

Allure Article – July 2009

The Parable of the Woman and the Gem

There once was a lovely woman blessed with unique talents. To outside observers, she appeared to have it all. Yet this woman failed to see her own beauty. In fact, when she looked in the mirror, she told herself, “You are flawed and inadequate. Sure, there is some good in me. There are some positives in my life but...” These things were not her focus. Replaying memories stirred up hurt, shame and guilt that weighed her down with misery.

She would muster the courage to put on a pleasant smile. She did her best at work, at school, and at home with her family. Yet inside she struggled. She carried inner wounds. The tedium of daily life exhausted her. She wanted something different for herself. She yearned for something more.

One day she hit a point of inner suffering so profound that she could no longer bear her life as it was. Something had to change. A Voice within whispered, “There is more! Simply open to the possibility of change. Be willing.” Echoes of this voice pervaded quiet moments. Sometimes she listened. Sometimes she turned her attention to other voices within and around her. Yet in the silence of the night her heart embraced the message, “Change is possible. There is another way to look at things, another way to live.”

The woman decided to open to this other way. She had no idea how change could occur, no time to figure it out, no energy left to focus on it. Her hours were consumed with family, bills and survival. She did not know how to change.

She did not need to.

Opening her mind unlocked a place in her heart that she had somehow overlooked. As she shined the light of her attention on this inner chamber she discovered a magnificent, precious stone. It was her birthright, the inestimable value bestowed on her by Life itself. This rare gem was waiting to be noticed. She had failed to notice it in the intensity of her daily life. She had been searching outside herself for value and approval. She was concerned, “What did others think of me?” She looked to them for acceptance and appreciation.

“Oh!” gasped the woman glimpsing the dazzling gem, “my value, my beauty resides in my heart. It is not outside me. No, it is within me. It has always been in me!” Although the woman was ecstatic with her new understanding, she also felt angry: “How could I have missed this and suffered for so many years, searching and striving for something I already had?”

The woman’s anger grew as she re-hashed the past and pictured how different her life might have been had she known this truth years before. Gradually she began to release her regrets. She saw that holding them was only hurting her. She realized that she had done the best she could with the knowledge she had at the time. It was a miracle that she had found a new way to view herself. She came to see that every situation she had lived through had been necessary for this discovery. Peace returned. Her path was a perfect unfolding.

She sat quietly and felt growing delight. “At last I see my own value.”

What a relief! She no longer had to prove herself to others. She knew was worthy—one with Life, full of hope, open to possibilities.

This woman learned that as a living being, she IS beauty. She does not have to work at being beautiful. She realized she IS love. She does not have to strive to be loved. She realized, she IS peace. She does not have to try to be peaceful. She realized she IS power. She does not have to use force to prove it. She IS worthy already. She simply needs to BE – to be herself. She could now relax into being the beautiful creation of Source that she is.

New energy and joy flowed through her. She now had a new perspective on life. She no longer needed to make a show of herself and her accomplishments. She could be whatever she wanted to be. She could relax. She could honor herself. She could choose ways to use her time and energy that made her feel good inside. She could choose to interact with those people who brought her joy. She could be whatever she wanted to be.

She thanked the heavens for this amazing insight that was transforming her life: “I am and always have been perfect in every way. I had only forgotten this for a short time. Now I have remembered. Now I know that I can achieve anything I desire. No one and nothing can hold me back but myself.”

She smiles. She breathes. She laughs. She jokes. She relaxes. She chooses not to worry. She trusts herself. Others see the difference in her; it is remarkable. She stands tall. She carries herself with confidence. She exudes to others the love that shines from her heart. She inspires them now by what she does with her life. Her outward circumstances did not change, her acceptance of them did. She approaches each day as a fresh start. No longer is she surviving, instead she relishes ordinary moments. Her life feels easier now. It takes far less effort. She sings as she attends to her family. She pays her bills with a grateful heart. She has tapped into the power of her Soul. She knows that by changing her thoughts, she has changed her inner world. Changes in her outer world are bound to follow.

Her life is a story of on-going transformation-- a journey that begins with self-acceptance and moves into deeper and deeper realization.

This is my story. I share it with you because these truths have set me free. They have empowered me to be proud of who I am. No year of my life is wasted. No experience is without value. Each day I live on earth is worthwhile. Difficult circumstances urge me toward growth and the willingness to open more fully to my Self.

So, too, your life is unfolding in the way most appropriate for your soul’s growth. Begin to see it that way. Begin to invite a new perspective. Be willing to see that all you need for your journey is within you. Stop looking outside yourself for the answers. The Inspired Voice within you gives you the wisdom you need to make choices wisest for you. This Voice is continually whispering to you. In quiet moments it guides you and assures you of your path.

Breathe deeply today. Let out a sigh of relief. You are a gift to the world, a treasure. You are growing into the person you are destined to be. Reclaim your power. Emerge into your fullness. It is time to embrace life with gratitude. It is time to DREAM, to imagine, and to open to the beautiful possibilities Life wants to offer you.

Just open to change. Be willing. It's that simple.

Your assignment this week is to take at least 5 minutes each day to sit in silence. As you sit quietly, visualize a brilliant gem, glowing in your heart. What color is it? Can you feel its energy? Notice how it sparkles with light from within itself. Experience the connection to that Light. Open to the Voice of Life that wants you to remember how precious you are.

Food For Thought

If God said,
"Rumi, pay homage to everything
that has helped you
enter my arms,"
there would not be one experience of my life,
not one thought, not one feeling,
not any act, I
would not
bow
to.

--Rumi (In *Love Poems from God*, Daniel Ladinsky, trans.)

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