

CANA eLETTER OCTOBER 2021



Dear friends,

We are continuing to send our supporters a printed copy of our Autumn eLetter as well as by email for those who have requested it.

Our theme this month is light and darkness, looking at each from a different perspective. Dualism is not helpful as we need both the light and the dark. But the light also represents something beyond the light of the sun, of the day - a light relating to Spirit, that we value and seek.

We are also featuring two articles about the changes we are experiencing at this time – Time to Push, and COP 26 which is being held in Glasgow shortly. Let us hope we will see the delegates working together and making strong commitments for change.

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LIGHT by Janice Dolley



When I was a child in our local children's church we used to sing

"Jesus makes me shine like a pure clear light

Like a little candle shining in the night

In this World of Darkness Jesus makes us shine

You in your small corner and I in mine."

It never occurred to me then what was meant by shining my light even though growing up in the blitz of World War Two, as I did, it was pretty obvious that there was plenty in the world which was not loving and light filled.

Today, when the darkness is possibly less obvious, we are encouraged to let our light shine more brightly so that all may come together to restore and rejuvenate the damage that we, as humanity, have inflicted on the natural world and on each other. The more our collective light shines then the more the darkness shows itself so it is no wonder that the world appears to be in such a critical time. Hence an inner prompting to deepen our understanding of light just a bit more.

Kate Porteus and I regularly share a meditation at a telephone distance and in a recent time together we focussed on the subject of light. Her meditation started at the beginning with Genesis when God said *"Let there be light"* which tells us that light was the very beginning of form, of creation and a first principle of individuation. Kate began to see this as a downward flow of light infusing matter with a

corresponding upward flow of matter infused spirit. She saw that in this way light enabled creation and individuation which then had the task of spanning both our individuality as well as being part of the One.

As we tried to find a definition of light Kate suggested it may be “conscious awareness” so that in our individuality we increasingly carried a universal consciousness. She saw that fear equates with darkness just as light equates with love so that it is fear, as well as our small ego-filled selves, that prevents us from being more light filled or being the light. Maybe this is why Jesus so often said “fear not” and that “perfect love casts out fear”.

My own meditation started from the New Testament when Jesus says “*I am the light of the world*” (Jn 8.12) and was told that “every time you are in your ‘I am’ state, connected and open to the new, you too are being the light of the world. As you breathe into your heart and open from there to your higher or soul self then the light automatically floods in and pours its radiation not only onto others but will also seep into all beings within your sphere of interconnection. So practise observing that whenever you can and it will expand and intensify into evermore light so that you too will be a light in the world. This light is already dormant within every cell of your being awaiting your recognition and calling forth. These are the next steps ahead for all of you.” This of course connects with Jesus saying “*You are the light of the world*” (Mt 5.14)

This seemed quite profound in two ways: one is the challenge to continually watch for remnants of our not yet fully transformed egos or those aspects of our personality selves that are not yet infused by our soul self. The other might be an increased recognition of what is being called forth within us. So then this prayer came to me:

“I recognise and awaken the light within each cell in my physical body and ask the elementals caring for my physical well being to assist me with this.

The light is already awakening in my mental body so I thank the beings who have assisted with this and ask that I may use my perceptions and deepening knowing in the wisest possible way.

I recognise and awaken the light in my emotional being and ask for assistance in finding ways of keeping this calm, connected, centred and serene.

I embrace and expand the light in my spiritual and subtle bodies and begin to see the interconnectedness of all aspects, and I open to the path ahead that this may expand in the highest way possible for the highest good of the greater whole.”

So how might we know how we are doing? As humanity are we strengthening and radiating more vibrantly the light that we are?

In a channelled message purporting to come from beings from the star system Sirius it has been said “*You are the strong ones holding the light for others to follow you. It*

is time now for you all to bathe in that light, being the loving, kind, supportive being that you are... We see how much you have helped spread the light on a planet that has been very dark over the last millennia. Once the light has spread throughout the world there is no going back to darkness."

Reading this you might hiccup at the idea of connection with extra-terrestrial beings, but maybe if our conscious awareness is expanding then this is another dimension of being that we might begin to embrace.

However, lest this quote raises feelings of scepticism, I turned to my trusted teacher, Anne Baring to see what she said about light and liked this quote:

"We are, in our essence, literally cosmic light, cosmic energy in every cell of our being.....Through the infinitesimal spark of light that is our human consciousness, the universe is becoming aware of itself on this planet."

