

Soul-Crafting: Getting Serious About Who We Want to Be

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It just happens, as I begin to write this, that a strong cold wind has come up, gusting in off the Pacific. My wind chimes are banging wildly and the trees are dancing madly. When I feel out into the world with my intuition, I can sense the power of this primal element expressing everywhere, under the surface, globally. The Winds of Change really are pushing on us relentlessly, blowing down dead branches and leaves, clearing the way for a new kind of perception and a new world.

Most people simply wrap their belief systems more tightly around their shoulders and tuck heads to chest to try to make progress against the gale. How many of us understand the advantages of surrendering to the wind instead, of letting ourselves be blown free of clinging debris and swept headlong and trusting into new territory? Your capacity for this surrendered relationship with the irresistible force of profound change—what we could also call evolution, enlightenment, or self-realization—will determine how easily and quickly your new reality can materialize. But surrender can seem like an insane act today.

I was catching up with John.

I was having a catch-up conversation with my friend John Wallace in Santa Fe, New Mexico, some months ago, and asked if he'd been noticing the waves of intensity hitting us lately. He laughed. Everyone he knew had been irritable, panic-stricken, and experiencing failure of their tried-and-true methods for surviving. This jibed with my observations of people facing their worst-case scenarios, even fighting the feeling of being possessed by negative entities. He and his partner Norma had come to the conclusion that this was an important time of "soul-crafting," when we must decide who we want to be, and how we want to be, unaided by anyone else. "No one can do this work for us," he said. I agreed and thought this was a great context for understanding the dysfunctioning and dissolution of the outmoded parts of ourselves that have become too slow and blind now.

And yet, I thought, we don't need to be alone, isolated, or martyred to do this work, as our drama-loving, either-or minds might have us believe. We can, and must, be involved in the world, connected to the flow of events, and the influence of other people—so the new selves we are crafting will be whole, complete, and integrated. In fact, if we don't experience our seamless interrelatedness with all people and life, we won't be able to understand the first thing about our souls' enlightened new world.

I mention John because his story, up until the sudden end of his life in early December last year, epitomizes many salient points and probably parallels the lessons many of us are consciously or unconsciously working on these days. John was (is?) a kind of soulmate, one of those people I didn't talk to very often, but when I did, we put each other back into an effortless alignment with our best self and reestablished our gratefulness for being alive.

John had been working diligently for quite a few years to create an environmentally sound real estate development and learning center called Na'avoteh, just outside Santa Fe, which would exemplify the principles needed to regreen the desert. First among them was respect for water and everything

represented by the divine feminine. To that end, he and his colleagues created the Rainmaking Institute, to help foster the work of today's "rainmakers." Native American rainmakers were able to call in the rain because they LOVED the rain, John once told me. The rain came to them because of love. Similarly, today, we need to call forth a new kind of life because we love it, and those who know how to work with love as a practical, powerful force to create societal change are the new rainmakers—and, I agreed with John: we need more of them!

In his process of facilitating the manifestation of a huge, complex project, and doing it in harmony with the principles of feminine wisdom, not via sheer cleverness, charm, and will power, John learned many lessons about other people's fear. I know it was taxing to him, and continually prompted him to examine the limitations in himself that he hadn't previously seen. He was committed to what I call "radical honesty," to addressing what was real in each situation, and getting to the core so the soul, or spirit, could facilitate an easy flow of unfolding. At the same time, many people wanted him to be a father figure. The soul's way of manifesting is much more effortless than the old military, patriarchal model of leadership allows. I sense, in part, it was this noble "keeping on" in the face of fear's grip, as well as continuing to holding ultimate responsibility for in himself, that just tired him out.

Battling our flaws slows us down.

In our conversation, John told me how he'd had a bodywork session to help clear a block he thought he had. The bodyworker said to him, "You are so much bigger than your perceived flaw, and giving the flaw energy by battling with it only slows you down." We talked about how our habitual thoughts of how things work aren't so true anymore. For example, a flaw doesn't have to be surgically eradicated as much as the true self needs to be expanded with attention. Then the flaw just dissolves into the truth. We commented about how there isn't much comfort in our mental constructs now, in the way we organize the world or identify ourselves. How it's actually painful when we buy into any way of being limited—the false constraints of our own perception. "We need FREEDOM!" John exclaimed. "We need to bust our collective stories."

