

March 8, 2023 Wednesday Evening with Aaron

(This talk not yet reviewed by Barbara and Aaron)

Sweeping Out the Old Toxins and Imagining an Earth of Non-Separation from the Place of Emptiness; Q&A on we are the enlightened ones, nimitta, how to respond to those with different views, abortion, what is the Holy Spirit

Barbara: Good evening and welcome to Evening with Aaron. I'm going to talk for a few minutes while a few more people get on. Is there anybody here who has never been to one of these evenings before? I'm looking at the names. Mike, have you been on this before? Okay, welcome back. So this marks thirty-three years that we've been doing this on Wednesday nights. That's a long time. A number of you I remember seeing back in the early nineties. I want to thank you for being here and to welcome you. After my living room we moved into this room. So, welcome here and it's wonderful that we can be here together in this room, even though we can't be live. Well, we're all live; we're just not live in one physical room. But I find Zoom really amazing and wonderful that we can all hang out together in this way.

I know Aaron loves the ability to keep offering the dharma in these ways. I'm very grateful to Deep Spring Center and the Board of Directors, the staff and everyone who makes these nights possible, and to all of you for being here.

I want to remind you that I offer this freely, but welcome Dana (donations). I never charge any fee for anything that I do, but I couldn't survive without your generosity. So, I'm very grateful for that generosity. There's a PayPal link on your invitation. So, I'm holding out my begging bowl. Your donations are welcome. Thank you.

Aaron has asked me to start by reading the Daily Aaron Quote. This came up today and he said, "Ah, that's perfect!" And of course it is.

Imagination as something that's created within the small ego self—just a small bit of, "Oh, I want this and I will create this," but there's still ego and perhaps distortion at play—this is very different than holding the deepest intention to support and co-create for the highest good. To hold that space with others. To know yourself as part of this cluster of infinite beings, and that each one has the power to go beyond what could previously be imagined from old past experience and into something new, to break through. Where imagination is simply a restructuring of old experience, it's just the replaying of the ego. When imagination comes to and from the place of emptiness—arising from emptiness and pouring into emptiness but aware of the infinite possibilities; holding out that possibility that others might see it, that it might inspire them and help them to move beyond prior boundaries—then it's not rooted in the self. Then it is not unwholesome because there is no contracted energy of self promoting it.



So, I find it wonderful that these Daily Quotes are so often relevant to what Aaron is going to talk about and to each of us. Okay, Aaron is going to come in...

Aaron: My blessings and love to you. I am Aaron. Back in the '90s I offered a frequent workshop that I called "Angels in Earthsuits". I know some of you were at those workshops. The essence of that is that you are an angel, a highly awakened spirit, here on earth in this incarnation in your earthsuit. You've worn different earthsuits. Perhaps you've been an ant, or a frog, a giraffe or a horse, or a cat, a beautiful rose or a giant redwood. These are all different earthsuits.

Each time you come into incarnation you come in in a certain body form, and the mind will have thoughts dependent on the kind of form. Yes, a tree has thoughts, an ant has thoughts.

Whatever your form, you have come consciously and for certain reasons. You have come with the intention to help bring this heavy density planet we call Earth further into a higher vibration, deeper into love. You have come to clarify, to bring--- if you will think of a photograph that can be low resolution and blurry or high resolution, you have come to bring Earth into a higher resolution so there's more clarity, more light. And, of course, you have come to resolve your own karma as well. So, to serve others, to serve the Earth, to be of service.

The important thing to remember here is the angel-ness. You are an amazing, extraordinary, beautiful spirit. You are love. You come into the incarnation and immediately there's chaos. For many, at that moment of birth there is chaos—noise in the delivery room, body discomfort, bright lights. "Where did my centeredness go? I knew who I was." And almost instantly there begins that process of forgetfulness.

Your meditation practice helps you remember who you are and why you are here. You are not trying to go anywhere, get anything from the meditation practice but simply to open to this resolution—blurry, getting clearer, getting clearer, clearer, opening. A deepening into knowing the true self, remembering. There is so much of which you are capable as you begin to remember why you have come. As you hold the image in your mind of an Earth that is grounded in love, that is peaceful, where there is much more intention to non-harm to other sentient beings.

This comes full circle, as you remember and are more able to ground the love that you are into the Earth. It supports the Earth being able to hold up that high energy and support a world in which all beings can live with love. So, it's round about.

