

BUTTERFLY

ButterFly

A HEALING ARTS RESOURCE

Making Peace

By Sandy Penny



In the spirit of the Summer of Love and World Peace Week, I've had a chance to question my own inner peace and consider making peace with the past. This is a great opportunity for a life review.

LIFE REVIEW

My brother, two years older than I am, was responsible (in my memory) for everything bad that happened in my childhood. I held a

lot of grudges and bad memories of things that happened with him. However, he did one very important thing for me—before I could read, he used to read to me. He was an avid reader, and he didn't mind that I asked him to read "Hansel and Gretel" about a thousand times. That early bond made me want to resolve my issues with him later in life.

When he developed severe heart problems, he began to have spiritual experiences, and I was the only person he knew who discussed such weirdness. An adult friendship began that healed the memories of the past. His spiritual experience included a life review. You've heard people say that when they think they're about to die, their life flashes before their eyes. Well, my brother had a narrated vision of every time he hurt people throughout his life, and he was shown the choice point. He was shocked to see how often he chose to hurt those he loved—taking actions that created sadness, anger, or fear in someone's life.

It was a harsh reality. Earlier in his life he would have defended his actions or denied what happened. Now it was time to fess up because he was on a heart transplant list, and there was a distinct possibility that he would die before a heart was available. He began to change. He softened his demeanor and spoke more gently. He began making amends and

demonstrating love. It was a joy to see this happen, as he had been an angry child and an angry man who killed his best friend in a drunken fight. He developed heart problems in prison, and I believe the cause was a broken heart with deep sadness and remorse for the life he had lived.

A year or so into his inner healing process, he got the call that a heart was available. I mused that perhaps he had cleared enough issues to keep a new heart healthy. That was three years ago. He's doing well and making good use of his new heart. He's a changed man with a sense of service, and he never hangs up the phone without saying, "I love you."

PEACE BEGINS WITH ME

What are you hanging onto in your life that is causing you pain, grief, or sadness? How can we expect to create a peaceful world if we can't even create peace in our own life?

In order to create inner peace, we have to forgive those who have done us perceived

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harm. In 1976, Louise Hay wrote a book, "Heal Your Body," revealing the correspondence between physical ailments and emotional or mental patterns. It offers affirmations to counteract negative patterns within us that create illness. [I visited HayHouse.com to verify the title of the book, and today's affirmation auspiciously was, "Peace begins with me."] At publishing, the book was considered pretty far out, but science has since shown the correlation between stress levels and health issues.

STRESS IS THE ABSENCE OF PEACE

Participating in negativity destroys peace, whether it's gossip, criticism, or angry rants. The more time you spend being negative or in the company of negative people, the more likely you are to have health problems. The more time you spend being positive, the healthier, stronger and more positive you become.

Negativity is a habit. In order to break a habit, you have to replace it with something else. You can begin with forgiveness—forgive your parents, forgive your boss, and most of all, forgive yourself. Forgiveness does not mean condoning bad behavior, only that you let go of the anger, sadness and negativity within so you can move forward in a happy life.

Just start by saying, "I forgive ___ for ___." Then say, "I love ___." It's the people we love who hurt us most. We have to forgive ourselves for loving someone who hurts us, and we have to forgive ourselves for hating someone we're supposed to love. The daily practice of forgiveness clears the pain and makes space for joy. Forgiveness is the key to inner peace. ✦

WHY FORGIVE?

Once, in a meditation, I became a jaguar running through the forest, being chased by men beating on metal pans. I was chased into a fenced enclosure for a jaguar ceremony. A sacrifice was made to the jaguar to protect the community from harm and ensure good hunting. As I, the jaguar, looked warily around the enclosure, a little girl danced toward me. She was the sacrifice.

Suddenly my spirit was in her body, and I could feel her joy at being chosen. There was no fear in her. Next I was in the body of the priest orchestrating the ritual. He was concerned for his people and wanted to serve them well. Then I was in the body of the father of the girl. He was conflicted over losing his daughter and the pride of such an honor. Back in the body of the jaguar, I had the child by the throat. As the child died, I was transcended and lifted above the scene. A great sense of peace engulfed me. I realized that we are all victims, perpetrators, innocent bystanders, and watchers who allow violence. If we are all those things, then how can we not forgive others whose actions reflect our own?