Our initial awareness can derive from what we read of the mystics of our own and other faith traditions, from quantum scientists or from hearing the stories of those who have returned from a near death experience (NDE). But above all, as best we can, we need to spend time in the silence of our deepest hearts, through prayer, meditation or time alone in nature so that we can focus on that spark of light within ourselves and radiate that out into the wider world.

Reading records of those who have had a near death experience as well as my friend Ursula's descriptions of the reality she experienced after death (2) or from spiritual explorers such as Christopher Bache, "Dark Night Early Dawn", we can expand our perceptions of this amazing and beautiful world where we have been privileged to spend our present life time.

"I was brought to an encounter with a unified energy field underlying all physical existence. I was confronting an enormous energy field of blindingly bright, incredibly intense energy... This energy was the single energy comprising all existence"(3)

Then there is the description of Jesus at the transfiguration *"with his face shining like the sun and his clothes white as the light"* (Mt 17.2).

Possibly you too have had a mystical experience of some kind. Because the current consensus reality does not embrace this, many who have had such experiences are scared to share them in case they are labelled crazy or someone not normal. Maybe it is time that we share our experiences more and learn from each other.

We speak of God as the cosmic ground of being or a vast ocean of light and love which interpenetrates our world but in our busyness we often fail to see it. However, in the early days of the first lockdown it was a common experience to recognise that the natural world was glowing with a new radiance of some kind, the birds were singing more insistently and energy was felt by some as it emanated from parks, gardens and wild places. The light we see coming from the sun restores and renews;

the light from an ineffable source maybe harder to detect. As the thirteenth century poet Rumi has said *"The heart is nothing but the sea of light, the place of the vision of God"* (4)

It was several decades before I was willing to share a profound peak experience that I had in our garden when suddenly as I looked at nature everything shifted and I could see a divine radiance pouring through every leaf, every bush, every insect. There was a radiant numinous light shining through living things which I knew was loving and beneficent and that this pervades all life. One can never forget this sort of experience and it has propelled me ever since to try to work for wider understanding of unity consciousness and the oneness of all being.

Maybe it is time that we share our experiences a bit more and learn from each other. In my conversations with my friend Ursula after her death, in the book cited above, she said *"If you only teach one thing Janice, teach the importance of co-creating."* One of the shifts underway as we move from the Piscean era to an Aquarian era is a shift from a focus on individual consciousness to a focus on group consciousness. Maybe this is why so many people seem to be wishing to live in a community of some kind and the wisdom of John O'Donohue before he died suggested that *"Perhaps community is a constellation. Each one of us is a different light in the emerging collective brightness. This has greater power of illumination than any single light would have on its own"*

References

- 1) Baring, Anne, "The Dream of the Cosmos". 2013, Archive Publishing
- 2) Dolley, Janice with Ursula Burton, "Awakening to a New Reality: Conscious Conversations across the Horizon of Death", 2020, Sleepy Lion Publishing
- 3) Bache, Christopher, "Dark Night: Early Dawn", 2000, State University of New York Press
- 4) The Mathanavi

In the story of the development of civilization, from around 2000 BC, we begin to see the beginning of a new phase in the evolution of human consciousness and a change of focus from a lunar to a solar mythology....The primary theme of lunar mythology is a cyclical process of birth, death and regeneration. The theme of solar mythology is a great battle between light and darkness, good and evil....I see it as a time of immense cultural and technological achievement but also as a time of ever-increasing loss of the sense of participation in the Sacred Order of an ensouled world.

Anne Baring. *The Dream of the Cosmos – A Quest for the Soul*. Archive Publishing, 2013

Darkness by Jane Upchurch



Light is not only the brightness of day but, for the last 3,000 or so years, a symbol of goodness and of Spirit or God. Similarly darkness can now be cast as anything inimical to Spirit and to ourselves. The danger of this is that we lose our natural balance, and our lives don't honour the importance of the dark.

Have you tried sleeping under a bright light? Not easy and not fully restful. Our bodies need the daily rest of darkness as do other creatures, many of whom suffer from light pollution in our cities. As well as our daily dose of darkness, for those of us nearer the poles than the equator, we have the dark days of winter, long recognised spiritually as a fruitful time for inner work. New life starts in the dark – in a womb, in a seed, in the soil. Plants grow taller in the dark. And Eben Alexander's experience of the presence of God in 'the core' during his near death experience was of a shining darkness.

