how much power "we the people" have, but it also shows that things like this can be handled in creative ways....and in fact may have MORE power if they ARE handled creatively. I think what he has done here may set a precedent for others to handle complaints, challenges, etc. in a more creative way. I really enjoyed this it is a great way to start my Sunday work day. I've a lot to do today and this just left me feeling inspired and uplifted. Thank you my friend for finding it and sharing it. I hope you are doing well. I've had little time for blogging, especially commenting but I slowly work my way around to my favorite blogs. I just worked out how to use RSS feed(I know a bit late in the game) but I've added your blog to my feed. So that is VERY cool. Hugs, Robin

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-12 18:45:13)

Robin! Good to hear from you!! This story is "lighter" than many I've posted yet it's potential for positive change may just be greater-It's infused with love...

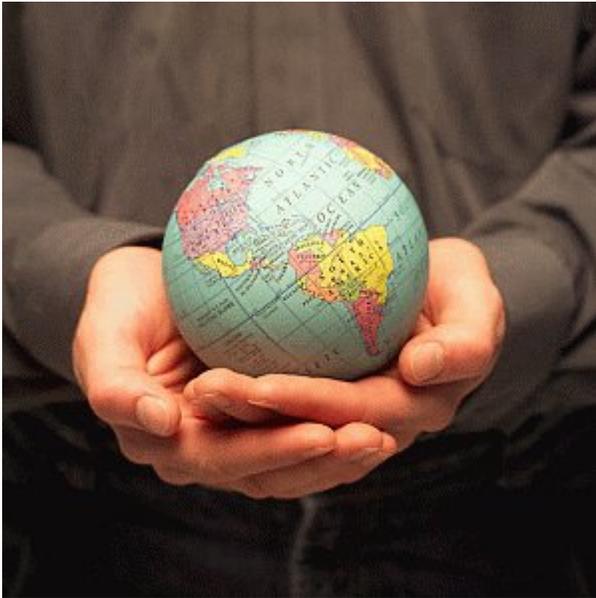
Robin Easton (2009-07-12 20:00:59)

I agree Alex; I think its potential for setting a new method of bringing about positive change is stunningly powerful. I can see it leading a whole new waved of this type of communication. And yes!! You are SO right about the love aspect. It just left me reeling by the intelligence and creativity it took to respond in THIS manner. It is brilliant. Also shows the power of the internet for GOOD.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-12 20:07:27)

Well, there are two more videos that man is producing. Keep a watch for them!!

## 2.7.7 Global Crisis, the MDGs, and the Earth Charter (2009-07-13 06:38)



The [1]MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) are an intertwined set of priorities first promoted by the United Nations in 2000.

Here they are:

End Poverty and Hunger

Universal Education

Gender Equality

Child Health

Maternal Health

Combat HIV/AIDS

Environmental Sustainability

Global Partnership

The original "deadline" for meeting the goals was 2015.

In the highly influential Huffington Post , in an article entitled, [2]It's Over: The Tragedy of the Millennium Development Goals, William Easterly says, "The MDGs will go down in history as a success in global consciousness-raising, but a failure in using that consciousness for its stated objectives....Why waste any more effort on the MDGs, now that we know they will not be met?"

In the [3]2009 Report on the status of attainment of the goals, it says:

"Rather than retreat, now is the time to accelerate progress towards the MDGs and to strengthen the global partnership for development. If the global community responds constructively to the crisis, the goals can still be achieved."

The statement from the Huffington Post is from an economist. The statement from the 2009 Report is from the Secretary-General of the UN.

It's relatively easy to see why the chief officer of the United Nations would implore hope and

significantly puzzling why an economist would preach defeat before the deadline...

Of course there are many other views as well as many other initiatives to improve the miserable lot of most of the members of our human family...

One particularly important initiative is the [4]Earth Charter—drafted during a six-year worldwide consultation process (1994-2000).

In 1991, the Bahá'í International Community offered suggestions for the proposed Earth Charter and presented them to the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

This blog always offers a spiritual quote along with its commentary since I believe the solutions to cultural and global crises lie in applied spirituality. I believe the BIC's suggestions to the UNCED are noteworthy because they give the underlying spiritual prerequisites without which any proposed political or economic solution will fail. Here are those suggestions...

*Spiritual Quote:*

Geneva  
5 April 1991

\* \* \* \*

"The Bahá'í International Community applauds the proposal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) that an Earth Charter be one of six principal components to be addressed at UNCED in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. Indeed, agreement on the 'principles to govern the relationships of peoples and nations with each other and with the earth' will be essential 'to ensure our common future in both environmental and developmental terms'. We, therefore, welcome this opportunity to share our views on elements to be considered for inclusion in this proposed Charter.

"It is our conviction that any call to global action for environment and development must be rooted in universally accepted values and principles. Similarly, the search for solutions to the world's grave environmental and developmental problems must go beyond technical-utilitarian proposals and address the underlying causes of the crisis. Genuine solutions, in the Bahá'í view, will require a globally accepted vision for the future, based on unity and willing cooperation among the nations, races, creeds, and classes of the human family. Commitment to a higher moral standard, equality between the sexes, and the development of consultative skills for the effective functioning of groups at all levels of society will be essential.

"There are many environmental declarations to which the UNCED Earth Charter could refer and on which it might draw, including the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment (1972), the Nairobi Declaration (1982), the World Charter for Nature (1982), and more recent documents such as the Universal Code of Environmental Conduct (Bangkok, October 1990).

"Clearly, an UNCED declaration or Earth Charter would profit from the widest possible con-

sultation with governments and non-governmental organizations. The Bahá'í International Community is, therefore, pleased to offer the following elements for possible inclusion in such a declaration of principles.

"In order to reorient individuals and societies toward a sustainable future, we must recognize the following.

