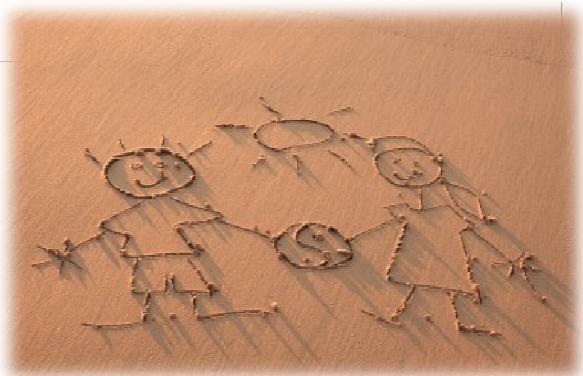


Karma Gobblers



The litany is depressing: violence, war, genocide, greed, crusades, inquisitions...pollution of our air, water, land, food...But these, in fact, are merely the collateral damage. The *real* culprit is the unconscious, uncaring creating of "bad" karma. The only sin is being and staying asleep to our true nature, our origin, our mission and our home. Anything that is negative flows inexorably from that sleep.

Are we destined then to keep on creating negative karma? Can a single slipup sully an otherwise perfect scorecard and send the world into another spiral of darkness? Is there any way out? To these three questions the answers, in sequence, are: No, No and Yes.

There are now and there always have been Karma Gobblers amongst us. Buddhism calls them, bodhisattvas, Hinduism calls them, avatars, and Christianity has called them, saints. They practice the healthiest diet on the planet: they eat up and transform negative karma. It's called Tonglen in Buddhism and consists of a conscious breathing technique where one takes on the suffering of others with the in-breath, transforms it in the loving furnace of the heart, and, on the out-breath, gives it back as happiness to all sentient beings.

Jesus taught it as forgiveness and praying for one's enemies; as returning love for insult; and as answering persecution with compassion. He taught it by inhaling a history of intertribal warfare and exhaling the "Good News" that we are all equally beloved children of the same Abba (daddy).

As surely as Turkey Buzzards pick up carrion from the roads - thus cleansing our freeways - and convert it into tissue for their own bodies, these karma gobblers sanitize our psyches and convert our tragedies into love affairs.

Would you like to be a card-carrying karma gobbler? If so, I suggest five simple practices.

Practice number one: forgive - not from your lips but from your heart. Forgive personal, familial, tribal and national insults.

Practice number two: tell yourself better stories. And stories come in four basic flavors.

The first flavor is your *identity*, which is the story you fashion from a very tiny sample of the trillions of experiences you've had in this life. Simply pick a *different sample*; no need to make them up; just choose more carefully, more lovingly. It's never too late to have a happy past.

The second flavor of story is *history*, the selective memories of the tribe or the nation. Mostly these are a non-representative sample that portrays us as victims of others' aggression or as reluctant executioners in our "just wars."

The third flavor is *cosmology* - the stories we tell of the origin, evolution and purpose of the cosmos. Since the scientific and industrial revolutions these have been wholly anthropocentric tales, which are becoming more and more godless, meaningless and hopeless. They speak of Nature as a brute, which we are entitled to conquer and pillage, until some future generation starves in the ecological desert we create and choke on the toxins we produce. Isn't there a happier cosmology lurking somewhere?

And the fourth flavor is called, *theology*, which is the account of our relationships with the gods. By and large these accounts have resulted in dogmas that promoted the narcissistic agenda of the aristocracy by invoking totally invented divine decrees to back up bloodlines and dominion. It really is pathetic; court historians and prophets-of-the-status-quo together with a priesthood designed to deliver a large docile base for the pyramid of power, privilege and prestige. This was the very system against which Jesus railed so courageously and eloquently - and which crucified him so viciously and mercilessly. Surely, we can come up with a better theology than this.

Have I confused you with my sub-points? I've just completed practice number two - storytelling.

So here is **practice number three**: try to make as many people as possible smile today; fellow motorists, people in line at the Post Office; your spouse, children, friends and colleagues. Physiologically speaking, it takes far fewer facial muscles to smile than it does to scowl. Moreover, it *feels* good and *does* good.

Practice number four: be as curious as a child. Aren't you jaded from being jaded? Open your eyes a little wider; then your ears; and, finally, your heart. Try to emulate the land speed record of recognizing a million miracles in a minute. This creates a paradoxical "rush" that leads to a still, silent serenity.

Last night I was awakened by the sound of the full moon. I have no idea what time it was. I got out of bed and went to the window. My home is on the edge of a 500 feet high cliff. One hundred feet below me a long fluffy cloud was settled comfortably into the valley of Pena Creek. The moon had painted it silvery white and had projected the silhouette of my house onto the lawn next to the labyrinth. Then it airbrushed some of the colors back into the dark shoulder of Bald Mountain across the valley.

How many miracles do we need in order to wake up? How many hints do we need in order to remember? How many "Aha's" do we need before we become enlightened?

Practice number five: talk to a tree; better yet, *listen* to a tree! You can do this vibrationally through your hands or telepathically by softening your gaze and your heart. You will find that it is quite easy to become fluent.

The future belongs to karma gobblers because they are the ones *creating* the future. They are the new species that will inherit the planet, just as Jesus promised. Sign up today.

Namasté,

Tír na nÓg
October 2012

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the letters "S" and "e" being particularly prominent.