

Our transitional time calls for balance and engagement. The vibrational world and a musical model can be our guide, inspiration and comfort as we move into a new reality. This transition may not be as difficult as we think, because balance is a natural state of our universe. The trick is to follow the breath: inhale with deep listening and exhale conscious intent.

Entering the Great Sound Current and Riding the Wave by Susan Alexander, MA

(Excerpted from a keynote speech given at Goddard College, Plainfield, Vermont at Health Arts & Sciences Graduation, July, 2001)

Tilting

It's no news that we are in planetary transition here, and tilting a bit. Does a mountain top seem more and more attractive? Not really, because the world is a fascinating, exciting, happening place - sometimes fearful - but all the same, we want it all. We don't want to miss anything. However the stimulation problem is major...what chaos! How do we ground it all?

Druid King:

In Druid times the people let the king do it. That was his job. Celtic kings, as far as we know, gathered their tribe around them in a circle and stood in the middle with their arms reaching to the heavens, feet far apart, rooted to the ground. They may have even worn a crown, like an antenna. They were the grounding cords for sky and earth energy and held those vibrations steady for the health of their tribe. After the event everybody could leave and go home, feeling safe in the chalice of this protective ritual. Today in the West our Druid king is nowhere to be found. In fact, we banned him to extinction. But we are desperate for guidance. We want to engage, to participate, but we're confused..... tilting from one "should" to the other. How do we find balance? As it turns out, we have an excellent teacher, the universe. Balance is intrinsic to it...built -in. Our Earth has been balancing for billions of years, perfectly poised between gravity and expansion. Our Milky Way is also in breathtaking balance. If the Universe were expanding just a trillionth of a trillionth of a second faster it would eventually fly apart. Any less and it would implode. Imagine the intelligence then, in that balanced state of being!!!! As physicist Brian Swimme so beautifully puts it, "The universe goes forth on the edge of a knife." Our bodies are also perfectly poised between the micro and macro worlds....it is the same mathematical distance inward to the molecules as it is to the outer solar system, using the power of 10. Balance, and the movement it calls for, is our joy. This tension is what we love...being on the edge. Bovine, idle lounging is really foreign to our nature.

The Breathing Universe

There is one way we're already in perfect balance without even thinking...we breathe. Humans and animals may not be the only beings who breathe. Our sun has many sounds. One of them is a kind of purring...a pulsing that sounds like a huge lion breathing. The Earth also has a pulsing that no one as yet understands. Some theorize that there is something like a piston....up and down....inside the earth, like a heartbeat. Musician Silvia Nakkach tells an incredible story about a trip down the Amazon River when suddenly all sound stopped dead, as if a presence had just stepped into the forest. From this vast silence came the sound of....inhaling and exhaling, like a collective, vast sigh. Animals? No. A native later told her it was a common event...the sound of the plants and trees!

A Musical Consciousness...From the Breath

So, you say, well, we're all breathing - just like our teacher taught us - in and out, and we're

still not feeling balanced. My guess is it's not quite working because we are trying to balance from an old way of thinking. But we are close, very close! It's just one small step to making the segue, the intimate connection, from the breath to the world of waves and vibration; to the gestalt of a musical consciousness. And I suggest that from a musical, or better yet - vibrational consciousness - we can enter into another way of perceiving the world which leads to balance. Looking at the world through a musical filter can help us not only to engage with everything around us, but to invoke a special kind of consciousness....an awareness of deep resonance and relationship. If you are connected and excited about your world, your breath begins to take you deeper and deeper into the mystery. Your breath begins to take on the aspect of deep, deep listening; deep awareness on the intake, and highly conscious output. We're talking about balancing in the middle of a wave....surfing that wave. Active, healthy engagement depends on two things...how you take in the world, and how you put it out. Julia Cameron says it this way: "I am both the listener and the song. I both receive energy and extend energy, with a rhythm as melodic and as natural as breathing." (*Blessings*) We all know you can't do one or the other to excess. The balance has to be just right. Natural, as she says.

The Mystery--Vibrating Worlds:

We now hear top ranking physicists all over the planet say that our material world is vibrated into existence. String theory, although not yet proven, says that the smallest possible component of "reality" is a vibrating string, or bundles of them intertwined. Matter created, such as a positron or an electron, depends upon the way that the string is vibrating..like a tiny harp, tuning the material world. Vibration, especially that of water, is the glue that holds all that vast space between atomic particles together. We're mostly space in this world, and the density is an illusion due to forces, or vibratory events. We are vibration. No exceptions. But it's not only sound and music. Colors, shapes, movements, fragrances, thoughts, all have vibratory make-up. Electromagnetic events are just as 'musical' as sound. Colors sing. It's clear that sound and ALL vibration, then, must intimately be connected to health and well-being. Once we realize the scope of this our reality changes forever.

