

Reflection for May 2, 2010 Live Oak UU Fellowship

Behind The Curtain

When I heard the sermon title for today, my mind went to the Wizard of Oz and “Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.” I thought about who or what is pulling the strings behind the curtain in my life. I suppose when I was a teenager my most intimate secret was that I was gay. When I was older, I learned to translate the dominant language so that she’s became he’s. So here is where POSSIBILITY (the overarching theme for the next few Live Oak services) comes into play.

I had the possibility of being in the dominant heterosexual world with a different frame of reference and still be able to navigate until I could get away from home, find some independence and make my way to a place, both physically and psychologically where I could be my truer self. Not exactly a hero’s journey, but a mode of survival that might allow me to actually thrive -- mythologically following bread crumbs out of the forest.

But then what? The “happily ever after” is not so easy to find. The daily hum-drum of being an office worker for 35+ years takes its own toll. I’m a responsible adult (most of the time), keeping the world running, trying not to consume more than my share, doing a good deed here and there and messing up royally from time to time. I’m not much of a dreamer in my everyday life, rather practical. But on the other hand, I want the possibility of a better world (I’m reminded of Mary Oliver’s poem *Wild Geese*) even as I feel along with TS Elliott “the centre cannot hold.” So I pull back the curtain ever so tentatively, fearing what I may find in my own heart, in the opinion of others, maybe I’ll encounter a version of Glen Beck, harsh, blaming, always right. Or maybe I’ll find a more compassionate self such as Karen Armstrong and her emphasis on Compassion. Or maybe it will just be me, still deciding how to say “Yes” to life.

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