

## Facing Our Shadow

One way or another, in some or innumerable events, we have all been traumatized.

These assaults have been too intense to fully process at the time, so we disassociated and pushed them aside and they have been imprinted in our cells. We live with these pressures, these shadows, the pain and fear that we have buried within, suppressed and avoided, but which inevitably come out sideways and cause us to act out in ways that are not good for ourselves or others.

This can be said of us as individuals, but also as ethnic groups and nations.

I recently had an email exchange with Rebekah Levy, a local teacher, voice coach, therapist, who was accusing me of being too airy fairy.

Her email was right on and I quote it here:

*I just think that the present chaos, illness and insanity we're caught up in IS PRECISELY the process to getting to where you want us to get, in a collective sense. There is simply no getting around PTSD no matter how serenely a person—or a nation, or a species—might believe they have dissipated, meditated or loved/forgiven their pain away. If they haven't actually addressed and experienced and expressed the very real crap they swept under the rug and or magicked away, it seems to me it always comes and bites them in the ass at a later (and supremely inconvenient) time. Just seems to me how we work, consciousness-wise.*

*You want us to somehow transcend all that and Do What's Right. But every time we do that, we end up in a backlash and 180 degrees from what we believed we were intending. Think of our great (and now just hanging by a mere thread) democracy...founded on the twin pillars of genocide and slavery (and, I would add, stealing the resources of scores of weaker nations).*

*We're only now discussing this openly. That's a big part of the insanity, isn't it? Think of the great French Revolution which turned into rivers of blood in the streets within a few months. Think of the Russian Revolution—they keep needing Czars, don't they? Never learned to govern themselves first—so much easier to stay kids and blame or bless Daddy for everything. Think of all the unrecovered, traumatized refugee Jews who are Nazifying all over the Palestinians only a generation or two later. The list goes on and on.*

*So we have to wade through the swamp until we understand OUR personal, individual versions of the swamp. It can't come from Above until we look at ourselves from Below. Apparently to me, anyway. Or think of it this way: What if you actually retrieved your bass/baritone voice? Hell, I can find mine and I'm female, so you could too. But it's too close to your terrible cancer trauma, it's right there. I don't blame you for not wanting to go there--I totally understand and forgive you--but maybe you might need to see that it could be your individual version of what you're preaching to the world about.*

This (both slightly edited) was my response:

*Well, darlin', thank you for this. I would say you're right and wrong as may often be the case. I agree with just about everything you say and you lay it out beautifully. We're definitely not opposed in all your examples and the need to work directly in the swamp below with the trauma. Here's where I think you're wrong.*

*While I definitely do skew towards the higher and probably overemphasize it, I have spent countless hours and days in the swamp doing what I call the 'deepest, hardest work' directly with the pain and trauma, itself, going to it, finding it, being with it, dredging it up, feeling it, sitting with it, owning and acknowledging it, letting it have its life and filter through my system, and, yes, in my experience of fully being with it as it arises, continues, crests and subsides, consciously helping it truly dissipate to the degree that it does (as opposed to 'magicking' it away). I have also spent thousands of hours helping others work directly with their PTSD. This is part of what I do and write of in End the Fight.*

*I think you lump me in with all the people who do suppress, avoid and act out on their PTSD and don't understand that, though I may still do a bit of that and tend to write of and emphasize spiritual aspects and possible earthly solutions, I have done tons of profound, gut-wrenching, heart-breaking, wailing work directly with it (and sometimes the quieter work of releasing it on the frequency level, which can also be effective).*

*But, where you are definitely right regarding me, is that I had/have more to do around the ravagement of my body from the cancer treatments and my voice and, I am sure, in other areas, as well. It is life-long work. So I thank you, again, because as a result of you/this, I have done some more deep, valuable work with the PTSD from my operations/chemotherapy*

*Most of my work has been around parental blocking and abuse, past-life deaths, murders, wars and torture, all the drugs I have done, lack of love, etc. and also, to some degree, with the collective pain of our world and universe and not enough around all my this-life bodily traumas and the barrier between me and my body and me and nature.*

*Re my voice, I do keep thinking I would like to be operated on by Adele's throat surgeon and avoid working on it directly. I started working with the sheet you gave me but almost immediately stopped. Part of what stopped me is my fear, partially displaced to be fear around disturbing my neighbors through these paper-thin walls but, I'm sure, really much more linked with my fear of existing at all, coming into more of my power, really being here, as I still do, to a large degree, live as if I'm non-existent...*

*Also I use my near total lack of money as another excuse to avoid work. I don't suppose you'd give me a few freebies on my voice in that nice little outbuilding you have...?*

*Very grateful to you, m*

*(I can find my bass/baritone voice, I just can't use it on a regular basis.)*

In the late 90's, I studied with a local teacher named Leslie Temple-Thurston, who, unlike most spiritual teachers, mandated that we work on our Shadows. She had various techniques for doing this, but I really started in psychotherapy at the age of seventeen and have been doing it in numerous ways since.

None of us has done all our work perfectly. But it's important that we now turn towards our shadow instead of encrypting it away in the deepest recesses of our individual and national psyches and do the hardest work of meeting it, acknowledging it, processing it and healing it as individuals and as a nation.

As I write in *A New American Evolution*, we must face our flaws and do something about them.

Otherwise, as Bekah so eloquently writes, it'll keep coming back to bite us in the ass in all the forms of chaos, violence and insanity that we now currently experience, or worse.