

Daily Meditation 11/14/2022

Peter Gabel: His Writings, Part III

Good morning.

In our last two meditations, we have been reflecting on the beautiful life, the healing life, the true seeking life, the prophetic life, and courageous life of Peter Gabel. A wonderful lawyer, and teacher of law, and educator, and philosopher around politics and culture, named Peter Gabel.

One of his books was called *Another Way of Seeing: Essays on Transforming Law, Politics and Culture*. I think in that title is contained a lot of his philosophy, that we have to change our way of seeing the world, change the way we see ourselves, change the way we interact with one another and see one another.

We want to see one another with what he calls mutual recognition, not as objects have to fear, not as enemies, but looking for mutual recognition. He says that fear can get passed down from generation to generation and we end up projecting on one another and withdrawing our true selves from one another, because we see others as a threat, rather than a contributor to our own growth and maturity and completion.

And then he sees that politicians latch on to that fear, that negativity, and take us down some very dark roads of hatred, division--exactly where we are today in American politics, spurred on by the American media, both the public media and the social media.

He urges us to think with our hearts. To think with our hearts.

Now Michael Lerner, who was a very close friend to Peter, and they were co-workers at Tikkun magazine, he talks about how Peter's work was to move past liberalism and Marxism on the one hand, and deconstruction (just taking things apart), and instead to bring what he calls a re-spiritualization of every aspect of our world, that can move us beyond the alienation that characterizes so much of human interactions and penetrates our institutions today--which are unsatisfying to a lot of us, to a lot of people--on the right and on the left, if you want to call it that.

Now this really has been a lot of Michael Lerner's work, and Tikkun's work, to bring spiritual values-- and certainly Peter Gabel's work-- into the culture. And the result is, I think, that in many ways Peter Gabel's work has been to celebrate the true self and to name, shed light on the false self, which he says becomes a "false we." False we.

We are operating on a very shallow definition of humanity when we're only playing defense against our made-up enemies.

Now one of the values that both Peter and Michael have exhibited in Tikkun, in their work, is that of what I call Deep Ecumenism. I told the story in my last video of how they welcomed me as an Episcopalian, Christian, educator, theologian after I was evicted from my program at Holy Names College after 12 years there. And they reached out to me.

But also, this past month, the last communication I had with Peter, by email--he was actually reading my daily meditations, these meditations that we're doing daily with yourselves. And he wrote me in response to one I was writing about the spark of the soul. And he said, "Excellent meditations on the spark of the soul, the Holy Spirit that manifests everywhere if we can pause to be aware of it!"

So again, he was walking his talk, and he was a seeker for truth, whether it be from his own lineage or other lineages. In that sense, I consider him a very authentic deep ecumenist.

And he built a vision of a new politics, and a new education, based on the wisdom that he was not afraid to derive from many sources. Again, what I call a Deep Ecumenism.

So, I salute Peter and I salute Michael.

And remember that the word Tikkun, the title of their magazine, means in Hebrew "to heal the world." To heal the world. Meister Eckhart says, "A good life is a healing life." And both Peter and Michael's work has been a healing work. A good life, therefore.

Thank you, Peter. And thank you, Michael.

We'll see you tomorrow.