

Daily Meditation 06/06/2022

Howard Thurman and MLK, Jr. on Community

Good morning.

In today's meditation, we're happy to spend time with Dr. Howard Thurman and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., listening to what they have to say about community and its importance. And how Thurmond warns us about the danger of what he calls "the will to quarantine," which shrinks our sense of community. And King calls for a new understanding of community, the beloved community.

But another important voice from the black tradition comes from Donna Marimba Richards and her amazing book, *Let the Circle Be Unbroken: The Implications of African Spirituality in the Diaspora*. And she, too, has a lot to say about community and interdependence.

And here I'm citing from my book, *One River, Many Wells*, page 91.

She says, "The relationship between the human and the Divine, the heavenly and earthly spheres, is one of interdependence. The spirits need us just as we need them. Just as spirit needs matter to give it form, and matter needs spirit to give it force, being, and reality."

Now notice again: we spoke earlier, we meditated earlier, on today's science and community, and all the bioregions and so forth. These are communities. And interdependence is behind them all.

So I emphasize that interdependence is a key category, key value in today's science, where you can see, as I said then, it is and always has been, a key value in spirituality.

Donna Marimba Richards goes on.

"Life, events and phenomena derive meaning, value or significance through relationship to an organic whole. The family or community is understood as just such a whole."

And see, we celebrate an ongoing creation. The Spirit is still at work.

"I say this: creation is not in the past. Like the aboriginals of Australia, there's a Dreamtime that persists."

Or, in Jesus' words, the divine kingdom is among us, working among us. And we tap into this kingdom and queendom through ritual and through many other ways.

Donna Marimba Rich's goes on:

"The universe is created, is continually recreated, by a divine act. We participate in that act as we perform rituals, an invitation of the Creator and aspects of the Creator. Through association with the sacred universe, divinely created, life itself becomes sacred, and a most precious gift to be cherished, preserved, passed on and revitalized. It is to be lived to its fullest."

And this echoes very much the teaching of Thomas Berry, that the universe is a primary sacrament, a primary sacred reality. And it's from that, that we all derive our energy. That also echoes the teaching of Malidoma Some, who is from Africa and whose specialty is rituals, when he says that there is no community without ritual.

So this is what Richards is saying too, you see, that ritual is a very important method and practice for tapping into the deepest levels of community.

So all this adds up to embellishing, putting flesh on the bones of our discussions of interdependence--of community in the universe, of community on the earth, the ecosystems (so many kinds), and community among human beings--that all flows together. And it is a river of the sacred, a river of divine energy.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.