I love the light, the sun and the summer. But I am learning to value the dark times, the slow times, the digging deep and hoping for growth times. Honouring the dark is part of knowing that all of nature is filled with spirit and we are part of that. I have found it helpful seeing life is a spiral, not an upward trajectory interrupted by difficulties. The problems that before I berated are part of my life and my growth, my journey in Spirit. And death too is part of that journey, returning us home to Source and future life experiences. It is true there are forces seeking to harm that we should recognise. But let us not confuse them with the God-given dark or base our outlook of life on them. Our lives need the richness and wholeness that comes when we embrace the dark.

Ref:

Eben Alexander. *Proof of Heaven – A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife*. Piatkus. 2012.

'The past is an interpretation. The future is an illusion. The world does not move through time as if it were a straight line, proceeding from the past to the future. Instead time moves through and within us, in endless spirals. Eternity does not mean infinite time, but simply timelessness. If you want to experience eternal illumination, put the past and the future out of your mind and remain within the present moment.'

Elif Shafak. *The 40 rules of love*. Penguin. 2009

The dark by Jane Upchurch



In the dark
there is a gift
I might have missed
in the bright of day.

It is the slowing of time,
the sense of air
soft filling each space,
touching my face,
of self with no mask
or pretence,
no agenda,
no inner or outer pressure,
just silence so loud
I can hear it.

It is so empty, it is full.
I can feel all that is there,
all that is always there,
although I am not.

I can honour it
by doing nothing.

COP 26 by Jane Upchurch



Cop 26, the UN climate change conference, is meeting in Glasgow from Sunday 31 October to Friday 12 November this year. It means a lot for those of us who live in Britain that we are hosting it now when it is such a critical time for our planet. I am sure all our thoughts and prayers are with the delegates that we might see them working together and making strong commitments for change.

We were privileged to briefly join a wonderful group of people who are walking from London to Glasgow to be there for it. It is a pilgrimage for nature and is called Listening to the Land <https://www.pilgrimagefornature.com/>. Pilgrimage for Nature are one of the official events at COP26, which is HUGE and allows them to be a platform for the many voices they have heard from all the people and other fellow beings they have met as they have crossed the land, and the voices of indigenous peoples from overseas who, due to COVID, will not have as much access to the main arena as is normally the case. These are people living on the front line of climate change and whose skills and expertise we need to draw on to survive this. Listening to the Land will be hosting their event on 12th November.

They are making a video to share and are asking those they meet what they want to say to COP 26. I said that although we desperately need strong commitments that will affect our physical world, it doesn't start there. We need a change of heart. I asked the oak tree that I pass each day the same question and this is what I heard: 'Feel me. Hear me. See me. Know me.'

We have a history of seeing and treating our planet and nature as 'it', something we can do what we want with, a resource to use and abuse. This view arose out of both religion and science and has been with us for hundreds of years so is well embedded in our psyche. It has led to many of the problems we are facing today with climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution etc. But starting to treat the planet as important and in need of protection is only half the answer as these changes are often still self serving.

Physically our lives are intimately bound up with all of nature and the inter-dependence of all species. But beyond science, it is also a question of heart, of soul. Even science now shows that there is an underlying link between us all, a sharing of consciousness on some level, which means a relationship, a connection. Living with the planet in this way would stop the abuse.

Yes, we need governments and organisations to work together and make commitments and laws that will ameliorate the changes in our climate. But we also need a change of heart.

Time to push by Charles Eisenstein

The human collective has in the last several years transitioned into a new stage of its birth process. In other words, we are entering a period of struggle where it is obvious that something important is at stake and our actions matter. We are moving down the birth canal. Immense pressures will bear down on us, pause for a while, then bear down again.

For most of my life, in the national and global arena each passing year seemed much the same as the last, a predictable deterioration. That is changing. The year 2020 was no aberration. Normal is not going to return. We might slide back a little after each contraction, but never all the way back. Each will push us into new territory. That doesn't mean the world situation will gradually improve—quite the contrary. It will intensify with each contraction until the moment we are born.

We are going somewhere. I can't offer proof of that, only metaphor, faith, and an appeal to your intuition. But here is one sign: The stasis that rendered us hopeless and cynical is over. That does not mean it is time to sit back and await our deliverance. It is just the opposite; now is the time when we get serious and act as if life depended on it. In childbirth the mother does most of the work, yet the response of the baby is important too. A live birth is easier than a stillbirth. This doesn't mean that life is a struggle. Mostly it is not, or needn't be. Soon, circumstances will push us out of our comfort zone. A comfort zone that, like the birthing womb, has long been uncomfortable.

