

Reflections, Music, & Events

Volume 3, Issue 2

AUGUST 7, 2013

2013

**First Sunday
Potlucks**

2:30—5:30 p.m.

Relaxation Retreats for
Stress Release
“How Do You Heal?”
March thru October

**Third Sunday
Workshops**

2:00—5:00 p.m.

“Life Makeovers”
March thru October

Join Us!

The Nature Center at
Shaker Lakes
2600 South Park Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44120

Questions . . .

Shirley A. Nelson
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~ Creating a Beautiful World ~ One Sacred Soul at a Time



Sacred Choice . . .

Shirley A. Nelson (San)

*“Your daily life is your temple
and your religion”.*
~ *Kahlil Gibran* ~

In last month’s newsletter we talked about *I Don’t Know Land* which is, for many, a place of transition that might cause us to feel unsettled and out of sorts with the world. *I Don’t Know Land* can be a little scary especially when the roots beneath us that were once so firm are shaken to the core—sometimes violently. Whether or not our time in this strange place is a day, a week, a month, or years, it is quite valuable. Although we can’t always see it, this is a time of intense growth whereby spiritual muscles are significantly strengthened.

No matter where you are on the journey, it helps to have something in place for the day-to-day—something that lifts your spirit and keeps you in a positive mind set. And it’s really important to have it when life takes an unexpected turn. At the very least, we try to have our finances in order, maintain good health, and nurture our relationships. But I’m talking about the spirit. I’m talking about doing what’s necessary to care for your soul. By developing spiritual practices, we learn how to work from the inside out.

These practices help to deepen our awareness of our oneness with God. They also help to penetrate beneath the surface to touch something within that stirs the soul.

Most of us are familiar with the following spiritual practices: reflective reading, prayer, silence, meditation, being still, being empty, forgiveness, healing our wounds, and practicing self love. The key is finding out what works for you and sticking to it. If you are in the process of developing practices, forgiveness is a good place to start.

You can begin with a simple writing exercise and say: “I forgive myself for . . .” or, if it’s someone else, put in their name. Write it until you no longer feel any energy around the matter. That might take a few minutes or a few years, and in the process it will release a lot of fear, anger, sadness, and despair.

With daily spiritual practice, we can develop a consciousness of positive expectancy by gently releasing attachments to old ways of thinking. Instead of focusing on what’s wrong, we start to focus on what’s right. It’s not by chance, it’s by choice—sacred choice. It is a sacred choice to select awareness of God over all else.

Making Choices

When we pause and do it frequently, we begin to become aware of what is around us and within us.

How can something so apparently simple lead to such profound change? Ordinary as it is, this is a mystery and one of great depth. In it we come to trust an instinct, the nudge that tells us when something is not quite right. We can become aware of being off and that we have a choice in the matter.

When things are too noisy, for instance, we may now turn off the radio. The relief when unnecessary stimulation is removed is amazing. As we listen to the body’s wisdom and attend to it we are approaching some comfort with silence.

More and more in every day we begin to be aware when things are too much or too frequent: amounts of food on our plate, appointments in our day timer, talk on the telephone, hours in front of the computer. These can take us away from presence in the present.

Daily choice is what builds a spiritual existence. Faith in our essential connection to life happens not by thought and belief but by practice and persistence. Making choices is how we exercise that faith.

It is always possible to ask, What’s enough here and now? Our automatic selves act without choice. Our knowing selves are wise and selective.

We know that too much, in the end, is too little and that enough is always enough.

*Gunilla Norris
“Inviting Silence”*





The Many Faces of Prayer ~ A Healing Balm in the 21st Century

Shirley A. Nelson
Author

Click here to read an
↓ excerpt ↓
<http://tiny.cc/53f07>

The Many Faces of Prayer

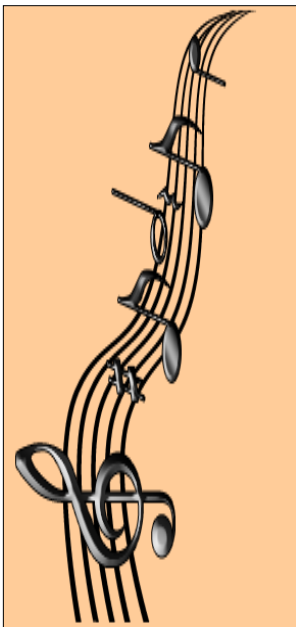
Divine Guidance Speaks Within Me and Through the World

Divine love guides me. I count — and I count on — this blessing. Spirit always speaks both to me and through me. I listen with my heart and I hear with clarity. In every situation, I find the path of compassion, the voice of higher wisdom. I am able to hear divine guidance. I

seek my inner wisdom and it comes to me. It is always there. There is a right solution, a good outcome for every difficulty. The world evolves in all its particulars toward higher good and harmony. I am able to be a part of this upward evolution as I listen and respond to my inner cues. I do not need to act out of fear. I do not need to force solutions. My inner wisdom guides me. As I listen to my

heart, I find support in the outer world. There is no place too isolated for guidance to teach me through inner and outer promptings. I ask to be led. I listen within me and without. The world responds to my listening with a voice of compassion and clear guidance. I am blessed by the guidance I receive.