- Unity is essential if diverse peoples are to work toward a common future. The Earth Charter might well identify those aspects of unity which are prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development. In the Bahá'í view, 'The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established'.

- The unrestrained exploitation of natural resources is merely a symptom of an overall sickness of the human spirit. Any solutions to the environment/development crisis must, therefore, be rooted in an approach which fosters spiritual balance and harmony within the individual, between individuals, and with the environment as a whole. Material development must serve not only the body, but the mind and spirit as well.

- The changes required to reorient the world toward a sustainable future imply degrees of sacrifice, social integration, selfless action, and unity of purpose rarely achieved in human history. These qualities have reached their highest degree of development through the power of religion. Therefore, the world's religious communities have a major role to play in inspiring these qualities in their members, releasing latent capacities of the human spirit and empowering individuals to act on behalf of the planet, its peoples, and future generations.

- Nothing short of a world federal system, guided by universally agreed upon and enforceable laws, will allow nation states to manage cooperatively an increasingly interdependent and rapidly changing world, thereby ensuring peace and social and economic justice for all the world's peoples.

- Development must be decentralized in order to involve communities in formulating and implementing the decisions and programs that affect their lives. Such a decentralization need not conflict with a global system and strategy, but would in fact ensure that developmental processes are adapted to the planet's rich cultural, geographic, and ecological diversity.

- Consultation must replace confrontation and domination in order to gain the cooperation of the family of nations in devising and implementing measures that will preserve the earth's ecological balance.

- Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavor, including environment and development, will the moral and psychological climate be created in which a peaceful, harmonious, and sustainable civilization can emerge and flourish.

- The cause of universal education deserves the utmost support, for no nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens. Such an education should promote the consciousness of both the oneness of humanity and the integral connection between humankind and the world of nature. By nurturing a sense of world citizenship, education can prepare the youth of the world for the organic changes in the structure of society which the principle of oneness implies.

”The Bahá’í International Community stands ready to contribute to the further elaboration and promotion of an Earth Charter in consultation with other interested bodies.”  
Bahá’í International Community, 1992 June 06, Earth Charter

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1. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>
2. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-easterly/its-over-the-tragedy-of-t\\_b\\_226120.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-easterly/its-over-the-tragedy-of-t_b_226120.html)
3. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202009%20ENG.pdf>
4. <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/>
5. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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James Oates (2009-07-14 12:28:58)

I commend the concept...I just don’t know if I hold much hope for the achievement. Warmly, Jim  
[www.CooperationEarth.com/earth](http://www.CooperationEarth.com/earth)

Nadim (2009-07-13 15:19:41)

First time reading through the Earth Charter proposals, thanks for sharing. It certainly checks most of the boxes from a root-cause perspective.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-13 15:22:30)

”It certainly checks most of the boxes from a root-cause perspective.” Fascinating way to put it !!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-14 13:30:18)

Well, Jim, far as I know, the only way concepts turn into reality is when they’re backed by massive hope...

## **2.7.8 Who Are The Iranians ? (2009-07-17 11:25)**

Much going on in Iran now...

Much in America, too...

Our previous post, [1]For America’s Spiritual Growth..., explored some deep connections between the two countries...

But who Are the Iranians...?

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynbUXNzI22w> &feature=player\_embedded]

Spiritual Quote:

”Aside from that which is a matter of record in Persian histories, it is stated in the Old Testament—established today, among all European peoples, as a sacred and canonical Text—that in the time of Cyrus, called in Iranian works Bahman son of Isfandiyar, the three hundred and sixty

divisions of the Persian Empire extended from the inner confines of India and China to the farthest reaches of Yemen and Ethiopia.[1] The Greek accounts, as well, relate how this proud sovereign came against them with an innumerable host, and left their own till then victorious dominion level with the dust. He made the pillars of all the governments to quake; according to that authoritative Arab work, the history of Abu'l-Fida, he took over the entire known world. It is likewise recorded in this same text and elsewhere, that Firaydun, a king of the Pishdadiyan Dynasty—who was indeed, for his inherent perfections, his powers of judgment, the scope of his knowledge, and his long series of continual victories, unique among all the rulers who preceded and followed him—divided the whole known world among his three sons.

[1] 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:2; Esther 1:1; 8:9; Isaiah 45:1, 14; 49:12.

”As attested by the annals of the world’s most illustrious peoples, the first government to be established on earth, the foremost empire to be organized among the nations, was Persia’s throne and diadem....

”It should not be imagined that the people of Persia are inherently deficient in intelligence, or that for essential perceptiveness and understanding, inborn sagacity, intuition and wisdom, or innate capacity, they are inferior to others. God forbid! On the contrary, they have always excelled all other peoples in endowments conferred by birth. Persia herself, moreover, from the standpoint of her temperate climate and natural beauties, her geographical advantages and her rich soil, is blessed to a supreme degree. What she urgently requires, however, is deep reflection, resolute action, training, inspiration and encouragement. Her people must make a massive effort, and their pride must be aroused.”

’Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 7

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/07/03/for-americas-spiritual-growth/>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Marilyn (2009-07-17 12:57:28)

I love the way you string these gems together! You’re a jeweler adorning the hearts and minds of those who read!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-17 13:26:29)

It’s a supreme honor having you say this...

The World Is Watching&#8230; &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-23 20:49:29)

[...] Who Are The Iranians? [...]

## **2.7.9 Prayers Make History... (2009-07-20 15:54)**

[1]image credit



There is political foment happening in Iran but it's not my place to comment on purely political happenings...

Yet, the underlying spiritual struggle, the human suffering, the psychological horror, the emotional drama; these I will address...

