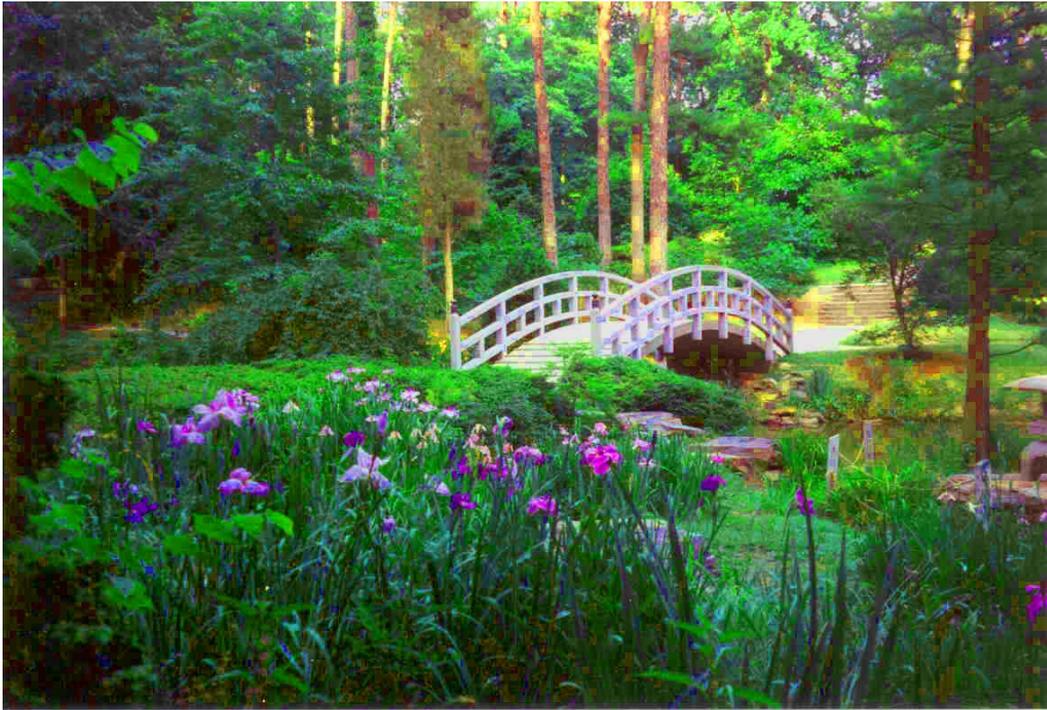


The Bridge

Think On These Things



Ann Hamilton Wallace

*The obstacles in your
path will fall and
become a bridge to your
success with the proper
actions and
understanding.*

To this end, Think On These Things is written.

Dedication

To John B., my father who was a saint upon the earth.

To Jesus Christ, my console and mentor.

To Larry Wallace, my husband, constant companion, good shoulder to cry and wonderful father to my children.

Because of you, I am truly blessed.

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INDIVIDUAL THOUGHTS

Where Psychology Fails

Psychology is the science of the human mind in any of its aspects, operations, powers or functions. It is also the systematic investigation of mental phenomena, especially those associated with consciousness, behavior and the problems of adjustment to the environment.

It has long been known that psychology deals with the mind. Recently, it has become apparent that we are a mind, body, and spirit organism. In years past, it was believed to be sufficient to deal with a patient's mental health and physicality exclusive of their spirituality. In fact, when we took our oral examinations to be licensed by the state, there was no mention whatsoever of the necessity of a spiritual support system. Therefore, it was assumed that if we gave a person a strong sense of self with healthy boundaries, our job was done.

In dealing with many clients in my private practice, sense of self and healthy boundaries are just the beginning. After sometime, clients often say things like, "My mother would pray for us and now she is gone. I feel uneasy about my future, because I do not have the belief in God she had." The issue of God and faith cannot be excluded when talking about mental health.

Psychotherapists are taught to build up the ego-strength of clients and to teach them by modeling appropriate behaviors for successful navigation of the environment. Usually, these skills teach

separateness by way of differentiating from our families of origin and standing on our own two feet. But like anything else, satisfaction of ego needs can never be fulfilling.

It isn't always ego needs that cause us emptiness, lack of meaning or despair. Often, we are searching for peace, and something greater than ourselves-- a connection to God and others.

A strong sense of loneliness and misery pervades our society and drives many folks toward addictions. In psychology, we study a great deal about chemical dependency. The war is still raging, however, because knowing about addiction does not make a person able to do something about it.

It is the spiritual aspect of the 12-step program that makes its combination with psychotherapy such a winner. A client needs a healthy body, a healthy sense of self and a connection to spirit and to others in order to find true happiness.

