

The Interfaith Temple

Explore • Experience • Evolve



An Inclusive, safe home for spiritual kinship, growth, evolution and loving support.

Newsletter



March 2022

March Musings — Rev. Dr. Stacy

Headlines, histories, lessons not learned and actions repeated. What does it take for humanity to break past the barrier of scarcity-mindedness, fear and retribution to live as we were designed—intended?

Most of us in an Interfaith setting believe in some power greater than ourselves—although sometimes in vastly different forms. But if we pause to consider how many people of faith there are in the world, and if each of us was truly living by the Golden Rule that is the cornerstone of all those faith traditions, how is it possible to have such division between us? If we all acknowledge that there is some higher power, and we all adhere to the same golden rule, how can we *not* get along?

We do see glimpses of progress toward global understanding and unity, and many of us feel the energies and paradigms shifting. But in times of war, and rumors of war, in times of chaos and upheaval, as we writhe in the birth pangs of the shift, in those times it feels like change will always be just over the horizon. How can we continue to hold the light, ground peace within ourselves so we can keep calm and carry on? How do you keep going?

I'd love to hear from you—I'd love to hear how you manage to maintain a spiritual presence while living in a secular society. What are your practices, the tools you use to stay grounded and connected to the Supreme Source and to each other? Do you have any stories of how you've witnessed or maintained spiritual calm in times of difficulty? Let's build the next newsletter with stories, inspiration and practical tips/tools to share with each other!

Submit your stories/articles/poems/images/etc. no later than Monday, March 28th, to revdrstacy@theinterfaithtemple.org. (700 word max).

Love & Blessings,

Stacy

March Calendar:

- Mar 2** [Spiritual Fluidity Circle](#) — 7:30 PM *Rev. Dr. Samora & Rev. Jacquie Droescher* — Do you blend spiritual practices or float easily between different faiths? What does it mean to be “Spiritually Fluid”?
- Mar 8** [Intention Circle](#) — 1:00 PM or 7:30 PM *Rev. Dr. Stacy* leads these circles to meditate and uplift each others’ intentions for the month. Registration and daily practice required for these powerful groups.
- Mar 20** [Regular Worship: Signatures](#) — 10:00 AM — *featured speaker Rev. Dr. Jay* — Everyone and everything has a signature. Like a fingerprint, it is something uniquely yours. What is your spiritual signature?
- Mar 27** [TNS Student-Led Worship Service: Reclaiming Joy](#) — 10:00 AM — *featured speaker Rev. Sharon Callender*. Join the TNS Students to rekindle joy and reclaim it’s radiant light.
- Mar 28** **April Newsletter Submissions Due!**
Theme: Best Practices Submissions to RevDrStacy@theinterfaithtemple.org (700 word max, seasonal images)

We hope you will join us.

Check our online calendar for holy days and Temple events.

[Calendar - The Interfaith Temple](#)



New Chapter Prayer

by Erine Sedicum

Oh Divine One

Open the door

to the new opportunities

given through the light

of Sister Sun and Brother Moon.

Let the harmony of the stars

celebrate the passage

of the new beginnings

of the spiritual march

of the brothers and sisters

of the Universal Parents,

coming together as a unit.

Oh Divine One

Let these prayers

be heard from the roots

of all there is

and will forever be....

Please hear my prayers.

Finding Comfort in Our Own Stories

A couple of years ago I read Elaine Pagels book, *Why Religion?* where she talks about how people have found comfort in various scriptures; in the stories of persecutions and how their faith and trust in God pulled them through. She relayed her own tragedies of the death of her young son from a heart defect, and then the shocking and tragic death of her husband less than two years later. In an effort to find some semblance of comfort, she examined the scriptures, both in the Bible and in the Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as in religious institutions to see how other people coped with tragedy.

It's made me wonder though, why do we turn to other places, other people, even stories that are as ancient as those in the Bible, instead of turning to our own coping mechanisms?