From a story on **Tehran Bureau**: *An independent source of news on Iran and the Iranian diaspora* entitled, [2]Prayers Make History, I want to quote various passages that set my mind and heart ablaze:

#### From A First-Hand Account

"As with other such days, I felt a dual sense of fear and fervor, heightened by the uncertainty of whether people would turn out or not. I arranged to go with friends, because the past month's experiences have taught me that going alone is unsafe. I remembered to put my name and number on a piece of paper in my pocket so if anything happens to me, my family can be notified."

"They came in all types: hipster with a rainbow-cannabis medallion resting on his open neck, a family with a ten-year-old child, women in that Islamic Iran archetype black chador, scruffy-looking men, laborers, girls in sunglasses, senior citizens."

"...phenomenal spectacle, a first in the history of Friday Prayers in Iran (and perhaps in a large part of the Muslim world), men and women were not segregated. They prayed side by side. This did not appear to offend the religious-minded; they seemed to accept the situation."

"Personally, as an atheist, I've always found it difficult to socialize with the religious masses. For the first time in my life, however, I really enjoyed being among my religious compatriots. I even tried to behave in such a way as to avoid causing them any discomfort or disrespect."

"The word online was that protests would start after prayers were over. ...I was intoxicated by the boom of thousands of reverberating voices chanting in unison....We pushed forward, a deluge thickened by people spilling in from alleys on either side where they'd been praying. The drone of

chanting carried over from other streets and we felt empowered in the knowledge that thousands more were on the move like us.”

”Suddenly, to our shock, they began firing tear gas in rapid succession — six, seven, eight? I don’t know how many hissing shots landed in quick succession in our midst. Panic ensued, as the crowd’s stampede-like retreat was constricted by the density of the crowd and the lack of space to expand into.”

”My eyes and throat and lungs were on fire. As I inhaled more toxic fumes, breathing became laborious. The muscles in my limbs felt numb, lax...People huddled around, and I went forth too, to get black smoke and cigarette smoke in my eyes to counter the effects of the tear gas.”

”The feeling of suffocation grew inside of me. A new awareness suddenly occurred as well: I may die. At that moment, I physically felt the possibility of death. Then I heard voices. I felt hands pulling me up, hands passing me along, and that’s the last thing I remember.”

The story continues, the man recovers, tells of help given him and his helping others, scenes of violence, bravery, human drama...

*Spiritual Quote (about the early history of the Bahá’í Faith in Iran):*

”Agitations, trials, woes, afflictions, and torture, arson, expulsion, plunder, beating, vilification, captivity, banishment, imprisonment, destruction of life—none of these could hinder the advancement of this beloved Cause, none could weaken the high resolve of its followers and champions in any part of the world, none could damage or disrupt the structure of its New Order, none could create a cleavage, a division, a schism or any form of sectarianism in the ranks of its embattled hosts. Nay rather, were one to observe with a discerning eye, it would become clear and evident that commotion in itself, the very succession of calamities, upheavals and hardships. and the recurrence of trials, adversities and sufferings have lent an impetus to the power latent in the Cause and reinforced its compelling force and pervasive influence. Indeed as a result of the onrushing tempests of tribulation and the raging hurricanes of tests and trials, the Faith’s scope of operation has been enlarged, its pillars have been raised to loftier heights, its foundation has become more secure, its glory more resplendent, the spread of its influence more rapid, its ascendancy and dominion more conspicuous and evident.”  
Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, *Fire and Light*, p. 36

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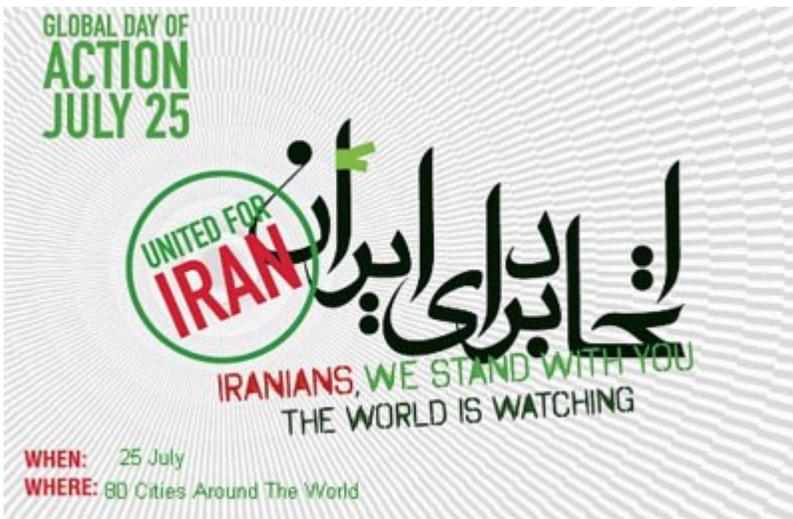
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2. <http://tehranbureau.com/prayers-history/>
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The World Is Watching&#8230; &laquo; Our Evolution (2009-07-23 20:47:25)  
[...] Prayers Make History [...]

## 2.7.10 The World Is Watching... (2009-07-23 20:46)



Things have been stirring in Iran...

As the ancient Persia, this country gave the world its first declaration of human rights...

Its recent track record on that account is shameful...

Go to [1][United for Iran](#) and see what a Global Day of Action for Human Rights can mean...

