

Healing with Radical Wholeness

Good morning! I've been gone for two Sundays so let me introduce myself—I'm Reverend Joy. I've been in Kansas City where for the most part I had the same weather you've had—just a day or two sooner and one tornado watch thrown in. It got cooler than I thought it would so lots of people got to see my ULV sweatshirt!

The last Sunday I was here I talked about this concept of Radical Wholeness. Since my memory isn't what it used to be and I have trouble remembering why I walked into a room, maybe some of you don't remember what Radical Wholeness is. Basically the concept has two parts. The familiar Unity foundational part is that we all come into the world with spiritual wholeness within. Sometimes we call it the Christ of our being—or our Spiritual Self—or our Divinity. It is that source of infinite possibilities that we tap into with our spiritual faculties of power and imagination as we shape our outer experience. The second part of Radical Wholeness is the more radical part when compared to our secular understanding and even our Unity traditional teachings: the wholeness within us can manifest in a variety of ways. There is no **one** picture of wholeness that is our goal. The path of transformation is a process *in consciousness* we call healing. Healing is a return to the wholeness **as we discern what that looks like for us**. Healing is our shift in consciousness and wholeness is **our** outcome. What is radical is making peace with our outcome when it is not how others view wholeness. What is radical is the idea that others are not the judge of whether or not we are manifesting wholeness or brokenness. What if a person who experiences blindness feels whole? What if a person who experiences life through the lens of autism or cerebral palsy feels whole? **YEAH!** Radical Wholeness puts the focus on the healing process and the consciousness of the individual—not whether or not his or her outer experience aligns with what **we** desire as wholeness.

What I'd like to explore today is a path for that healing transformation in consciousness. This is clearly not the only path, not a pat formula or an easy out. It is just one process with some steps that came to me in meditation that might be helpful as we work on healing into this Radical Wholeness of our own design.

There are 14 references in the Bible linking eyes and ears: 8 in the Old Testament and 6 in the New Testament. There are 4 in the Apocrypha but we won't count them. In the New Testament there are two different healings that involve the language to “take up your mat”.

Something that occurred to me was that these healings link to the three primary styles of learning: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. When we are in need of healing we are failing to understand and to know in a deep spiritual way the very truth of our being. AND it doesn't matter what our learning style is! We are capable of appropriating spiritual Truth into our consciousness in ways that allow us to live from and speak from and act from this Truth. How cool is that? Whether we learn by seeing or by hearing or by doing, we can shift our consciousness into healing paths of transformation. How? Isn't that always the interesting question? Stop telling me what is possible and start giving me something practical that I can use. OK.

Maria Nemeth has some steps for change that I go back to because they are just helpful. Transformation is change. As much as we might resist "change" we all seem to long for transformation. So let's call it transformation today. Maria's steps are: Look, See, Tell the truth and Take authentic action. I'm going to combine the first two steps into Awareness. Then we'll try Discerning the Truth with a big T and a little t. Finally we are called to action—even when the action is to sit in the silence.

Awareness. To decide where you want to go you have to begin by figuring out where you are. You cannot change a habit or thought or choice until you become aware of what you are doing or thinking or deciding or not deciding. For visual learners we might say, "Are you looking at your life/health/finances/relationships? Do you see what is going on? Do you see what you think and feel?" For auditory learners we might say, "Do you hear what you just said? Are you listening to the thoughts speaking in your head about your life/health/finances/relationships?" For kinesthetic learners we might say, "Are you focused on what you're doing or are you on auto-pilot? Are you aware of what you choose to say and do in your life/health/finances/relationships?" Awareness requires us to pause and examine what might not feel like living our best life or being our best self. The easiest way to stay in our rut is to just never stop.

Socrates said "The unexamined life is not worth living." Perhaps a more potent question is if you never stop to evaluate whether you are living a life of your dreams and potential or just doing what other people want and expect of you, is it really living? For years Myrtle Fillmore was told her health woes were inherited and there was nothing she could do. She did not question that until she heard "You are a child of God and you do **not** inherit sickness." What does it take for us to realize we are blind or deaf or paralyzed?

What stops us and makes us examine our lives, our thoughts and actions? Think about your life? When did your spiritual “aha’s” come? Usually it’s either through crisis or resonance. Sometimes there is a major shift in our outer experience that stops us in our tracks and forces us to examine our lives. It can be a loss, a health challenge, a change in employment or relationship status. It is so drastic we can’t ignore the fact that our rut no longer exists as it did before. Other times we read a book or attend a workshop or hear a song or see a movie and there is something revealed that vibrates within us as a message just for us. The message is so loud and so clear we take time to examine what it means in our personal thoughts and choices. I think what happened to Myrtle might have been a combination. Her health was reaching a crisis point AND she heard a message just for her.