Have we even developed coping mechanisms? Has there ever been an event in your life that you can turn to when you need to be comforted? Perhaps it is as simple as being cared for by your mother when you were ill or injured. Maybe it's the inner strength and pride you found in yourself when you accomplished a task that others had said you couldn't do. But do you have your own stories you can turn to when things are dark or bleak around you?

And is a lack of our own stories perhaps cause for some of the malaise we feel in the world today? Are we less able as a society to cope with distress because we haven't been taught how?

As more and more people turn away or never have had any sort of religion or faith in their lives, how do we learn the skills to cope when tragedy strikes?

As for people who are religious, or participating in some spiritual or faith-based program, are we taught to rely solely on that and not on our own stories?

So just what are these scriptural based stories anyway? Aren't they just events that happened (or legends perhaps) to someone else? Millennia ago? And if we can find comfort in those stories, why do we undervalue our own stories? Are they not strong enough, perhaps?

I'm reminded of Harry Potter at this point, as he is struggling to learn how to produce a patronus charm to protect himself from the dementors, he has to recall a happy memory. Poor Harry didn't have a happy childhood, so his happiest memories weren't nearly strong enough. Is that what happens to us? Do we lack strong memories of happiness and comfort to provide the energy we need when bad things happen?

And then I recall the popularity of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books made popular by Jack Canfield. They provided stories of hope and encouragement for millions of people. Again, we seek solace in the stories of others.

But isn't it possible to find comfort in our own stories? For Harry, it was when Hagrid told him that he was a wizard and would be attending the same school his parents had attended, and that he would be leaving the Dursleys who had raised him. It was finding out that he had a way to escape the dismal life he had led in the Dursley's care.

How about you? Have you ever sat down and written down your happiest memories? Want to give that a try?

For me this seems to be an exercise in gratitude. Because when we realize how many happy moments we have had in our lives, our hearts open with thankfulness. They may be little things – or big – but the important thing is that we have had them. It may have been the moment you found your balance and rode your bike without help. It may have been when you finally beat your older sister in a game of chess, or got a B+ on a paper you had struggled to write. It could be almost anything, but each one memory can trigger us to think of others, some perhaps that we hadn't thought about for years. And all of those happy memories can certainly assist us in producing our own patronus charm when we are faced with difficulties.

As Elaine Pagels was writing her book, she was recounting story after story of happy times and events, both with her husband and their son, even while they were dealing with his heart issues. Every moment she recalled spending with him seemed to be a joy to her. Remembering the closeness and love she and her husband shared, and writing down these stories for this book gave her tremendous comfort after they had passed. And now that the memories are written, they will provide a life-long source of comfort even when in the depths of despair she can no longer recall the good times.

Writing can be cathartic for many people, but writing down our memories of joyful events gives us our own scriptures to review in times of need. Go ahead, give it a try. Write down your own happy stories, your stories of happy events, stories of overcoming something, stories of comfort, peace and joy. Create a book – your book – that you can turn to when things are difficult or look bleak. Or when you are facing a tragedy. To have your own stories when you need them. To remind you that you have gotten through other things, and you can get through whatever it is you are going through in the moment. You've had happy times in the past, and even when all seems darkest, those memories can shed light on your soul. Add your book to your arsenal of comfort – be that your spiritual practices, stories from others or from your faith or religious scriptures. Build your own fortress of refuge for times of trouble, and it will be there for you whenever you have need.

Prayers to Lord Shiva

Sloka in Sanskrit:

Shivam shivakaram, shantham,
shivathmanam, Shivothamam,
Shivamarga pranetharam,
pranamai sada shivam.

Sloka in English:

Salutations to the God who is peaceful,
Who lives in peace,
Who creates peace,
Who is peace itself,
Who is the soul of peace,
Who is greatest peace,
And who shows the path of Peace.

Om Namah Shivaya

Most Reverend Dr. Michael J. Festa, Bishop and CEO

Right Reverend Dr. Jay Speights, Elder

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