Alannah's Song

By Debra Villalobos

Saturday morning. I remember that fateful day four years ago. I stretched out in bed, hands roving over my body, monitoring a cyst in my right breast that had been there for years. I palpated a real lump at twelve o'clock. Time stood still.

This recent Saturday morning we had been invited and agreed to attend a fundraising luncheon in Albuquerque. Our looming deadline caused stress and we didn't know much about who was speaking. I lamented the loss of a whole day. Six hours driving for a lunch.

After learning the name of the speaker, Robin Roberts, hostess of Good Morning America, breast cancer survivor, privileged with health insurance, job assurance, and lots of celebrity support, I "Googled" her. I was enticed by the fact that she was from Pas Christian, Miss., and had lived in Nashville and Atlanta, my youthful stomping grounds.

I decided to embrace the day once we were on the road.

She was funny and informative as she spoke to 800+ people (90 percent female in dresses, bare legs and high heels, 10 percent male) supping on soup and using chopsticks to clutch crispy and soft noodles. The tables were worth about \$10,000 each. We were guests of the Healys, long time friends and philanthropists. The aim was to raise funds for researching and curing cancer.

Roberts described a similar morning to that of mine finding the "lump," followed by numerous diagnostic procedures. She spoke of becoming a messenger, similar to what I had done through the pages of Horse Fly.

We laughed at her descriptions as she slipped into her native southern tongue. She talked about mama and her upbringing in the south, her athletic feats due to determination, her seven rules to live by, including positive thinking. She had survived cancer through the approaches of Western medicine. So had I. I stood when they invited breast cancer survivors to be recognized.

As I listened to her speak and laughed out loud at the familiar "southern" tongue and tale, I quit lamenting the loss of a whole day. I remembered how Katrina had wiped out an old stomping ground. Yet, I could only think of the song in my mind that played over and over about Alannah Elizabeth Walker and Alicia Clyde. (See April edition of Horse Fly.)

As I observed cosmopolitan America, dresses, high heels and legs galore, I thought of another book I had carried to Pieces for resale. Its title was "Breast Cancer? Let Me Check My Schedule!" This title put me off

and I had hardly opened it.

Undergoing treatment for cancer while living through a busy schedule is in direct opposition to the plan Alannah presents in her book "Cancer Wise: From Terminal to Healthy." With a prognosis of three months to live and breast cancer that had metastasized to the liver, Alannah had nothing to lose in choosing to follow the practices she had learned from teachers of natural healing. Instead of undergoing conventional treatment that might prolong her life by a few months, each whole day was filled with visualization, juicing, resting, cleansing inside and out. In six months she was cancer free and is still with us 32 years later. She has become teacher to many of us.

Cancer is big business in the conventional medical profession and is the second most financially successful industry in America, second only to petroleum.

I am more empowered by the lyrics and melody I have found in what I have come to call "Alannah's Song" than by the multi-million (perhaps billion) dollar wag of the Western medical profession. I knock on wood.

Fear is a most predatory emotion. When my daughter was a toddler, I listened to tapes about parenting with love and logic. "If your



child runs amok in the big store and you're always looking for her, tell the child to be sure to keep up with mama." What a concept! As I moved faster and with more intention than my daughter, she would call out. "Slow down mama!" Fear is like that. Rather than confront it, we should outrun it.

What I am learning are some answers to the question of how I take care of myself.

Whether time has stopped for you with a most dreaded diagnosis, or you or I have to confront a fearful issue, Alannah's book and program can provide supportive daily practices we once knew and perhaps have forgotten.

Years ago, in Tennessee, I listened to an older man from New Mexico telling my parents that there really was a cure for cancer, growing right here on Earth. But he said that the government and the medical society would never let the information out to the public. Cancer was not as prevalent then as now. I remembered this as I sat at that luncheon, imagining what hundreds of thousands of dollars going for research and development could do for those with no money. Though awed by the mother whose daughter died of breast cancer 18 years ago, who created a foundation to raise the dollars for this luncheon, I could not help hearing Alannah's song reverberating through my mind.

Please join us on May 23rd at The Fitness Studio from 11 to 3 to meet her and hear her story. We will serve you lunch and a cup of prevention. RSVP 751-4829. ✦

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