~ Julia Cameron ~
Blessings



Sacred Music Pick of the Month

Silence

Sometimes the best music is silence.

Silence is the source of all that exists, the unfathomable stillness where vibration began—the first oscillation, the first word, from which life emerged.

Silence is our deepest nature, our home, our common ground, our peace.

Silence heals. Silence reveals. Silence is where God dwells. We yearn to be there.

In our present culture silence is something like an endangered species ...an endangered fundamental. We need it badly.

Silence brings us back to basics, to our senses, to our selves. It locates us.

Without that return we can go so far away from our true natures that we end up, quite literally, beside ourselves.

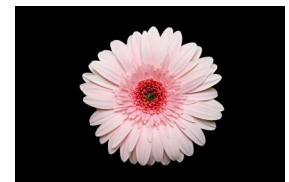
We live blindly and act thoughtlessly. We endanger the delicate balance which sustains our lives, our communities, and our planet.

Can we remember our power as persons?

Can we remind ourselves and others that, nurtured in silence, our awareness can lead us back to integrity and meaning?

Each of us has and is a holy capability.

~ Gunilla Norris ~



There is a place where words are born of silence, a place where the whispers of the heart arise.

~ Rumi ~

SIT-UP ~ Stay Tuned Spiritually In Tune for Universal Peace

Artist of the Spirit

Are you an *Artist of the Spirit*? Do you color your life with the things that matter most and that which you truly desire? Our lives are artist palettes and we can choose colors that are joyful and inspiring or we can choose colors that are sad and dreary.

If you are wondering what colors you have chosen, just take a look at your life. How do you feel? If you feel lots of peace, love and joy then you are an *Artist of the Spirit* whose colors are ripe with passion. These colors may show up in your home, wardrobe, personal style, etc. But they also show up in your spirit as a

zest for life, big energy, generosity, compassionate, loving, and kind to self and others. And that's where it really counts! If you want to head in that direction, keep practicing. With daily spiritual practice, you will replace negative thinking with God-centered thinking and your life will take on the colors of your soul. *San*



Water the Seeds Not the Weeds

Just a Thought . . . 

The Issue of Fairness

As long as we see what has come to pass as being unfair, we'll be a prisoner of what might have been.

This is a very painful issue to discuss for most of us, because so much of how we see the world hinges on a sense of fairness and justice, those truly noble human concepts that govern how we treat each other.

But the laws of experience in the natural world, in which we have no choice how to live, do not work this way. Rather, the larger Universe, of which humankind is a small part, is a world of endless possibilities and endless cycle, a world in which life forms come and go, a world itself that has erupted and reformed countless times.

This is why the Hindu tradition has a deity known

as Vishnu, who both destroys and bestows life, often in that order. Although fairness and justice are beautiful gravities by which we as human creatures try to live with one another, the storm and the germ, the termites eating the foundation of your home, the errant stone breaking your windshield, the wave swamping your little boat—these molecules of experience do not understand what is fair. They just bombard us in the endless cosmic dance of life that just keeps happening.

When I was struggling with cancer, I was asked repeatedly to release any anger at the injustice of having cancer. Quite honestly, I felt a great many things—fear, pain, anxiety, frustration, uncertainty, exhaustion—but I did not feel that having cancer was unjust. When was I or anyone promised perfect health? An ant can struggle for yards with food in its mouth only to have a dead limb tired of hanging on crush it. What makes

human beings presume to be exempt from such things?

I know now that, over the years, my own cries that life is unfair have come from the inescapable pain of living, and these cries, while understandable, have always diverted me from feeling my way through the pain of my breakage into the re-formation of my life. Somehow, crying “Unfair” has always kept me stuck in what hurts.

I offer what has surprised me in my pain: that life is not fair, but unending in its capacity to change us; that compassion is fair and feeling is just; and that we are not responsible for all that befalls us, only for how we receive it and for how we hold each other up along the way.

Excerpt from: The Book of Awakening: Having the Life You Want by Being Present to the Life You Have.

by Mark Nepo

Peace ~ Rashid



Rashid Reaves,
Retired fire fighter and paramedic... Planting sacred seeds to enrich your heart and soul. . .

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What About the Monkey Mind?

Learning to Pause

In almost all traditions of spiritual development there is the understanding that our wills need to be trained.

Without willingness we cannot enter into stability on behalf of our inner lives.

Willingness is not willpower, the — “pull up your boot straps” — kind.