Sound Essence and Nature's Sound Current:

There seems to be a universal sound-current on this planet, and probably beyond, that literally holds the chalice of health for all beings. We all participate in it; are entwined with it, "like root and flower, forever flowing in and out of form," as soundworker Molly Scott has said. We are all instruments for this energy. Bernie Krause, sound designer and recorder, has traveled all over the world capturing the last natural soundscapes on the planet. He has noticed a very peculiar and fascinating fact.... there is a definite sonic niche occupied by each forest creature, from insect to jaguar. But beyond that, there seems to be a mysterious concern for the whole. If one creature stops vocalizing, another will immediately join the chorus to keep that audio bio-spectrum intact. The entire region is working as one being. R. Sundhara Barrable has also found that whenever an ecosystem loses a certain species it will do whatever it can to replace that sound. Here is a description of a concert I long to attend. Marius Schneider describes an aboriginal nature concert in which the instruments are the voices and bodies of the people, as they imitate all the sounds around them...the wind, trees, animals, water. The chorus of prima sounds grows and becomes a beautiful concert...the sounds of life. Imagine if we could do this in our culture...if we could honor this bio-fabric of sound? How healthy this would be for us! We might even begin to believe that we are those sounds, and they are us.

Much could be said on this subject of pure, raw Sound and vibration, but actually composed music is also wonderful as a metaphor for life. It is born, goes through a process of

relationships and changes, and dies. And speaking scientifically, it literally mirrors the essence of nature itself in its chaos patterns and mathematics. For instance, the same mathematical formula that defines the ebb and flow of music has been discovered to exist widely in nature; the flow of a river, beating of a heart, wobbling of the earth's axis. This is more than just simple pulse because the rhythms closely resemble irregular patterns of coastlines, clouds and mountain ranges etc. This is the way we like our music...not too regular; not too chaotic. Just right. The brain must, then, on some level, perceive its reality as a musical, complex landscape. And turning this around, the music we hear must feel like our earthly home. No wonder we love it!

Our planet, then, is nourished by this fabric of sounds in ways we cannot imagine. If we are musical beings then this entire vibrational world is available to us. Taking it in is an art that begins with Deep Listening. Musician Alloudin Mathieu has said: "Listen as though your life depended on the next sound you hear." To discover just how unique you are, take a poll among your friends to see how many of them like exactly the same kinds of music you do. The trick here is the word "exactly." It might come as a shock to you that you have an impossible task. No one will quite match up....almost, very very close possibly, but not exactly. Be open to your soundworld. Not the sitting duck "open," waiting for the next blast, but like a lioness. Like a warrior, she waits, alert in the grass; alert for the slightest movement. Get your antennae out there; clear your ears. Engage in the mystery. The richness of our sound-world is staggering!

Conscious Contributions - The Output:

The second part of the wave that we need for our health is the output. We are not only the listeners, we are also the song. A contribution is called for. Aboriginal cultures believe literally that life around us is nourished by our song and that we must give back. Remember that bio-ecosystem in the forest? But you don't need to create audible sound to contribute. What is really needed is vibrational giving in subtle ways. When you become an excellent listener, a vibration sleuth, when you participate with your entire heart in this dance, you develop into a master tuner. Naturally. You can't help it. You become like a little Merlin of frequency. You begin to tune everything and everyone, beautifully. You read resonance maps, making adjustments as you go. You cause worlds to flow with harmony around you, just because you are paying attention to what is needed! What's needed over here? Is this living room in harmony? We've all done this - it's tuning our world. As you tune, you also ground. As a master tuner you begin to make choices with an open heart, because that is the tone that begins to sound the loudest for you. And it's this heart tone that is the one that every other tone is in tune with. It is the ground of being; the Coeur De Lion. The power belongs to everyone and it's what we are being asked to reveal.. to become new humans. We need a new language for this.

The King's story is now our collective story. Our beautiful earth and sun are calling to us; can you hear them? Can you hear the beating of the earth's heart, the purring of the Lion sun?

Listen deeply. They will show up.

"The temple bell stops but the sound keeps ringing out of the flowers." (Basho, 17thC Japan)