**For now, watch this video:**

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q1\_JLj0wKKM &feature=player\_embedded]

And, here's a list of links to our other posts about Iran:

- [2]Prayers Make History
- [3]Who Are The Iranians?
- [4]18 Tir = 9 July
- [5]An Anthem for Iran
- [6]Jon Bon Jovi Sings for Iran
- [7]Neda, Stay With Us !
- [8]Why Is This Woman In Jail?
- [9]Morality's Downfall
- [10]Women, Stereotypes, and Truth
- [11]Why Should You Care?
- [12]Religious Persecution
- [13]Repression
- [14]East and West Embrace, tentatively...
- [15]Religious Minority In Iran
- [16]Prisoners of Conscience
- [17]Woman - Man - Art
- [18]Human Rights Abuse That's Closest To My Heart...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"We are commanded to quicken the souls, to train the characters, to illumine the realm of man, to guide all the inhabitants of the earth, to create concord and unity among all men and to lead the world of humanity to the Fountain of the Everlasting Glory. The reformation of one empire is not our aim; nay, rather we invoke from God that all the regions of the world be reformed and cultivated; the republic of men become the manifestors of the bounty of the most glorious Lord; the East and the

West be brought nearer together; and that the Turk and Tajik, Iran and America, India and Arabia, Japan and Persia, China and Germany; in brief, all the nations and peoples of the world become as one soul and one spirit, in order that strife and warfare be entirely removed and the rancor and hostility disappear so that all become as the waves of one ocean, the drops of one sea, the flowers of one rose-garden, the trees of one orchard, the grains of one harvest and the plants of one meadow.”  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá v3, p. 490

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1. <http://united4iran.com/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/07/20/prayers-make-history/>
3. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/07/17/who-are-the-iranians/>
4. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/07/07/18-tir-9-july/>
5. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/07/02/an-anthem-for-iranians/>
6. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/29/bon-jovi-sings-for-iran/>
7. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/23/neda-stay-with-us/>
8. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2009/06/04/why-is-this-woman-in-jail/>
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17. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/05/17/woman-man-art/>
18. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/2008/05/16/human-rights-abuse-thats-closest-to-my-heart/>
19. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Liara Covert (2009-07-25 20:40:22)

Love is always the answer. You can choose to learn something else or express something else, but love is the ultimate healer for heart, mind and spirit.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-25 20:48:43)

Absolutely, Liara !!!

## 2.7.11 Global Day of Action (2009-07-26 06:13)



Our last post alerted folks to the Global Day of Action on July 25th—[1]United for Iran—when [2]people in over 100 cities around the world stood with the people of Iran in their hour of need—their struggle to have their voices heard, their votes counted, their rights protected...

Here are just a few of the videos of this Global Day of Action  
from the United for Iran site:

**CNN covers Berlin and London:**

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c\_Cjb6YgYfg &feature=player\_embedded]

**Shirin Ebadi, first Iranian to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, human rights activist and lawyer**

(after the introduction there is an English translator...):

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UUEaJ6ljsF4 &feature=player\_embedded]

**U2 sings for the Iranians:**

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtbbajLJoHA &feature=player\_embedded]

*Spiritual Quote:* "Bahá'u'lláh...has said, and has guarded His statement by rational proofs from the Holy Books, that the world of humanity is one race, the surface of the earth one place of residence and that these imaginary racial barriers and political boundaries are without right or foundation. Man is degraded in becoming the captive of his own illusions and suppositions. The earth is one earth, and the same atmosphere surrounds it. No difference or preference has been made by God for its human inhabitants; but man has laid the foundation of prejudice, hatred and discord with his fellowman by considering nationalities separate in importance and races different in rights and privileges." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 232

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Robin Easton (2009-07-29 15:16:20)

Often due to media we only hear about all the horrendous things happening in the world. And there ARE a lot of horrors taking place all over the globe, BUT there are also SO many good good people...all the people who spoke out or stood up for the people of Iran is proof of how much GOOD there is in the world. AND it also shows how much can be done when good people join together in a common cause. We are far more powerful than we have been taught to believe. Some powerful pots here Alex. Thanks my friend. Hugs, Robin.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-26 16:15:01)

You're very welcome WellWisher! The map is from the United for Iran site. This day inspired me because it spotlights the evil of nationalism when it uses the concept of sovereignty as a cover for human rights abuse...

Liara Covert (2009-07-27 17:10:45)

Love teaches in every situation. How you choose to feel and share love is always the underlying message that you may sometimes forget to hear.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-28 06:46:49)

Thanks for that, Liara...

WellWisher (2009-07-26 11:14:20)

The events around the world in support of Iranian People on Saturday July 25th were truly inspirational. Thank you for sharing these videos and for the awesome map.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-07-29 15:24:38)

Thank you, dear Robin, for your comment! So, are you back from the Wild?

## **2.7.12 The Art of Human Rights Struggle (2009-07-28 09:57)**

Just a few of the art works inspired by  
the struggle for human rights in Iran  
on [1]Tehran Bureau

✕ ✕ ✕  
✕ ✕ ✕

*Spiritual Quote:*

”The source of human rights is the endowment of qualities, virtues and powers which God has bestowed upon mankind without discrimination of sex, race, creed or nation. To fulfill the possibilities of this divine endowment is the purpose of human existence.

”Human rights can be established in terms of social status when members of the community realize that the gift of life and conscious being obligates them to meet responsibilities owed to God, to society and to self. Mutual recognition by members of the community of the truth that their lives emanate from one and the same universal Source enables them to maintain ordered relationships in a common social body.

”The social body does not create essential human rights. Its office is that of trustee under appointment to act for the community in the preservation of the relationships which represent the moral achievement of the members, and to cherish and protect that unity of spirit which is their highest mutual obligation.

”No social body, whatever its form, has power to maintain essential human rights for persons who have repudiated their moral obligation and abandoned the divine endowment distinguishing man from beast. Civil definitions of political and economic status, if devoid of moral value and influence, are not equivalent to essential human rights but express the expedients of partisan policy. An ordered society can only be maintained by moral beings.”