Just like in the *Wizard of Oz*, we are all running around like the scarecrow searching for more and more knowledge (the Brain) without true wisdom. We are forever obsessed with youth and the perfect body. Too much emphasis is placed on the human body.

One major ingredient that is missing is the heart. Maybe it is time to be less fearful and find our heart so that we can be like the mighty Lion. We all have heart, but it has been subjugated to other aspects of our being.

It's time to put spirituality at the forefront. For the sake of society, and ourselves let us be aware that spirit matters.

LOCAL
THOUGHTS

A New Bottom Line

Most individuals believe that the United States is run by the people and for the people. Guess again. Over the years, power of every kind has been taken out of individual hands and put into America's corporations.

Ronald Reagan's infamous statement, "What's good for Dow Chemicals is good for America," is a great example. Even though most Americans feel strongly about clean air and water for their children, we all know large corporations continue to pollute us toward extinction. America's men are becoming infertile. Cancer is out of control with no end in site. Autism, a pervasive developmental disorder that was extremely rare (1 in 10,000) is now an epidemic (1 in 157). Some have said it is because we have better diagnostic procedures, but experts say that the increase is much too severe to be attributed to testing.

For many years, the bottom line in our country has been to make as much money as possible and to look out only for "Number One." All matters of spirituality are left to the clergy and the housewives of America. Even though our constitution is built upon the assumption that church and state are separate, some things need transforming. Without moral vision and a sense of spirituality, our society is doomed.

Lack of spirituality has hurt every area of our lives. Emotionally we struggle with a loss of meaning and loneliness. Politically, we have to choose between two large parties that do not serve our vision for the future.

Ecologically, we use the resources of our planet as if we own them, consuming them at irresponsible rates without a thought for our actions or for future generations. We are on the brink of ecological disaster in the 21st century. The government bows to the agenda of large corporations that supply an ever-increasing production of goods that damage our environment.

Our children carry our low levels of depression into their lives and the lives of their children. How can anyone be truly happy if he is not loved for himself, but for how well he performs? In education, children must be taught in an environment of cooperation versus competition. Every child has a gift and those gifts must be uncovered and nurtured. In Mel Levine's *One Mind at a Time*, he explains how different each child's mental profile is. Some profiles serve the child better in school and other profiles are better suited to the world of business.

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that spiritual values be expressed in the classroom. Spiritual values stress the self-worth of every student regardless of I.Q. results or SAT scores. The Dali Lama has commented about how today's education subjects children to

memorizing facts, but without teaching true wisdom. The best educated child would be the one that graduates with a good heart.

We live in a time where the media's power to brainwash our sensibility has reached new depths of depravity. Our religion has become the almighty dollar and the quest for material possessions. We often use one another like disposable commodities, where someone is only as good as his or her ability to serve our narcissism. After all, when we die, the one with the most toys wins?

The 21st century will be spiritual, or it will not be at all.

--Malraux

It is time to stop doing what has not produced the desired results. Spirituality and moral values must not be sequestered to Sabbath and holiday get-togethers. We must make a commitment to reweaving the very fabric of our society.

Only in this way will our lifestyles in the United States reflect our highest moral convictions. In his wonderful book, *Spirit Matters*, Rabbi Michael Lerner has this to say, "The time is now to stop compromising with a world whose fundamentals are so far from our own highest values and begin to create the world we privately tell ourselves we really believe in."

GLOBAL THOUGHTS

Planet Human—Planet Earth

I was amazed years ago when I heard how many microorganisms make our bodies their home. We literally are an entire planet full of so many bacteria, fungi, viruses and yeast. When all is well, we don't even notice our parasitic visitors. But, when the delicate balance of parasite hosts gets disturbed, we get disturbed in the process.

Viruses such as chicken pox and herpes live in remission in our central nervous system. When there is a flare up, one takes notice rather quickly. The cold sores, genital lesions and shingles are troublesome and painful.

Our skin is literally crawling with life. Staph A, while harmless on the outer layers of our skin, becomes a nasty infection when a point of entry becomes available. We have all heard about the "good" bacteria in our colons and the nasty consequences when that balance is not maintained.

There has been a whole specialty recently developed in medicine concentrating on the over-abundance of yeast in our system. Many patients have been put on very restrictive diets in order to decrease the amount of yeast in their systems, thereby eliminating symptoms of chronic fatigue, infection and even depression.

Everyone knows how sick we feel when the viral load gets too heavy, and we come down with a bad cold or the flu. Sometimes

complications from secondary bacterial infections like pneumonia can even cause death.

Viruses kept under control are viable, whereas viruses with a mind of their own such as cancer often kill us. We simply cannot support the assault and die in the process.

Most of us are aware of the strength and weakness of our bodies and are ever vigilant to keep ourselves in balance.