In our newly awakened state we must discern the truth. We can start with the little t truth in our outer world. What is not working and how are we contributing with the thoughts we hold and the choices we make? Like an addict acknowledging that the choice s/he makes to drink or gamble or shop or whatever is interfering with life—from finances to relationships to living on purpose. Once we discern the changeable stuff in the outer, we must discern the counter part in the absolute Truth with a big T. I am divinely guided. I am wisdom. I am divine life. I am loved with divine love and I am love in expression. Whatever we feel is not going well, there is a divine counter-part we can tap into to bring transformation into our consciousness. If I hold thoughts of powerlessness—there is divine power. If I hold thoughts of limitation—there is divine imagination and strength expanding my possibilities. I discern something is not operating at my fullest potential which is acknowledging were I am blind or deaf or paralyzed. I discern how I contribute to that temporary condition and I discern an absolute Truth that is unchanging.

Then comes the last challenge—to take authentic action. To see with clarity, to hear with acuity and to take up our mat and walk. Occasionally we can know what is ours to do—we can know the error in our ways—we can even grasp the power we have to make changes and we do not take that final action step. We are afraid. We worry what others will think. We believe we will fail so we don’t try. We remain blind, deaf and paralyzed **by our own choices**. That last phrase is a bitter pill to swallow. This is where some blame God. Some traditions deny we have the power to change and surrender to a theology of a punishing and judging God. Some believe there is a rescue that will happen after we die. Those are easier paths than owning our power now.

Radical Wholeness is up to us--not what others deem possible. Yet it is not something manifest by others—that is up to us also. We manifest transformation in our outer experience as we utilize the divine, radical wholeness within us. How do I know it's my Radical Wholeness? If Radical Wholeness isn't an image of what others expect, what does Radical Wholeness look like for me? Will I know it when I see it?

For me, Radical Wholeness feels like peace; feels like I am on my spiritual purpose; and feels like gratitude. For visual folks, when I see clearly where I am and I am content. For auditory folks, when I hear harmony and gratitude in my thoughts. For kinesthetic folks, when the path is clear and I walk confidently forward. Those are moments of Radical Wholeness.

Some of you might say, "Well Rev Joy, isn't it a little hypocritical to walk around with a cane and talk to us about healing? Might your idea of Radical Wholeness just be an excuse not to heal?" Trust me—I think all the critical thoughts all on my own. Even the ones you are too loving and kind to speak out loud but might wonder privately. And I think it's valid and we should talk about it.

First of all, we all have healing work to do. When we are as whole as we are going to be this trip on earth we'll leave. That's basically my belief. And if I only preached about things I had completely mastered, well, there wouldn't be anything to talk about on Sunday. I try to share insights that have come through me and tools that work for me. A couple years ago I healed through a major health challenge and guess what? The Universe felt there were still some lessons for me. And honestly, the arthritis in my hips is something I have ignored, pushed through and tried to pretend was not an issue for several years. Now it has my attention. Could it be different had I done something different several years ago? Well, we won't know that will we? For now I am immersed in my examination—precipitated by being pushed out of my rut by pain. I am trying to see clearly both what is going on, how I contribute and the spiritual Truth with a big T that will move me onto the path of transformation. And I have some new insights. I am patiently staying alert to authentic action I need to take.

As for excuses. There is always a tension between loving and accepting who I am and finding the courage and guidance to become more of who I came here to be. Radical Wholeness is meant to be a concept to empower more people to love and accept who they are because only when we find balance can we focus on the other side of the equation and become more of who we came here to be.

Radical Wholeness doesn't stand for the idea there isn't more for all of us to be. It just says others don't get to define what my highest and best looks like. I don't intend to heal myself into being 5 feet tall. That is not how I see my wholeness manifesting. Some people may not see wholeness as the ideal body mass. Hopefully we are becoming ok with people not seeing wholeness for them as straight or as the gender someone assigned at their birth. At the same time, if we are awake and aware, we all have stuff we'd like to work on. Relationships we'd like to strengthen or release; a sense of financial prosperity we'd like to rest in; a habit or addiction we'd like to overcome. As we used to say in Risk Management: If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, you may not truly understand the situation. That tension between being content and being motivated to seek more is part of our awareness. If it's been a long time since you thought you had something to work on in your life, you might be heading for a wake-up call. Birthdays, New Year's Day and Anniversaries are calendar reminders to pause to examine our lives-both for gratitude and for healing opportunities.

Healing is the path of transformation which begins with awareness, allows discerning the truth to unfold and calls us to authentic action to manifest our Radical Wholeness. And so it is.