We've talked through the years of many ways in which you may help support the higher vibration and consciousness on Earth, in which you may basically transform the Earth through your highly loving presence. Intention is one, just remembering your intention that whatever arises, to live with love. Pleasant objects will rise; unpleasant ones. Many



of you have worked extensively with meditation, and especially vipassana, but also pure awareness and the heart-centered practices.

With vipassana, we watch how objects arise. There is contact through the physical senses or the mind—touching, hearing, tasting, smelling, feeling, thinking. Each time there's an object and mind touches that object and holds it, there's that contact and then consciousness. When there is consciousness, there is feeling, awareness it's either pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.

If you stub your toe, there is going to be some body pain. Contact, consciousness of the stubbed toe. Pain, another object. It is not the stubbed toe but the pain that came with the stubbed toe, the consciousness of that and the unpleasantness of it. If it's unpleasant, aversion will arise.

Now, as spring comes, the skunks are coming out. A few times this week Barbara's house has suddenly filled with a strong skunk odor. Smelling, contact. Organs of scent touching the object of skunk smell. Contact, consciousness, unpleasant. And, for Barbara, as for most of you, some aversion, "I don't want this. I want the fresh air. I don't want the skunk smell."

Your maturation means that you begin to see how objects are arising out of conditions and passing away and have what we call a 'no self' nature. In other words, your consciousness, this human that you are, is observing the object, but it's simply arising out of conditions and passing away. I wouldn't say that you did not participate in its arising. If you see a skunk in your yard and go out and throw stones at it, and it lets off its smell, you certainly have helped co-create that smell. You have responsibility to that. But it's not letting off its smell because of you; it's simply that this is the nature of the skunk. Your stubbed toe is not hurting to offend you; it's simply that there are nerves, and when you stub your toe, it's going to be painful and then there will be aversion.

Contact, consciousness, feelings, mental formations. The stories that can come up: "Why is the skunk in my yard? Not fair!" "Why did this chair leg suddenly get caught on my pants so that I stubbed my toe? Not fair!"

A skunk is just being a skunk. The chair leg is just being a chair leg. So we start to have a lot of clutter here—this arising, that arising, passing away, stories about it. It becomes blurry. You get embroiled into it. There's not much clarity anymore, just anger. Or—if it's a pleasant object—grasping, a lot of tension, a lot of unpleasantness. And because you don't want it—you don't want the unpleasant because you grasp at the pleasant—there's suffering. This is the dharma in a nutshell.

Many of you have been looking at this with me for more than thirty years. So many of you have asked me, "Aaron, what next? I've gotten skilled at watching objects arise and pass away and not becoming caught in the story." But it's still arising. The landslides



and earthquakes that can kill so many thousands of people; the war and hatred that can kill so many people. In your own personal life, this or that illness or personal loss and the fact that the human cannot control everything, causing suffering.

I want you to imagine a much bigger picture. I believe Barbara read “Imagination” to you. The imagination is a strong asset, but this is not the personal imagination. It needs to go deeper—the imagination that can literally picture a world in which people treat each other with kindness. A world in which humans treat the rest of the Earth with respect, being very careful of all the elements of the world. A world in which people are able to listen to each other.

Your meditation practice has led you into a readiness to truly hear not just your neighbor, your child or spouse, but the plants in your garden and what they need, the skunk and what he needs, the people living in a place that's so filled with war, hatred, killing and bombing, and the anguish of that—on both sides. Unless you can hear deeply (it's interesting, me talking about hearing deeply through this body, which is deaf)—unless you can hear deeply, how can there be change? As long as there's still a piece of the self that comes up and says, "Oh, no, not that!" and contracts, how can there be change? And yet, you are human and there will be contraction, there will be aversion and grasping.

Most of you, again, have worked in depth with vipassana with me. You understand the process of noting the contraction itself. So there's the skunk smell, the unpleasant, the little moment of, "I don't want that." And then, aversion itself taken as the object, "Here is aversion."

Can there be aversion with no aversion to aversion, just watching it and knowing that this object also has arisen from conditions, is impermanent and will pass away, and is not of the nature of a separate self? By that, I mean there are multiple conditions out of which this particular unpleasant object has arisen. We can watch contraction with the object. "I don't want this!" Contracting and wanting to push it away. Ah, that is the next object. I'm no longer focused on the skunk or the smell; I'm focused on the experience of contraction in this mind and body wherever it may be predominant, which is sometimes in the mind and sometimes more in the body, felt more in contraction in the body—contracting, contracting.