Bahá’í International Community, 1947 Feb,

A Bahá’í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights

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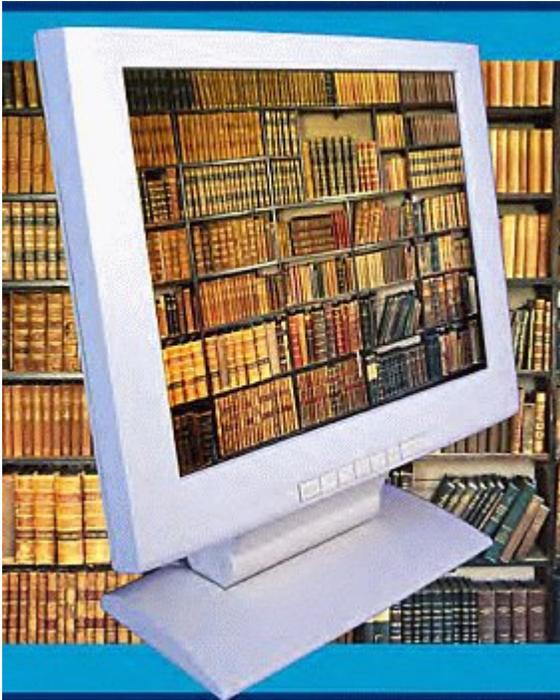
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## 2.8 August

### 2.8.1 Our Evolution's \*Special Posts\* (2009-08-01 00:39)



This blog regularly publishes posts that focus on particular events and crises in our world, attempting to provide important basic information and, of course, Spiritual Quotes that can lead to valuable perspectives concerning solutions or resolutions.

Our Evolution also has a number of [1]\*Special Posts\*, developed over the past year, with each addressing a particularly important general aspect of what's necessary to heal our ailing world...

There's a link to these \*Special Posts\* always available in the main header bar but I wanted to give you some insight into what this special coverage actually covers:

- [2]The Game of Life explores the connections among Life, Games, and Spirituality...
- [3]Path Toward Peace explores eleven critical steps humanity must take on its path toward an enduring global peace...
- [4]One Common Faith addresses the essential Oneness of all religions and the failure of most religious leaders to encourage practical, loving efforts to unite our human family...
- [5]Who Is Writing The Future? discusses the future of our Human Family and the Vision and Perseverance necessary to go forward into our collective maturity...
- [6]Spiritual Civilization will give you a firm grounding in the need for humanity to balance it's drives toward material civilization and spiritual civilization...

#### *Spiritual Quote*

"What we witness at the present time, during 'this gravest crisis in the history of civilization', recalling such times in which 'religions have perished and are born', is the adolescent stage in the slow

and painful evolution of humanity, preparatory to the attainment of the stage of manhood, the stage of maturity, the promise of which is embedded in the teachings, and enshrined in the prophecies, of Bahá'u'lláh. The tumult of this age of transition is characteristic of the impetuosity and irrational instincts of youth, its follies, its prodigality, its pride, its self-assurance, its rebelliousness, and contempt of discipline.

The Great Age to Come

”The ages of its infancy and childhood are past, never again to return, while the Great Age, the consummation of all ages, which must signalize the coming of age of the entire human race, is yet to come. The convulsions of this transitional and most turbulent period in the annals of humanity are the essential prerequisites, and herald the inevitable approach, of that Age of Ages, 'the time of the end', in which the folly and tumult of strife that has, since the dawn of history, blackened the annals of mankind, will have been finally transmuted into the wisdom and the tranquility of an undisturbed, a universal, and lasting peace, in which the discord and separation of the children of men will have given way to the worldwide reconciliation, and the complete unification of the divers elements that constitute human society.”

Shoghí Effendí Rabbání, *The Promised Day is Come*, p. 117

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1. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/>
2. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/game-of-life/>
3. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/path-toward-peace/>
4. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/one-common-faith/>
5. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/who-is-writing-the-future/>
6. <http://amzuri.wordpress.com/special-series/spiritual-civilization/>
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Anne (2009-08-01 04:14:33)

Thanks so much for putting together the .pdf versions of the blog series. I commonly like to save interesting or informative posts for viewing and studying later. It's great that you have made it so easy for me!!! Looking forward to studying these articles.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-01 04:20:52)

So glad you find what I've done beneficial to your needs—gives me hope...

## 2.8.2 False Religion (2009-08-05 16:40)



So much hate being spread in the name of religion...

'Abdu'l-Bahá, son of the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, once said:

"Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion."

He also said, "A Bahá'í denies no religion; he accepts the Truth in all, and would die to uphold it."

Recent events in Pakistan show the dark side of this issue:

**From The New York Times:** [1]Hate Engulfs Christians in Pakistan "The attack in this shabby town in central Pakistan — the culmination of several days of rioting over a claim that a Koran had been defiled — shows how precarious life is for the tiny Christian minority in Pakistan."

**From CNN:** [2>About 200 arrested in violence against Christians in Pakistan "Seven people were killed and 20 injured Saturday when Muslim demonstrators set fire to houses in a Christian enclave..."

**From Agence France-Presse:** [3]Pakistan Christian schools strike after killings "An angry mob of Muslims torched 40 houses and a church in the remote village of Gojra in Pakistan's heartland province of Punjab..."

It's no wonder more and more intelligent people can say things like, "I'm very spiritual but certainly not religious..."

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...it is evident that the Divine religions are meant to create a bond of love among humanity, and to bind the people together for no other purpose than amity. Divine religion is not a cause for discord and disagreement. If religion be the cause of discord and difference, then no religion is

preferable, for religion is meant to be life to the body politic. If it be the cause of death to humanity, then its non-existence is preferable. Therefore, in this day religion is to be sought, for religious teachings may well be likened to remedies. If a remedy be productive of worse symptoms, the lack or absence of the remedy is preferable.”

