

What Else Is Here Besides Suffering

Written by Nirmala

Monday, 10 October 2011 03:51

I received a follow up response to my previous blog post about grace:

Q: I can see that experiences are neither good nor bad unless I judge them. So basically, I see experiences as neutral and not even benevolent. Things just happen, not toward any greater good. I can hold the concept that all experiences are benevolent and beneficial, but from what I see around me, I'm not sure this is true. How is starvation benevolent or beneficial? When I see horrific cruelty to animals, I can't see any Grace or benevolence. If Grace acts through experiences, it sure chooses some pretty horrific ways to get its point across, and this has hardly led to the mass flowering of enlightenment. If starvation and cruelty were beneficial tools, surely millions would be awakened and awakening by now. To me, life looks more like a mixed bag of tricks and treats without any purpose or meaning.

A: Everything you share is true, and there is still the question of how true. Is it the whole truth? Is it the biggest truth? Is it possible that while all of the hurt, pain, and suffering in this world are real, there is still a bigger truth to this existence? This doesn't mean denying or ignoring suffering or not acting in ways that would relieve or reduce the horror and tragedy that are part of life. But while acknowledging and attempting to alleviate the suffering, you can look for and question the possibility of a greater intelligence and Presence that is also operating in this world and beyond it. A bigger truth than the pain and suffering is the truth that consciousness isn't harmed by anything. Bodies can be harmed and even die, but can consciousness be damaged? I'm inviting you to hold this as an open question, something to be discovered as life unfolds here on earth and also beyond your time here on earth.

Here and now, you can directly discover for yourself the bigger truths. The truth is what opens your Heart and quiets your mind, while a smaller truth contracts your Heart and makes your mind very busy. So check this out for yourself: Does believing that life is a mixed bag with no purpose open your Heart? And what effect does it have on your Heart to hold the possibility that consciousness can't be harmed, and that it has a deeper purpose in life? Which idea gives your Heart more room to breathe and just be? I invite you to explore this capacity of your own Heart to discriminate how true every idea, hope, dream, fear, worry, and intuition is. Truth comes in many different sizes from extremely small to infinitely big, so discrimination is needed to determine how true things are.

In my view, we are both right, and the truths I share and the truths you shared are not contradictory, but complementary. Even if we can't see how these truths fit together, we can at least recognize that there is room for both of them. A bigger truth is not better, just bigger. A smaller truth is not worse, just smaller. You can respond to and include all sizes of truth in your awareness: You can feed the starving, feel intense grief and sadness over unnecessary cruelty

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and destruction, and also discover the limitless peace and love that are also here in every moment. You can also discover for yourself the depth of your soul that has never been and never will be harmed. And you can see that same depth in the eyes of a starving child if you look deeply enough.