Most of you have heard me say this many times: that which is aware of contraction is not contracted. Rather, there is an experiencer, a knower, the one who knows, watching contraction arise and knowing that it has no solidity. It arose out of conditions. And then, eventually it will pass away.

So, why am I focusing on this at the start of my talk? If you are going to imagine an Earth that is without environmental disasters, without hatred and war, grounded in love and respect for every sentient being, you have to not get caught in the multiple stories



that are so familiar, including the story, "I shouldn't be contracting." That's just another story.

Can you begin to imagine a world at peace? A world where every sentient being cherishes itself and every other sentient being and the Earth itself as a sentient being? Can you begin to hold that possibility in your hearts?

This is where the opening came from, from the Aaron quote today, "Where imagination is simply a restructuring of old experience, it's just the replaying of the ego." And that will not free you or the world.

"When imagination comes to and from a place of emptiness—arising from emptiness and pouring into emptiness but aware of infinite possibilities...", holding out that possibility of a world in which, when you are pushed, you don't react by pushing back, that's setting the scene for others who are still pushing back to perhaps see a new possibility. That Hundredth Monkey story; simply demonstrating what is possible.

We do this in many different ways. One is simply your commitment to practice, to paying attention without blame for yourself, without saying, "Oh, I shouldn't have said or done that." Just, here is contraction. Here is the arising of anger or sadness or frustration and wanting to take it out on someone or something. Ah, compassion for this human who's experiencing these things, and not getting caught in the story.

"I choose to enter a whole new paradigm wherein things can come and go. I can be open to the experience of them, not trying to push them away, and hold space in my heart for this sometimes painful experience." And simply offer love, hold space, let it be. Arising and passing away, arising and passing away. Seeing the big picture, how if everybody reacts to everything by punching at it, we're going to have a big boxing match. If people respond by hiding, those who are still boxing will keep boxing.

But if people, if the angel in the earthsuit can remember, "I am an angel. I am an awakened being here in this earthsuit and the earthsuit keeps pulling me into reactivity. But I choose not to be reactive. I have free will choice. I do not have to be reactive. I don't blame myself when I am reactive; I just acknowledge it and move on."

But increasingly, we learn that we do not have to be reactive. Instead of reactivity there is compassion, the amazing power of compassion for oneself and all beings. And then the angel starts to come forth with strength, clear, holding everything within this loving huge heart, the heart we all share. And from this place we teach others, "When I let you into my heart and you let me into your heart, we can share with each other the depths of our sorrows and our joys, the depths of our dreams, the depths of our power, the power of love."



Now I'm going to move on a bit in my talk to something directly related, and yet a somewhat, I won't call it a new topic but moving on a bit.

When I see the environmental disasters on the Earth, when I see the hatred and wars, I see it really as a giant inflammation—many different kinds of inflammation perhaps is a more accurate statement.

This past month with Barbara, and at her request, she's been exploring inflammation for her and her body. She has a lot of arthritis in her body, fingers that are bent and misshapen a bit, and body pain. So she's been asking me and my beloved friend, Father John, and other entities, "How do I truly heal this inflammation, not just reduce it? What does healing of it look like?"

Father John and others who are very medically knowledgeable have been introducing me to the working of white blood cells, for example, with their macrophages and microphages. I'm not going to go into the scientific technicalities of it. I'm not an expert on it; I'm a dharma teacher.

But what I've understood in the simplest form is that when there is inflammation, there are two steps to the healing of it. One is the release of inflammation by releasing the agents of that inflammation. We're just talking about the body now, and we'll expand it. So, Barbara has been working a lot with energy and working to release tension in her hands, old karma in her hands. To bring light and energy through the hands.

But Father John reminded her that the release of the inflammation is not enough—there's a second stage. He likened it to putting a fire out. You're home is adequately comfortable, but it became cluttered and there were some incendiary objects that caught fire. So the firemen came and put the fire out. "Ah, the fire is out. I can go back into my home." And the clutter is even burned away, the old newspapers and such. But before you can go back and live in that home, you have to sweep it out.

So one type of cell, the macrophages, put out the fire, and the microphages sweep it out. (Maybe I have that backwards—Father John? He says it doesn't matter—one kind of cell or the other kind of cell.) I am not claiming to be a scientist. Simply, we have these two stages, putting out the fire and sweeping out the clutter.