Compilations, Bahá'í Scriptures, p. 312

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1. [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/03/world/asia/03pstan.html?\\_r=2&src=tw&tw=nytimes](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/03/world/asia/03pstan.html?_r=2&src=tw&tw=nytimes)
2. <http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/08/03/pakistan.anti.christian.violence/>
3. <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i-xDZKhJz4vVyAx-sdpk2cIKpX3A>
4. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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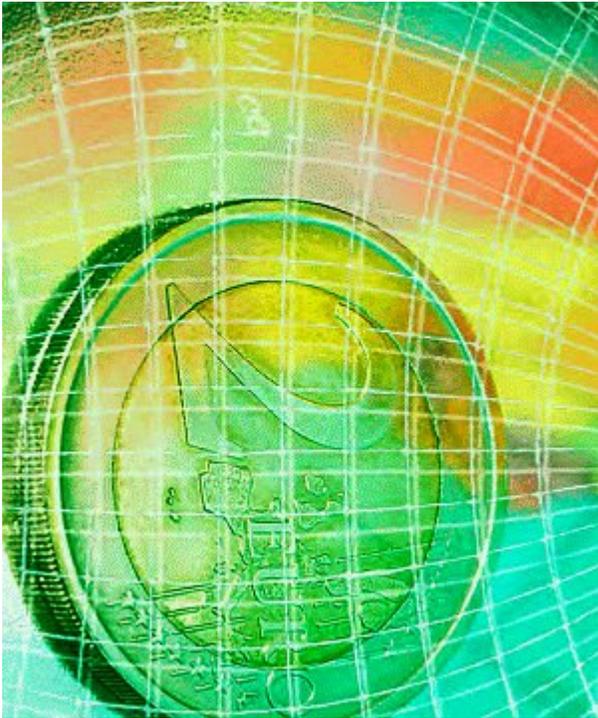
Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-18 16:54:16)

God is Almighty but He's given us free-will...

Lin Kim (2009-08-18 10:44:22)

God being almighty and all powerfull.....don't you think he is capable of inspiring a religion that does not cause the kind of blood shed you talked about?

### 2.8.3 Money (2009-08-08 19:50)



”There is no class so pitiably wretched as that which possesses money and nothing else.” Andrew Carnegie

Carnegie is said to have amassed \$298.3 billion in 2007 dollars.

He’s also quoted as saying: ”I resolved to stop accumulating and begin the infinitely more serious and difficult task of wise distribution.”

Considering money in more general terms, there’s a wonderful and innovative four-part documentary on PBS called the [1]Ascent of Money narrated by [2]Niall Ferguson. Certainly not a dry documentary; more like a video novel...

The following Spiritual Quote is a letter from ’Abdu’l-Bahá (a man poor in money yet vastly rich in spirit) written to Andrew Carnegie.

*Spiritual Quote:*

”O respected personage! I have read your work, The Gospel of Wealth [1], and noted therein truly apposite and sound recommendations for easing the lot of humankind.

[1] An article from Andrew Carnegie’s book The Gospel of Wealth was published in England in the Pall Mall Budget and called, also, The Gospel of Wealth, cf. Andrew Carnegie’s Autobiography 255n.

”To state the matter briefly, the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh advocate voluntary sharing, and this is a greater thing than the equalization of wealth. For equalization must be imposed from without, while sharing is a matter of free choice.

”Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the

doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely-chosen expending of one's substance, leadeth to society's comfort and peace. It lighteth up the world; it bestoweth honour upon humankind.

"I have seen the good effects of your own philanthropy in America, in various universities, peace gatherings, and associations for the promotion of learning, as I travelled from city to city. Wherefore do I pray on your behalf that you shall ever be encompassed by the bounties and blessings of heaven, and shall perform many philanthropic deeds in East and West. Thus may you gleam as a lighted taper in the Kingdom of God, may attain honour and everlasting life, and shine out as a bright star on the horizon of eternity."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 115

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1. <http://video.pbs.org/video/1170821435>
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niall\\_Ferguson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niall_Ferguson)
3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Angela (2009-08-09 03:02:17)

I really learned a ton of information from the Ascent of Money PBS show. I had intended on catching it when it first aired a few weeks ago, but couldn't make it. Thanks! I am thrilled in the enrichment of the artists and thinkers of the renaissance period, and feel very comforted by the "logic" behind the explanation for how business is ran these days. I was struck by the fact that banking has developed to be so prominent in just four short centuries and now I have a better grip on what is happening today. Very Cool!!! Sorry about my spelling errors!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-09 03:12:31)

Hey! Thanks for commenting on the PBS show—gotta be the best documentary I've seen in years!! So now you know enough to make Lots of money, right? ;-)

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-12 05:25:03)

"lighted tapers": Awesome description for these two enlightened Souls!!!

isabella mori (2009-08-12 05:22:19)

i'm going to watch this - sounds very interesting. what a beautiful quotation by both men - and how inspiring to see these two great "lighted tapers" together! thank you!

## 2.8.4 Love Lost... (2009-08-12 08:49)



### Love

The most valuable yet misunderstood Power in the Universe...  
Where do we find it?  
Where does it find us?

'Tis said, God is Love...  
So, why do we, created in God's Image, so often have love go wrong...?  
What's Your Image of Love?

Enjoy this song—Exuberant Music, Tragic Lyrics...  
By the way, the Lady and the guitarist in the blue plaid shirt are married...  
There's Some Techie Issue—So, Just click the Video, Then Click "Watch on YouTube"...

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zs50uz3a\_-M &feature=related]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"I am lost, O Love, possessed and dazed,  
Love's fool am I, in all the earth.  
They call me first among the crazed,  
Though I once came first for wit and worth...

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 22

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1. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-17 14:52:53)  
Absolutely!!!!!!!!!!

Robin Easton (2009-08-17 14:43:28)

Yes, dear Alex, I agree. That is exactly what it is. And once fully embraced it is with us forever. It is with us from the beginning, but we humans don't often realize this. If we did we would have no wars, no hate. We would simply love and embrace each other as we would see the Divine in everything we looked upon. Hugs, Robin

Robin Easton (2009-08-17 04:04:31)

My image of love, or better yet, my relationship with love is with something so great that it encompasses all things...and still loves, no matter what. It soothes and forgives. It holds no judgment to begin with. It is a love so vast that when felt I know I am safe....no matter what. My image of love is endearing, enduring and infinitely sweetly compassionate.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-17 13:38:24)

Your evocative and infinitely sweet relationship with love is what I would call the power of God...

