

Lightening Up and Stickiness

The direction for the group for this year is to lighten up. Lightening up may sound light or playful, and it can, at times, be light and playful. The lightening up that is going to require real work is when our stuff (*the emotional woundedness and the self limiting mental thoughts*) is blocking us and needs to release for us to live as an image of God. (Genesis 1:27 “And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”)

The people in the Thursday group desire to live a more full life; as a more full expression of God, and live less as an expression of a neurotic, wounded, fearful, thought-minded person.

If the blocks (our stuff) were easy to release, then all the people in the world would be much closer to living in the image of God. This is far from what is happening on earth at this moment. Each of us, also, are far from living as a transparent image of God. And that's okay.

We've witnessed people that we know (especially older people) who have their set ways, their set attitudes, that are the counter expression of living as the image of God. They're stuck in very limiting, often fearful, ways of living and ways of relating to others. We can see the bitterness or prejudice or souring that is their expression. Their stuff is in the way of living in the image of God.

This stuff can be like cement. It can be rock solid and not able to release. This stuff also can be sticky; not rock solid and also not yet able to release. If we have something really sticky on our skin, it's not ready to let go. It might wear off if we rub it a lot. It also will release if we have a good cleansing agent like soap or something stronger. The sticky stuff inside us are the uncomfortable feelings and the repeated thoughts that close us down; that make us believe that we are less than a living image of God.

Each of us has both rock hard stuff and sticky stuff. Rock hard stuff can turn into sticky stuff. Sticky stuff can dissolve and release. What we carry, and how we act and think because of what we carry, are the only blocks we have to living as a full expression of being made in the image of God.

Lightening up is turning rock hard stuff into sticky stuff, and letting go of what is sticky. The rock hard stuff and the sticky stuff can increase if we feed it with our fearful, compulsive thoughts and with our wounded emotions. Last year we worked with how fearful thinking fuels more emotional wounded feelings, and how emotional wounded feelings fuels more fearful thinking. We've been working with stopping or slowing down this cycle of increasing separation and closing down.

The work this year of lightening up is most serious, though being serious all the time won't get the job done. It's time to stop creating and maintaining and strengthening our sticky stuff and our rock solid stuff. *Each of us are going to come up against strong stuff in us; stuff that wants to stay. This stuff will want us to stop turning rock into sticky and to stop releasing sticky. All sorts of uncomfortable feelings and all sorts of stories will come up to try to stop us.* We can blame others, and this can stop us. Discouragement (the lack of courage) also can come up to stop us. Pema Chödrön said that staying with (not running away from and not feeding) the very uncomfortable feelings that come up again and again has required the most courage in her life.

We're going to take some bumps and bruises along the way. We're going to be very uncomfortable at times. This can make us want to stop working; stop freeing ourselves from what limits us. Earth is a tough school. We learn a lot and grow a lot through adversity, struggle and difficulties. *These are portals, when worked with correctly, for our freedom.*

In previous articles I've written (of course from one point of view) that our emotions and thoughts are anchored in our body. The uncomfortable feelings and the fearful (also angry, judgemental, blaming, and defending) thoughts can stay strong if the physical anchor point in the body stays.

Releasing the anchor point releases the uncomfortable feelings and fearful thoughts. By loosening these anchor points, our wounded/reactive emotions and our very upsetting thoughts sail away; no longer held in place. *We can only release what we're in contact with; with what's up at the moment. This is why we'll be working on some emotional wounding or a crazy-making thought pattern again and again; releasing whatever amount is there at the time.*

Most people reading this are in their first year or two of actively releasing the rock stuff and the sticky stuff in the way that we work in the group. We've released a lot of sticky stuff and rock stuff throughout our life. We've also accumulated a lot of sticky and rock stuff throughout our life, and maybe even throughout lifetimes.

Each of us has been drawn to this work because of our dissatisfaction with where we are inside ourselves and how we act outwardly. If we're noticeably getting rid of more stuff than we're accumulating, then we're solidly progressing on our spiritual path.

We need to work. Yes, God does most of the work. God has also given us free will. If God sees us working, then that opens the door for God to help us even more. Luke 19:26 says: "I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away." The quote from Luke lets us know that the more that we lighten up – open to the Light, the more Light God will pour in.

The question for each of us is: What is the work, what are the correct efforts, that we need to do to open to the Light and live as an image of God? Any and all practices from our spiritual path are included in our work. We can also breathe into our belly, drop or drift into our heart (more out of our minds), relax, write, listen, trust and follow our inner guidance. We can add in Pema Chödrön's advice of being more gentle and more kind to ourselves, to come closer to what is uncomfortable inside us and not to listen to our minds as much.

This year of lightening up will be very challenging. This year also can be the most rewarding year of our lives. This work gets easier the more we do it. If we come to group twice a month and stay for the entire five hours, this amount of time is 1.5% (yes, one and one half percent) of our entire month. Therefore, much of our progress depends on how willing we are to do our spiritual practice when we're on our own. We have every opportunity to live in the image of God. How much will we work?