In terms of the world, then, putting out the fire means addressing the issues of the world—the places of hatred and fear, the places of terrible poverty and sickness. Taking care of the world in that way. But we still need—here we come back to this word, *resolution*. We still need resolution that comes with sweeping out the burned debris.

We were watching something from the civil rights movement fifty years ago or more. There were people crossing a bridge. I don't know the details; you probably do.



But people were injured, even killed. We were watching on TV the anniversary of that event. Putting out the fire is the equivalent of saying, “No, I will not stand by and allow a world where this disaster or that takes place, where hatred is taken for granted and not addressed. No.” Just setting limits, stating your own truth with love.

So I had a good conversation with Barbara in which she was saying, “I took part in so many of those movements, Freedom Rides and marches, and yet we still have the same racial, religious, and other hatred. What’s gone wrong? Why hasn’t it shifted?”

I noted that my sense of it is that the house was not swept clean. The debris was left—the debris of hatred, of fear, of living in the ego self separate from each other. The fire was put out, but all the material was still there for a new fire. Why are people shooting up schools and other such places? What has not been attended to?

And it seems to me that there has not been *resolution*, that vital phase in which people see deeply into the causes and conditions that inspired this hatred, prejudice, and fear in the first place.

A primary cause of this for me is the whole illusion of separation. As long as you’re trying to help *fix* the world with your imagination and your ego, saying, “We could do this, we could do that,” and millions of people truly wanting to fix it, but not understanding that you each as an ego with your own idea pushing against the other ideas, not really *hearing*, you haven’t yet swept out the clutter. The clutter is the whole idea of separation.

Now, we can’t cure the idea of separation for people who aren’t ready for that. But as more of you move into a space of non-separation in your practice and truly are able to hold that energy—one with the skunk; feeling its fear; non-hatred to the skunk; compassion for skunk and human; skunk and human becoming one—as more of you are able to hold such space—Ukraine and Russia, seeing how at odds they are, seeing your readiness to take sides. And while there may be a side that is more compassionate, a side that is more grounded in politics and greed, still the essence of the issue is human fear.

When you are able to move into a place more empty of fear in yourself, to relate to fear, to prejudice, to opinions that arise in the self with spaciousness, then you become able to imagine a world free of these diseases—yes, diseases: fear, hatred. They are diseases arisen from conditions. When you move into a place beyond your personal ego and preferences, truly aware of how all of these scenarios are arising and passing away yet still able to say no and set clear boundaries, but the boundaries are not coming from your own ego but from a place deeply grounded in love for all beings and non-separation from all beings, only then can we begin truly to transform this Earth.

You are angels in earthsuits. For thirty years we've been talking about opening to this angel. Are you ready to live from the angel now, not with disregard for the earthsuit but to begin to know who and what you are? To trust the power of the awakened heart that is your essence? It grows smoothly out of you practice.

When you watch the skunk—separation from the skunk, don't want the skunk! Okay, that's fine. The human doesn't want the skunk. And if you still have trash outside your house inviting the skunk—the trashcan lid is not closed—then of course the skunk will come, and then there's anger at the skunk.

In parallel, you are still feeling hatred, or, if hatred's too strong a word, at least strong negativity toward people with some ideology or other, and yet you ask of them to drop *their* negativity toward other people. Only you can carry this seed forward, truly bringing love in where there's previously been misunderstanding, fear, even hatred. Only you can do this within yourself. And this is the step of *resolution*.

In those lists of Perfections in the Buddhist tradition, we have words like patience, generosity, and loving kindness. One of the words in these lists is 'resolution'. I remember thirty years ago Barbara asking me, "What does 'resolution' mean?" The rest were clear, but 'resolution' was not clear to her.

Resolution relates to resolve. What have you not resolved in the self? Or, if I could phrase that in a different way, to what have you not yet opened your heart in the self so that it can settle, has no more power and can be swept out the door, not needed? What opinions are you attached to, including the opinion that this side is wrong in the war and that side is not at fault? Including the idea that these people or those people are responsible for the deteriorating environment of the Earth?

Yes, you're entitled to opinions. But look clearly at those opinions and see if they are part of the grit that's holding the Earth in this constantly negative spin. How can you resolve... I don't know the best phrasing of it... the old beliefs that have lain there for eternity, "It should be this way; it shouldn't be that way," that harden your heart so that you cannot fully hear each other.

Resolution leads to clarity of seeing, clarity of understanding, and the increasing ability of the enormous capacity of the heart to hold all of this joy and sorrow, love and hatred; to hold it all without blame, and yet still be able to stand up and say, "No, we will not kill each other. We will not poison the Earth," and to model that behavior.