## 2.8.5 You Have A Genius... (2009-08-16 04:17)



[1]

This woman faced down a pre-midlife crisis by doing what we all secretly dream of – running off for a year.

Elizabeth Gilbert is an extremely gifted writer. She also has well-grounded ideas about what "Genius" really means! She soared into celebrity with her book, [2]Eat, Pray, Love, "fueled by a mix of intelligence, wit and colloquial exuberance that is close to irresistible".

The following video will show you her storytelling skills as well as her dedication to honoring the genius within every creative act.

Prepare to be surprised, delighted, and inspired:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86x-u-tz0MA>]

Want to listen to Elizabeth read part of Eat, Pray, Love and answer questions from some of the folks who work at Google?

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bhVDIe42to]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"The confirmations of the Spirit are all those powers and gifts which some are born with (and which men sometimes call genius), but for which others have to strive with infinite pains. They come to that man or woman who accepts his life with radiant acquiescence."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 120

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1. [http://www.ted.com/speakers/elizabeth\\_gilbert.html](http://www.ted.com/speakers/elizabeth_gilbert.html)
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eat,\\_Pray,\\_Love](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eat,_Pray,_Love)
3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Nadim (2009-08-24 17:27:50)

I loved this post, thank you.

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-24 17:33:24)

Oh, my, you're certainly welcome!! Allah, Allah, Allah! Olé, Olé, Olé !!

Nadim (2009-08-24 18:01:04)

Hahaha - my sentiments exactly!

## 2.8.6 Prisoners of Conscience (2009-08-19 15:08)



**An International outcry is being heard, a globally deep concern about the fate of innocent Iranians—basic human rights denied; imprisoned, killed...**

Among these abused Iranian citizens are many Bahá'ís—those who would never protest against their government, jailed for their spiritual beliefs...

It's one thing to demonstrate in the street against what you feel are improper elections; it's quite another to be sitting in your home, praying for your government, and have its agents arrest you...

Recently, at the Herbst Theater in San Francisco—where the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948—an event was attended by: "Over 1000 attendees, including local dignitaries, government officials, members of the press and Bay Area Bahá'ís and their guests, gathered to support the cause of justice for the community of Iranian Bahá'ís enduring persistent persecution."

Listen carefully, if you would understand what evils are being perpetrated, to this two-part video presentation by Dr. Farhad Sabetan, spokesperson for the Bahá'í International Community and Lecturer of Economics at California State University:

[youtube=<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KTNVDecmZA>]

[youtube=[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsZ1Rm\\_7C\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsZ1Rm_7C_s)]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"It is incumbent upon every man, in this Day, to hold fast unto whatsoever will promote the interests, and exalt the station, of all nations and just governments. Through each and every one of the verses which the Pen of the Most High hath revealed, the doors of love and unity have been unlocked and flung open to the face of men. We have erewhile declared—and Our Word is the truth—: 'Consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship'. Whatsoever hath led the children of men to shun one another, and hath caused dissensions and divisions amongst them, hath, through the revelation of these words, been nullified and abolished. From the heaven of God's Will, and for the purpose of ennobling the world of being and of elevating the minds and souls of men, hath been sent down that which is the most effective instrument for the education of the whole human race."

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 94

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1. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-20 10:09:16)

Thank you, Catherine, for such a touching comment!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-22 01:52:41)

Yep, Catherine is a wise soul!!! Truly appreciate your comment, Dear Robin... Ya know, I'm a Baha'i but those Baha'is in Iran show me a Faith so Deep it Awes me.....

Catherine (2009-08-20 07:06:28)

One's real life is often the life that one does not lead, the soul that sees beauty may sometimes walk alone..how sad for such peaceful people who must suffer for what they believe, the Bahai's.

Robin Easton (2009-08-22 01:48:09)

Wow, I could not even begin to improve on dear Catherine's comment. It did me good just to read it. She is such a deep soul. Wise. You two make a great tag team. I really think what she said is true and have even found this true at times in my own life. But these persecuted people must indeed feel they walk alone. They truly reliant on their faith and knowledge of something greater and all knowing, something compassionate, forgiving and loving. And yet, that does not end their suffering or even prevent their torture or death. Thank you for speaking our Alex. You, yourself, are a brave soul educating the world and showing the courage of many people around the world. I thank you deeply for doing so. Hugs, your friend, Robin

## 2.8.7 Social Media - So What? (2009-08-25 01:32)



Not really sure what all the hype is about?

Twitter... FaceBook... Plurk... Jaiku... LinkedIn... Bebo...

So What, you say?

Watch the compelling video, [1]Social Media Importance Explained, on the WebSite Un-Marketing and you just might see a phase-change coming in how humans live on this earth...

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Increasingly, globalization assumes political, social and cultural dimensions. It has become clear that the powers of the institution of the nation-state, once the arbiter and protector of humanity's fortunes, have been drastically eroded. While national governments continue to play a crucial role, they must now make room for such rising centres of power as multinational corporations, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations of every kind, and huge media conglomerates, the cooperation of all of which is vital to the success of most programmes aimed at achieving significant economic or social ends. Just as the migration of money or corporations encounters little hindrance from national borders, neither can the latter any longer exercise effective control over the dissemination of knowledge. Internet communication, which has the ability to transmit in seconds the entire contents of libraries that took centuries of study to amass, vastly enriches the intellectual life of anyone able to use it, as well as providing sophisticated training in a broad range of professional fields. The system, so prophetically foreseen sixty years ago by Shoghi Effendi, builds a sense of shared community among its users that is impatient of either geographic or cultural distances."