"We're unraveling, he said. "Battling our flaws only slows our release. We have to be people who demand honesty and courage, and that requires openness and humility—to walk the path of truth. At this time, there's no room for anything that gets in the way of soul alignment. Anything that doesn't bring us fully alive is too small for us. We cannot allow a diminishment of ourselves now."

He continued, saying "There are non-negotiables that we've negotiated anyway. This is the pain today, and it's intolerable. Compromise is like kryptonite for us! We have to think: What can we let go of that doesn't support full aliveness? And yet all the interferences are minor compared to who we are and what we're built for."

Things don't seem as spiritual as they used to.

I paused and digested John's words, then said, "I remember when I started on my spiritual path thirty years ago, I had a great, dramatic yearning for a higher reality. Everything was tinged with spiritual growth, and the magic of accessing the higher, more intangible dimensions. Now, life often seems so ordinary. I worry at times that I'm being worn down by the world."

John said, "Yes, but what used to feel spiritual is *gone*, because we're actually inside those dimensions now, and they're in us. We're in the Mystery in a new, full way. We used to get rushes from what was beyond our reach, what was ideal and special. But now we're BEING the dimensions! And it's so huge and vast!" We got excited. I spoke of how we really have grown exponentially without realizing it, how we embody so much more because we don't recognize the "gap" between ourselves and the outside like we used to. We are truly like Zen monks, alive within the sacred that also includes answering email, waiting on hold for customer service, and changing the furnace filter.

This was to be my last conversation with John. When we said goodbye, he—as always—made sure he told me how important I was to him and what a positive influence I'd been in his life over the

years. And I reciprocated. Our conversations were always complete emotionally; we knew where we stood with each other, how we felt.

How could he be gone from this world?

When I got word that John had died suddenly of a heart attack, I was thoroughly shocked. He was in his late 50's, fit and athletic, loving and open. And probably clearer and more untroubled than he'd ever been in his life. Why, John? Unraveling, indeed!! I like to know the conditions pertaining to someone's death experience, partly because I want to understand the lessons we choose to emphasize for ourselves and others by the form of our death. Why the timing? Why the particular cause? Everything is symbolic, serves a soul purpose, and tells a story. Curious, that he was midstream in his project, close to coming out the other end of the long tunnel of disciplined effort he'd been maintaining. Why, when this man was becoming so clear, did his tunnel let him out on the "other side," rather than here so he might help change the balance of power from dark to light in the physical realm?

An answer came to me as I meditated and contacted him spiritually. I saw that his goal in life had been to love as many people as possible. Not so much to BE loved; John instead basked in opportunities to be with every kind of person in a real, loving way and to give and receive pure attention. He was an astonishingly good listener. At his memorial service, I heard that Norma told many people how much they had meant to John, and they all said, "I know! He told me when we last spoke." I saw that John had achieved this life purpose, and upon his release from his body, had had a full realization of just how successful he'd been in opening and sharing his heart. John had moved from being a man with a warm heart, to being a man who was ALL HEART; he literally became his exploded heart.

Often we don't realize what our soul's purpose really is, and confuse it with the mind's goals. In John's case, one might have guessed his purpose was the accomplishment of many socially conscious, large-scale projects. How ironic, I thought, that perhaps we are here to become expert lovers, and that's really it. That to love and realize the omnipresence of love is the most fun thing we can do. I saw that now that John is not limited by time, space, and a body, he can love more people, all at once, and be more saturated in the experience. People don't have to be rationed out one at a time, and there are no distortions to reckon with, caused by people's fearful, or need-based misinterpretations.

At last I heard the story of what happened just prior to John's death. He had participated in an all-night gathering of his men's group two days before. They had performed a ceremony from which he emerged absolutely glowing. The following evening, Norma attended a similar gathering of her women's group. That next morning, she received a call from him. He was at home and needed help. "Please come right away," he pleaded. "Something is happening to me." All the women piled in their cars immediately and went to help him. By the time they got there, he had died, a shocked expression frozen on his face. After the officials and friends had finally cleared away, Norma got out her aromatherapy oils and slowly, lovingly, anointed his body. She said his expression slowly changed, and a deeply peaceful look came across his face. For the next couple days, as he lay in state, his skin remained pink and people swore that he smiled on the hour.

Anything that doesn't bring us fully alive is too small for us.