So— if I can take this leap from Barbara's hands to the Earth itself—the stage of releasing the toxins, putting out the fire, and then the stage of sweeping out the house. What needs sweeping out in yourself so that you can use these wonderful imaginal cells, the power of your imagination, the power of your heart of love, to see something new instead of the old that simply is not working?



You have the power to do this, to literally imagine an Earth where all beings may live in peace, in good health, with joy. Where the Earth itself may thrive, not being raped by those with greed. Can you imagine it without attacking anybody, without finger-pointing and saying that it's because of him or her? It is because of the whole concept of separate self.

If you are angels in earthsuits, you are all angels together. Your wings are interlocked; you are not separate angels. You are beautiful expressions of the One, expressions of love. You, and the ant, and the skunk, and the tree that fell in the yard during the storm—all of it, you're all together. Can you imagine that? A world in which you cease to see anything as separate, and yet in which you still trust the love in your heart to know when to say no, when you see somebody who does declare its own separation, making war on someone else, hurting someone else. But if that 'no' comes from a self-righteous place, it's just more personal power. From whence can that 'no' come? Can you imagine how it can come from love?

This, my dear ones, is your power: to change the world by sweeping out all the old debris and opening to something brand new, which is a world of non-separation and love, with each of you growing into that awareness from your own practice and intentions.

That's a lot. Let's take a short break and then I'll open the floor to questions. Thank you for hearing me. This was a somewhat impassioned talk, as you could feel. This is what I came for, to teach this—not to *teach* it, but to remind you: Wake up! You already know this. You don't need me *teaching*, just reminding you you know this.

Let's do it. Let's raise the vibration of this world to a place where such negativity can no longer flourish, because that is why you came into the earthsuit.

I am Aaron. I love you. I pause.

(Break)

Barbara: Aaron is asking me to share that we will have a retreat from June 3rd to June 10th, Saturday to Saturday. We used to have our week-long retreats in June, then we moved them to the fall. So, we seem to be moving back to June now. This will be on Zoom—vipassana, Pure Awareness, and heart practices.

Aaron is saying that he cannot give a topic until we talk with John, but he is suggesting a retreat that focuses on meditation—the basics of deep practice, but with the underlying question: being peace, being love. How do I allow myself to be the peace, the love, the non-duality, non-separation that I wish to see in the world? John, Aaron and I will finalize that and you'll get an



announcement about the retreat probably in the next week. But do put that week aside as the possibility of joining us, June 3 - 10, with a chance to really go deep in practice.

Okay, Aaron will come in when appropriate.

Q: I had emailed you about this. I would be curious to get your and Aaron's perspective on two related topics. One is the presence and number of people who are completely one with Source, whether you call them enlightened or liberated. The different traditions all speak about people in the state who are completely one with Source even while in the body, such as Jesus, Krishna, Saint Francis of Assisi and Ramana Maharshi. I'd like to hear what Aaron has to say, if anything, about the number and presence of such people on the planet to day. I believe Eckhart Tolle is one of them, but I'm not sure.

And the second related question is, avatar Meher Baba mentioned that he was the Messiah, the original soul that comes back periodically to Earth every 700-1400 years for getting humanity back on the right track and teaching about love and the presence of oneness. And he mentioned that he was Jesus, Krishna, Ram and the Buddha in prior advents. So I don't want to compel a response, but if Aaron had anything to say about any of these topics, I would be very much grateful for those responses.

Barbara: I'm going to let Aaron come in.

Aaron: I am Aaron. Thank you, Q, and I'm happy to meet you.

You said, "... the presence and number of people who are completely one with Source, whether you call them enlightened or liberated."

Everybody is completely one with Source. Some do not realize it yet, but that does not mean that they're not completely one with Source, only that they haven't understood it yet. Everyone and everything, from the smallest microbe to the largest redwood tree, or whatever, everything is completely one with Source. Everything is completely connected to everything else.

Your effort is toward remembering that connection and looking to see what blocks you from that connection—the personal ego, and fears, old stories and old karma, how to transcend that.

When you ask how many have transcended their ignorance and know that they are one with Source, suffice it to say "enough." Enough that you *can* bring forth the changes on Earth that you have come to bring forth. It is sufficient. There is sufficient awakened consciousness on Earth. So let's do it.



Your second question, "the presence of such people... Meher Baba mentioned he was the Messiah."