Just as we have many forms of life symbiotically co-existing on and within us, we also are visitors to planet Earth.

Our planet has provided much for us such as clean drinking water, forests for building our homes and rich soil for growing our crops. But we have often forgotten that our relationship must remain in balance, or we will court disaster.

Today, in the 21st century, our concerns are more for economical gain than for ecological preservation. We must make every attempt to use our political system to manage the “out-of-whack” relationship between the global economy and the Earth’s ecosystems.

If we continue to multiply at the current rate, we could over populate the earth. That would result in a lack of resources for everyone, and entire nations could be lost.

Over-population is only one concern. Pollution is out of control. Any attempt to reverse the process is often vetoed by the Bush administration. Republicans are bed partners with big business

and corporate America. It's true that it is important to protect the economy of our nation but not at the cost of clean air, clean water, and clean food. For if chemical mishaps keep happening and pollution keeps killing our wildlife and citizens, then we will have no human life on this planet to be concerned about economically.

The damage we do to the ozone layer and polar ice caps literally threatens all life as we know it on the planet.

We are like a virus on mother Earth. She has provided for us, but we continue to assault her relentlessly with our inconsideration. Someday, we may kill our host, and Earth will become a dead zone. At this time, we are on the verge of becoming a cancer to our planet.

The process from viral invaders to lethal disease (cancer) has taken some time, but we are at that threshold. According to the research team at the Worldwatch Institute, "During the last century, we figured out how to travel to the moon, make even more powerful computers and transplant human genes. But as we start the new century, we have far to go to bring clean water to a billion people, to slow loss of thousands of species and to meet our energy needs without destabilizing the atmosphere."

For the first time via Internet, activists can be readily informed of emerging global challenges like climate changes, genetically engineered food and persistent use of pollutants. Together with others, we can be linked up into cells of concern and actions.

The time to do something is now.

For further information about the state of the world, read Worldwatch Institute's flagship publication called *The State of the World*, published by W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., or contact them at www.worldwatch.org.

UNIVERSAL THOUGHTS

Think On These Things

It is time for us to wake from the slumber of disenchantment and infantilism. Open your mind and your mouth and be heard. Some, including myself, might say that they are not public speakers, or the richness of their thoughts is not necessarily reflected in their speech.

Don't be afraid and remember that Moses said to the Lord, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent but slow of speech. Then the Lord said to him, **"I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak."** (Exodus 4:10-12)

Listen to the wisdom of Thomas Merton:

"If man simply follows his own inclinations and his own ideas, even when they appear to be good ones, he is not fully protected against error and dishonesty. He needs to be able to listen to other more inscrutable and more direct commands, issued at the very center of his personal existence and reaching into the depths of his own identity and freedom in such a way that he knows they are directly intended for him personally by the ultimate Lord of life and death, Yahweh, the Nameless but wakeful and present One who is in Augustine's phrase, more intimate to us than we are to ourselves."

Finally, be ever thoughtful of Mohandas Gandhi's words on non-violence:

Gandhi had great admiration for the man called Jesus Christ. Gandhi felt that Jesus embodied the ideal of non-violence. “The Satyagrahi is totally dedicated to the transformation of his own life, adversary and society by means of love.

“Those who are non-violent seek to find the goodness in the adversary, a goodness that is there but often lies hidden. The only way to truly overcome an enemy is to help him become other than an enemy.”

This is the true wisdom and message of the Gospels.

THE END

Suggested Reading

Conversations with God, Book 3 by Neale Donald Walsch

Defying the Iranian Revolution by Dr. Manouchehr Ganji

Diet For A New America by John Robbins

God Isn't Done With Me Yet... by Sister Mary Rose McGeady

Healing the Soul of America by Marianne Williamson

One Mind at a Time by Dr. Mel Levine

Real Magic by Dr. Wayne Dyer

Spirit Matters by Rabbi Michael Lerner

The Search For God At Harvard by Ari Goldman

The Thomas Merton Encyclopedia by William H. Shannon, Christine
M. Piochen and Patrick F. O'Connell

There's a Spiritual Solution to Every Problem by Dr. Wayne Dyer

About The Author



Ann Hamilton Wallace has successfully pursued dual careers, practicing psychotherapy since 1989 and composing dozens of songs, some of which are internationally known. She is a member of the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences and a member of the California Association of the Marriage and Family

Therapists. She holds two masters degrees in philosophy and psychology. She also holds a doctorate in metaphysics from The University of Metaphysics in Los Angeles and is an ordained minister. She resides in Los Angeles with her husband and son. The couple has four children. Dr. Wallace's mission is work with like-minded individuals to revamp the U.S. educational system and care for the elderly. She hopes to travel to the Middle East to help work God's miracle of peace in that region.