Now as I recall our last conversation, it seems like John was getting ready. Incrementally, he was talking himself into a state of oneness and open-heartedness, letting go of focusing on his flaws in exchange for an awareness of what is true and ever-present. What was it he said? "We must bust our collective stories. At this time there is no room for anything that gets in the way of soul alignment. Anything that doesn't bring us fully alive is too small for us. We cannot allow a diminishment of ourselves now." If we become fully alive, do we necessarily need to be alive in the body? Perhaps not! But are our human hearts, so used to closing down in the face of coldness, unconsciousness, and

meanness, capable of receiving the soul's magnitude of intensity, without some sort of "spiritual aerobics" training?

The winds of change are blowing our debris away. What will be left of us? To surrender to the clearing process can truly feel insane. If I achieve clarity, will I suddenly die? Or will I remain here, ingrained in this world, a clear light in a body helping guide other people to become clear lights in bodies? For certain, our egos are going to die and be replaced with the warm wisdom of the heart. We are going to KNOW how we are intimately connected in a unified field of energy and love. What difference then does it make whether we maintain our physicality or shift entirely into the higher frequencies of ourselves? Perhaps none, yet there may indeed be a reason to live a long life in an enlightened body. Maybe, as with tuning fork resonance, other bodies can adjust more quickly when they can copy a higher pattern from another body.

This time of soul-crafting is incredibly important, it seems to me. It is now that we set our real tone to vibrate throughout the entirety of ourselves, and by deciding who we will be, we get serious about bringing our soul into full consciousness. What's interesting is that the consciousness of the soul does not come through our brain alone, in the way we typically recognize new information and insights. The realization, or physicalization, of the soul comes through the mind-in-the-heart. It comes whispering, in a new language we are not used to hearing or speaking.

The soul brings the experience of the heartfield.

The soul brings with it a new experience of the Sacred Heart, the exploded heart, the heartfield. As soul takes over, the heart expands so rapidly that it becomes not a thing, but an environment to live within. And if we are not practiced in being porous enough, vulnerable or soft enough, forgiving enough, or surrendered enough, our hearts may pound and try to escape our guarded bodies, like chicks breaking from their eggs. Our hearts may drift out when we are absent-minded, beyond the confines of our everyday auras, to commune with millions of other hearts. And we may find ourselves inexplicably overcome with emotion and empathy with human suffering and sacrifice. The heart continually seeks and eats pain, transforming this mistaken perception back into love again.

We must remember that our hearts are strong and flexible. They can zoom out to universal proportions and back in again to be personal and specific. They are powered by divine sanity and responsive to the needs of the collective. Cold, hard hearts are not good; expressing hate, no matter how subtle or disguised, wounds the heart and stunts it, making it difficult to take that quantum leap from object to environment that is coming soon for all of us.

In this time of soul-crafting, I encourage you to commit to keeping your heart soft and open, no matter what seems to be coming at you from the world. I encourage you to think with your heart and discover what that actually feels like. What is it saying? I encourage you to exercise your heart, expanding it in various ways and letting it settle back to seek its own level again, like a pool of clear water.

If you, like I, have lost a loved one recently, I encourage you to continue to connect with them and let them guide you in stretching yourself to encompass more of your totality. Part of you already and always lives in the frequency they now occupy, and you can take your mind there just as easily as keeping it contracted into the small ball we call daily reality. Stretch out, relax, build your frequency, relax, run more energy, relax. Soften your heart, then focus. Let go of your identity-ideas, then see what you are. Let your heart roam, let it live outside your body. Let the wind blow through you and be your friend. Something amazing is near at hand that only your heart will be able to know.

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FALLING INTO THE HEARTFIELD

the first feeling as I cast myself into the world's body
is: panic and pandemonium
then: the children are scared and whimpering
then: quiet mumbling by powerful men making plans
then: the women are comparing notes
then: the dogs are barking because they are alone
then: the winds are blowing madly and leaves are falling in the spring
then: birds are chirping because they are glad for the sun
and as I go farther, I feel the earth about to give birth
the cramping is beginning, the discomfort grows
and: she is happy!
and: the angels are here, very close!
and even so: horses are ripping grass to the left, then the right
under that noise is:
green and under the green is:
water at peace and:
air molecules swarming
and inside that movement is: raw excitement
then: I feel the pleasure of being alive
then: the exquisite pleasure of just being
and through it all:
a private amusement
we are in chaos
and we are unable to escape the gravity-pull of gratitude
it's what makes us smile
the origin experience: of tiny smiles turning to full foolhardy grins
and: falling farther in I feel the wide-waking sleep
the coming birth has the power to expel particles like us
with a force we cannot fathom
far from the nest: into new home places
the feel of new homes we cannot anticipate
and: now I am stunned
with this experience of welcome
and can go no further tonight