Again, you may not be happy with my answer, Q, but you are *all* the Messiah. Truly, you are all of the essence of that awakened being, of that awakened presence. Most of you don't recognize that yet. You are coming to recognize it, to know your power to transform the Earth and everything upon the Earth with love, for that is what the Messiah is, the One who is the bringer and holder of love. And each of you are that.

I choose not to specify whether this being or that is fully awake. I don't think it matters. Why do you need to look to one person and say, "Oh, *they're* awakened," or "They are not quite awakened." That limits people. You are *all* awake. You are *all* the Buddha, *all* the Christ. You are all of the nature of unconditional love and the power to express that love. That is my answer.

Q: I just want to ask, in the *Visuddhi Magga* there is the mention of the sign or the countersign of meditation which is called a *nimitta*. So I'm just curious: what is that?

Aaron: Nimitta is basically a strong object that serves as a passageway through into the Unconditioned. For example, if one is doing jhanna practice and there is a strong color, or shape, or image, that is a form of nimitta. Energy can be a form of nimitta. It's something upon which attention may rest, and it becomes the object wherein you see that conditioned objects are arising and passing away, and this holds your attention, focuses your attention. It's not necessarily the Unconditioned; it's a doorway into the Unconditioned. Does that answer your question?

Q: Yes. So does it mean that the nimitta could also be an unconditioned object?

Aaron: What is an unconditioned object? Everything conditioned is arising out of the Unconditioned, is impermanent and not self. It's not the Unconditioned; it's an expression of the Unconditioned. The only unconditioned object (and I hesitate to call it an object) — expression that I know is love. And light is an expression of love. And what is love?

The nimitta that are often used are a color or a shape, but if you focus on it long enough, it pulls you through the whole flow of conditioned objects arising and passing away and into the Unconditioned.

We're not looking for the object; we're looking for the object as the doorway, the nimitta as the doorway to take you into the Unconditioned. Does that clarify it for you?

Q: Thank you, Aaron.

Q: My daughter, who lives in the state of Washington, reaches me often by telephone. So we FaceTime, which is good, but we're not in the same place. She is a follower of Mr. Trump's politics and still believes the election was stolen from him. And I find myself wimping out when she begins to talk politics. I don't go there. I don't know whether I don't have the courage to speak out and just say, "No, that's not correct." I have reached the position that I tell her, "Look, I'm your mother and you're my beloved daughter. We have a relationship of love. It has nothing to do with how we vote or what church we go to." She's joined the Mormon church, which is fine with me, I'm fine with that. I've become very Buddhist, so okay, everybody chooses. I said we all have different ways; I get that far with the discussion.

But I don't seem to have the courage or something to just say, "I feel that this policy that Mr. Trump espouses is wrong." What's my problem?

Aaron: Thank you, and I hear you, and I know there are others with family with very divergent political views. I think it's a very valid response to just say, "Politics is off limits. Let's not talk politics. You are my daughter and I am your mother and I love you. And I want to hear about your personal life and what you're feeling. And we're not going to convince each other. So, let's drop the topic."

Moving aside to someone who is *not* your daughter, and to those who believe the election was not stolen despite all of the evidence to the contrary, you're not going to convince them. There's nothing you can say that's going to convince them, as there's nothing they can say that's going to convince you.

You might say, "I hear you and I disagree. But whether the election was stolen or not, how can we as a country move forward?"

So, dropping the, "You're right / I'm right" discussion and asking, "What will allow us to move forward?" And if the other says, "We can only move forward if you agree with me," say, "That's impossible. I can't agree with you; you can't agree with me. How can we agree to disagree agreeably? How can we move forward?"

So, I think taking the focus off of the specifics of right/wrong, and instead, what will lead us to some degree of compassion for each other. You might start with the question, "What do we both seek? Regardless about who's right about the election, we both seek a stable country where beings may thrive. Can we agree on that?"

Then, "What do you see that would support moving toward that stability?" If she says having Mr. Trump as president again, "No; we're not talking politics. What real things do you see that



could help the country to move forward to be peaceful and stable and loving?" Get into that conversation and not the political one, and agree to disagree.

Hear each other, because deep hearing is perhaps the most essential ingredient, compassionate hearing. Listen more than speak.

What allows us to hear each other? When we get out of our own skins and really can hear the other person, we can hear their fear, we can hear their pain. We can acknowledge that we're in the same place, that we both have fear for the future of our country, of the world, and that there's no wrong or right to having that fear, to feeling that pain. We can start to imagine together not *how* we will fix things, but what is it we seek?