Willingness is more like surrender to one’s deep longing.

It orients us according to the heart’s desire

instead of the ego’s demands.

This requires recollection.

A little space of time to remember. Thoreau called it living with a wide margin.

We can start by giving ourselves

just a tiny, small margin.

Without it being any more than simply stopping we can pause all through the day to feel

ourselves in time and space.

This allows us to be located.

When we learn to do this

many times a day — before getting out of bed, before meals, before leaving for work, before turning on a light or shutting it — the pauses add up.

We are expressing a little pressure of the will.

Over time the habit of recollection leads us back to the center,

to stillness and listening.

There we can begin to find a new center from which to live.

~ Gunilla Norris ~



Mary Grigolia
Spiritual Educator for 32 years, Unitarian Universalist minister, songwriter

Meditate with Mary
mary@marygrigolia.com

SAN's Sacred Circle

*We are all meant to
be mother's of God,
for God is always
needing to be born.
~ Meister Eckhart ~*

Be the Peace that you
want to see . . .

SAN's Sacred Circle was established in 1998 as a lay ministry, grass roots, spiritual support group to nurture and develop sustainable practices for emotional healing and spiritual growth and to cultivate an overall sense of well-being within participants.

Inner wisdom is the compass that bridges your humanity and divinity and everyone has access to this amazing tool that lovingly guides and directs us. Access to the "still, small voice within" occurs through music, meditation, quietness, prayer, dance, and creative art inspired activities. In an environment that is sacred as well as playful, workshop participants connect body, mind, and spirit using their inner compass to transform their lives.

Peace & Blessings ~
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Certified Life Skills Coach
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If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive this newsletter each month by email, please let me know. Send your request to sanscircle@gmail.com.



Carole Ann Drick, Director

Conscious Living Center
Youngstown, Ohio

Sacred Spaces for Rest and Restoration

Conscious Living Center

Last weekend I attended Summit Spiritual Center in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. The keynote speaker was Carole Ann Drick whom I met that day, and we are fast becoming friends.

Carole Ann wears a lot of hats and she wears them well. Along with speaking engagements and teaching about conscious living and healing, Carole Ann officiates weddings, end of life ceremonies, and she is the author of several books. There's more, but I'll let you discover it for yourself.

If you are interested in expanding your consciousness and healing more deeply in the areas of your life that you are aware of, this is the place

for you. On her website you will find several options to choose from and I invite you to explore the possibilities to find which is most suitable for where you are in your life.

Following is an excerpt from Carole Ann's website that gives you an idea of what is being offered. "Here at the Conscious Living Center we are dedicated to facilitating life enhancing and spiritually awakening activities and living. Since 1989 we have been deepening our awareness through asking the question: "Is it possible to live in this moment without the unconscious influence of the past?" And, we have been discovering the answer one breath at a time.

Because we listen with our

inner ears to what you are saying, our facilitators are able to assist you in reaching your visions of health, abundance and happiness. We use simplified spirituality techniques in a comfortable & relaxed environment with affordable donations so that you can realize your deep inner longings."

To learn more, go to:
www.livingthepresence.org

On August 11th I am the guest speaker at Summit Spiritual Center at the 10:30 a.m. service. You are invited to join me!

*2307 Sackett Avenue
Cuyahoga Falls, OH
Phone: 330-923-6637
Rev. Michael Mangus, Pastor*

*For more information go to:
www.summitspiritualcenter.org*

I hope to see you there!

San

San's Sacred Circle

2013 Retreats

There are two ongoing retreats in 2013. All sessions will be held at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes on the first Sunday and the third Sunday at 2:30—5:30 p.m. starting in March and ending in October on the following dates (4th Sunday):*

How Do You Heal?

March 3	July 7
April 7	August 4
May 5	September 1
June 2	October 6

Life Makeovers

March 17	July 21
April 21	August 18
May 19	September 15
June 23 *	October 20

How Do You Heal?

First Sunday's

Session 6 • August 4th

The Fragrance of Forgiveness ~ Practical Practices to Forgive

Guest Presenter: Rashid Reaves

Pain, injury, or illness is an indication/warning that we are out of harmony with life and have an existing attitudinal issue in need of recognition and attention. The area or parts of the body affected can serve as an indicator as to the nature of the particular issue. Unresolved anger, resentment, fear, guilt, and lack of forgiveness are the sources of most illnesses, and must be released. These conditions are highly poisonous to the human system.

\$15 per session ♥ Journal \$21

The Art of Healing: A Journal for Creating Joy in Your Life



Life Makeovers

Third Sunday's

We have fulfilled the maximum number of attendees for this session. If you are interested in when the next one will start, please contact Jacqueline or me.

Shirley Nelson at 216-978-2626 or sanscircle@gmail.com

Jacqueline Owen at 216-692-3388 or email jacquetango@aol.com