There is often a moment as the baby slowly moves through the birth canal where it seems impossible. A moment of, "I can't do this." Usually though, she can. So can we. The process humanity is undergoing was not designed to be impossible; only to seem impossible at a key moment. We can do this. It is why we are here.

For the full article see:

https://charleseisenstein.substack.com/p/time-to-push?r=qlld49&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email&utm_source=

EVENTS

Cana Conscious Conversations (CCC)



The Significance of Heart

Saturday 6th November 2021, 10.30-12.45

'What our world needs if it is to function better - indeed if it is to avoid disaster - is the emergence of more awakened or deeper hearted human beings'

~Serge Beddington-Behrens

As a western society we are rapidly becoming aware of the need to change direction. So much of our habitual thinking and behaviour patterns have resulted in the destruction of life on our beautiful planet, and in the creation of inequality and poverty. We have to find a more beneficent direction for our evolution as a human species.

A significant shift seems to be underway. It's from the domination of our clever, analytical thinking towards living within the greater wisdom of our hearts, which is also the realm of our feelings. We are realising that we are now being called to be truly deep hearted, compassionate beings.

CANA is inviting you to join us for an exploration of the significance of our hearts for our next Conscious Conversation. We have invited several contributors to give us some food for thought, as well as experience a heart-centred way. These include Revd Don MacGregor, Dr Jude Currivan, Janet Corbett, a student of the HeartMath Institute, and Janet Derwent of Sundial House Centre for Creative Meditation. There

will also be at least two breakout sessions as well as a whole group session in which we can share our own inspirations and insights

This topic of bringing heart and mind into balance is not new. In the Hebrew Scriptures it says *“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7 KJV)*. In the Gospel of Thomas, Jesus says *“When you give birth to that which is within yourself; what you bring forth will save you. If you possess nothing within, that absence will destroy you.”* And Anne Baring, a contemporary mystic says:

“Our ancestors understood that civilisation cannot develop unless it is rooted in the power of the heart to give birth to a feeling world....and without that feeling and that inward journey to develop soul, creation cannot continue to unfold... The message is clear: without the creative energy of love, we cannot create a true civilisation, and when we cannot create, we destroy” Anne Baring in her Forward to “Merchants of Light” by Betty Kovacs

We hope you can join us on Saturday 6th November.

Please email Bill at admin@cana.org.uk if you would like to participate.

CANA Online Sacred Space (COSS)



This is an on-line ritual, an opportunity to engage with Spirit and with our own divine centre communally. This is not a eucharist, there is no wine, no blessing from a priest, no Christian liturgy. But it does seek to embody some of the essence of the eucharist experience in creating a sacred space of communion but within a wider framework.

We have held two so far and have recorded the sessions so that any of you who were unable to attend can experience it or send it to friends. The music that we use is Dance the night away by James Last, and Celtic Blessing by Aled Jones.

This is the link for the 28-minute video : <https://youtu.be/yrleZ5YJ7y4> There may be an advert from YouTube as we used music.

You are welcome to use any or all of the liturgy that we put together for COSS.
Here is the link: [CANA-Online-Sacred-Space-06-07-21-Fullness-of-Life.pdf](https://www.cana.org.uk/CANA-Online-Sacred-Space-06-07-21-Fullness-of-Life.pdf)



CONTACT US

GROUP MEDITATION If you would like to join with us at the full moon when our focus is birthing a universal spirituality, or at the new moon with a focus on praying for the planet, then please email us.

CANA operates on a gift economy so if you would like to contribute and do not already, then email us and we will send details or look on our website [Donate](#)

If you would like to reply to any of this or have questions or suggestions for future editions, please email info@cana.org.uk, ring Jane or Bill on 01895 639476 or write to them at 20 Manor Road, Ruislip, Middx HA4 7LB.

*May love and light fill your life and our world
bringing healing and wholeness*

CANA is a network of people responding to the new impulse of Spirit at this time. Many of us recognise its resonance with the teachings of Jesus as a way of transformation. Our hope is to rediscover and re- imagine a path leading towards a more universal spirituality that can operate with respect for all living creatures and all faiths, a path of love and service for the betterment of all. This is not just about the transformation of the individual, but the global shift of humanity to a higher way of being and of love that Jesus termed 'the realm of God'.

www.cana.org.uk