For Q, get into a discussion with your daughter of what the Earth she envisions might look like. Not who should be president but how people relate to each other in that world. It really is not so hard.

Barbara had a loving neighbor completely on the opposite side of the political fence, a very kind and generous person with whom she realized she would never see eye to eye on politics. As soon as he would approach her with political beliefs, she would turn it around and say, "What does your ideal world look like?" And they got into some very engaging conversations, not talking about how you get there but what is the result, what are you seeking.

Then you're able to stop and know that we have different pathways to that point, but can we agree this is what we seek? A world of justice, peace, fairness, plenty for all beings, and just hold that as our intention. The other may say, "That's not enough. You have to do it politically." "Well, maybe you do, but for now can we just hold the idea of no being starving or killed for political reasons on this Earth? Can we just share that vision?"

Q: I'm a New College alumna and I am gay and I have trans and non-binary family members. So a lot of this authoritarianism that's going on right now feels very personal to me, even though it probably isn't. I feel obliged to stand up in opposition to authoritarianism. And I'm not sure I know how. I'm not sure that I want to feel oneness with people who I view as fascists. *(laughs)* I don't hate these people, I truly don't. I'm not sure I love them, and I'm not sure I have to love them...

Aaron: *(smiling)* Q, you need to *love* them but not to *like* them!

Q: Okay *(laughing)*. So this talk tonight from Aaron really landed with me, because I've been really struggling with this for the last few months. My state senator has been sponsoring and co-sponsoring the anti-trans and anti-gay bills in North Carolina.



Aaron: Get out there and work for the election of the person who opposes the present Senator. I'm not saying don't work politically; of course you have to work politically, that's the framework that we have in this country.

But don't engage in hate-mongering. Just a clear statement, "The negativity that this present Congressman has is very hurtful to other people, and so I am going to say no to it and support this candidate." Not "He's a bad person," not "He's an evil person," but rather, "His ideas bring harm to people and I cannot support someone that brings harm to people." Others may say that if we go along with the various pro-gay/trans, etc., laws that that will bring harm. Well, we have a difference of opinion. But each being has the freedom to have their own choices and needs.

For my mind, somebody assigning their views as being "God-given" or correct is simply wrong. It does harm. You are not saying that to allow somebody those freedoms is... let me phrase it carefully.

If we choose in ways that limit other people their free-will choice, that is a way of doing harm. If we allow other people their free-will choice, they will bear the repercussions of that choice. Now, I know that people can become very stirred up about this as it relates to abortion, for example, and feel it's wrong, it's bad, and others say, "No, it's necessary."

From my perspective, if—and that's something I don't believe is true—but if abortion were wrong in the deepest sense, so that people had to be protected from it, then I think more beings would understand and be anti-abortion. Is murder wrong because it's against the law, or is it wrong because it's wrong? So, I know there are those who will say, "Well, abortion is wrong because it's wrong." But this carries an assumption that the soul is already in the fetus at conception. How can anybody state that? Who would know that? Nobody can know that.

My experience is that this is completely opposite from what I experience as true: that the soul enters the body later on, or immediately, or almost just at birth. But it never enters the body that it wants to have survive if it knows that that fetus will be aborted. It simply doesn't do that. It waits until there's certainty that the fetus will survive or it doesn't enter the body.

I can't convince anybody that my view is right. Now, I have a kind of inside track here, because I'm not human; I'm spirit. I see a little bit deeper into how it goes. But these are the kinds of discussions that you cannot win, arguments you cannot win with somebody. All you can do is campaign for the political candidates of your choice. You're never going to convince the anti-abortionist that it's okay to have an abortion. You're never going to convince the anti-gay person that it's okay to have non-traditional sexual roles. You're not going to win these arguments.



The only way to "win" is through deep listening and compassion that may end up with you having to say, "I disagree with you, but I still love you. We have different views." There's not any other way around it, because so many beings are not yet awake, not awake to any degree. And so beings will be filled with "I'm right!" and with various negativity and fear and a desire to control others, not to respect others free will.

The only answer I know has two parts. First, clear saying of no and setting boundaries. Working toward a world in which there are clear boundaries of what people may or may not do. That people may not come in and take over and say, "Our race, our religion, this or that is the right one and all else must die or suffer." All beings need to get to a point of saying no to that.