Commissioned by The Universal House of Justice, Century of Light, p. 132

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**[2]Subscribe Free**

**in a reader or your email**

1. <http://www.un-marketing.com/blog/2009/08/18/social-media-importance-explained/>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Catherine (2009-08-26 15:55:44)

Well said,the Media tells poeple only what they are told , not the whole thruth. Experience that eternal moment of freedom of mistaken for emptiness.

Catherine (2009-08-26 15:02:53)

You are today where your thoughts have brought you;you will be tomorow where your thoughts take you!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-26 15:14:15)

"You are today where your thoughts have brought you" And, most of my thoughts were not stimulated by Social Media... "you will be tomorow where your thoughts take you" But, now that I'm heavily into Social Media, my thoughts can take me to some very New Spaces!!

Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-25 19:29:10)

Thank you for the Comment \*and\* the Link!!!

Jason Snyder (2009-08-25 19:19:33)

While social media allows us to better coordinate activities, diffuse learning, and promote some degree of replicability, does it actually help us enrich the core activities. Is a study circle over skype as usefull as one in person? We discuss this issue on Baha'i Coherence <http://bahaicoherence.blogspot.com/2009/08/bahai-activities-and-use-of-internet.html>

## 2.8.8 Youth In Danger (2009-08-27 19:24)



This post isn't directly about the moral dangers our youth face, but a perusal of this [1]Google search will deepen your understanding about that...

But, look at this couple: so youthfully together, so fresh with Life and promise! They could be dead in tragic moments from engaging in an activity that far too many do with no thought of danger—exuberance overcoming vigilance...

While I was Twittering, I followed a link to a very well-produced yet grippingly graphic public service video from Wales. Though texting while driving isn't normally considered a moral issue, its consequences could lead to issues of high moral concern...

Show it to all the youth you know...

[youtube=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGE8LzRaySk]

*Spiritual Quote:*

"...the dangers facing the modern youth are becoming increasingly grave, and call for immediate solution. But, as experience clearly shows, the remedy to this truly sad and perplexing situation is not to be found in traditional and ecclesiastical religion. The dogmatism of the church has been discarded once for all. What can control youth and save it from the pitfalls of the crass materialism of the age is the power of a genuine, constructive and living Faith such as the one revealed to the world by Bahá'u'lláh. Religion, as in the past, is still the world's sole hope, but not that form of religion which our ecclesiastical leaders strive vainly to preach. Divorced from true religion, morals lose their effectiveness and cease to guide and control man's individual and social life. But when true religion is combined with true ethics, then moral progress becomes a possibility and not a mere ideal.

"The need of our modern youth is for such a type of ethics founded on pure religious faith. Not until these two are rightly combined and brought into full action can there be any hope for the future of the race."

From a letter Written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, April 17, 1926, Lights of Guidance, p. 630

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1. <http://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=youth+social+dangers&hl=en&rls=gm&sourceid=gmail&um=1&ie=UTF-8&oi=scholart>

2. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

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Alexander Zoltai (2009-08-27 22:39:30)

Thanks for letting us all know what the Baha'is are doing!! Hopefully, youth will share the video in this post with other youth.....

Marley (2009-08-27 22:18:35)

In the Baha'i community, the youth are taking on responsibility for empowering the pre-youth. The saying is that no one learns more than the teacher, and these youth really are stepping up to set an example for their young charges. It's quite outside-the-box to reach the youth by offering them the responsibility to teach these youngsters who so willingly look up to them. It's a win-win.

### **2.8.9 Are You \*Really\* Educated? (2009-08-30 15:35)**



[1]Yes! magazine is good for a lot of reasons...

One of the latest goodies on their site is a list of twelve things a really educated person knows...

From the site: "You won't find 'takes honors classes', 'gets good grades', or 'attends only Ivy League schools' on John Taylor Gatto's list of qualities of an educated person."

Do check out the [2]full article but here are those points of real education:

- 1: Establish an individual set of values but recognize those of the surrounding community and of the various cultures of the world.
- 2: Explore their own ancestry, culture, and place.
- 3: Are comfortable being alone, yet understand dynamics between people and form healthy relationships.
- 4: Accept mortality, knowing that every choice affects the generations to come.
- 5: Create new things and find new experiences.
- 6: Think for themselves; observe, analyze, and discover truth without relying on the opinions of others.
- 7: Favor love, curiosity, reverence, and empathy rather than material wealth.
- 8: Choose a vocation that contributes to the common good.
- 9: Enjoy a variety of new places and experiences but identify and cherish a place to call home.
- 10: Express their own voice with confidence.
- 11: Add value to every encounter and every group of which they are a part.
- 12: Always ask: "Who am I? Where are my limits? What are my possibilities?"

*Spiritual Quote:*

"Bahá'u'lláh taught the Oneness of humanity; that is to say, all the children of men are under the mercy of the Great God. They are the sons of one God; they are trained by God. He has placed the crown of humanity on the head of every one of the servants of God. Therefore all nations and peoples must consider themselves brethren. They are all descendants from Adam. They are the branches, leaves, flowers and fruits of One Tree. They are pearls from one shell. But the children of men are in need of education and civilization, and they require to be polished, till they become bright and shining.

"Man and woman both should be educated equally and equally regarded."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 28

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1. <http://www.yesmagazine.org/>

2. [http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/learn-as-you-go/higher-education?utm\\_source=aug09&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=4\\_12Things](http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/learn-as-you-go/higher-education?utm_source=aug09&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=4_12Things)

3. <http://feeds2.feedburner.com/OurEvolution>

Gad's BlogBook v0.1,  
L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X 2<sub>ε</sub> & GNU/Linux.  
<http://www.blogbooker.com>

Edited: August 31, 2009