One question to ask those who may be caught in a more negative and narrow mode is to ask them, "You believe that your way is right and that everything else is wrong. Are you willing to push that on other people? What if those who disagreed with you were in power and were going to say to you, 'You must go to a concentration camp, you will be put to death, because you have different opinions?'" To help people enlarge their consciousness to the degree that they can tolerate difference of opinion without the need to do harm or limit other people.

It saddens me enormously because, of course, the divine God/Goddess is love and never had an intention that those who believe *this* should be put above those who believe *that*. God is Love.

But we cannot force others into a raised consciousness. And hating them simply provides more hatred and lowers their consciousness.

Small acts of kindness can help. You can say to somebody who is very intolerant and seemingly completely against you (and Barbara has done this with the neighbor with such different views)—"Look, we have totally different views, but I care about you as a person. So why don't you come over and let's share a pizza. We agree not to talk about politics. Personal level—my heart to your heart. I care about you as a person." Because love is the only way to break through this strong fear and negativity of those who hold such narrow views. And it will take as long as it takes. Have faith and be persistent in loving.

Q: Can you describe what the Holy Spirit is and how it relates to our growth?

Aaron: Thank you, Q. The Holy Spirit...I am not going to put myself out here as an authority. This is *my* understanding of what I mean when I say "Holy Spirit": the Unconditioned. The Divine. That which expresses as Christ consciousness or Buddha nature. These are familiar yet not thoroughly definable terms. This *essence* of the Divine, the creative and heart-centered core of all that is, this is the Holy Spirit. Holy, divine, grounded in love. Spirit as differentiating between the material, the spirit plane. In other words, that which is expression of the—let's use the term breath. God: that pure word of love.



I'm going to call on R here, if I might. R, you've given me some words for breath and spirit and God that are translatable into English. I think in Hebrew you've come up with some words.

R: Yes, but in this case I believe the term is *shekinah*, as the representation of God as love. The spirit of God is the shekinah—not the God of justice but the God of love, the God of compassion.

Aaron: That makes sense to me. That's what you've said to me before—the God of love, the God of compassion. So, the Holy Spirit is the expression of this essence of divinity. It doesn't judge. It's not caught up in right and wrong. It simply is love. And then there are those beings who have been such supreme expressions of the Holy Spirit, like Yeshua and the Buddha. Does that answer your question?

Q: It helps. Of course, it's a difficult topic, but it's something I'm interested in. Thank you, Aaron.

Aaron: We can talk more about it at another time. If you want to email Barbara with a more precise question, I'd be happy to try to speak further to it.

But the Holy Spirit is certainly not limited to one being like Yeshua. The Holy Spirit is within *all* of you, expressed through all of you, through some more clearly than through others. The Holy Spirit is the expression of the Unconditioned. It is Love.

Let me go further out on a limb here and say that when Barbara's neighbor stated very clearly his negation of certain things, his belief that the election was fouled, his negation of this or that, he was speaking from the ego-self. The core of him is still there, unified with all that is, an expression of God, Goddess, however you want to name that. So he is part of this Holy Spirit, but he's also an ego-self.

This neighbor passed last month. He is not yet enough through his transition to respond. But when he's further along in his transition, perhaps he'll come to us and carry on this conversation in a way that I can hear him and he can be channeled. *(To him)* I want you to know, my friend, that we welcome you if you want to speak—not yet, but when you are ready. So, from where he is now he may find it easier to speak more clearly. And we remember that he was a deeply loving, kind and generous human being.

We have time for another question.

There's a chant that John has led often that I love, and of course I cannot sing it, but the words are:



*Seems like such a long time,
Holy Spirit waiting,
Since I've drawn your breath in,
Silent and all pervading.*

And it repeats.

John, I know you don't have an instrument there to play, but with your voice, could you just sing that verse for people?

(John sings)

Thank you, John.

That seems like a good place to end the evening. If it seems like a long time since you've drawn in that sacred breath, why not try it? In meditation, open to it and invite it in. Feel it fill you; feel the love of the Holy Spirit fill you, love of God/Goddess, and know that you are That. And you can live from that place, getting better and better at it as time goes on.

Thank you for your presence tonight. I love you all. I am Aaron.

I am deeply moved by the depth of your loving hearts and how open you are to allowing yourselves to grow and invite in that Holy Spirit and allow It to express through *you*, because that Holy Spirit needs a voice and you are the voice, the voice of love.

I'll return the body to Barbara.