

It is Time to Become Wise Stewards of Life on Earth

by

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In light of so many recent natural as well as man made disasters, I am compelled to reflect upon and mourn the lives of so many innocent people and creatures and the harm that has befallen our home, Mother Earth. It is disheartening and deeply saddens me to think of our planet stricken and damaged by massive oil spills; impacted by potential nuclear meltdowns and the life-threatening spread of radiation; the proliferation of nuclear weapons; light and sound pollution posed by the relentless drilling of oil and gas wells; deforestation; the raping and decimation of pristine environments which have served for countless years as habitats for our fellow creatures; the accumulation of greenhouse gases in conjunction with the burning of fossil fuels; the needlessly cruel and unnecessary slaughter of billions of animals for food each year, and so on. How can we fail to recognize the earth as a living, breathing, powerful and yet, simultaneously, fragile organism? How can we not but respect her beauty and bounty? I hope and pray that it is not too late to salvage and restore the earth.

I live on a small, but beautiful parcel of land outside Dallas, Texas. I am blessed and privileged to spend almost some part of every day outdoors in touch with the natural world. We have hundreds of trees and shrubs – currently in bloom. We have a large pond full of turtles, frogs and fish. We also have ducks, geese and blue herons, egrets, cormorants, hawks, road-runners, rabbits, coyotes, snakes and many other magnificent creatures. We also have those animals regarded as “pests” such as gophers, field mice, opossum, skunks and armadillos. We regard them as “gifts” – for their presence increases our awareness and understanding of the purposefulness of each one and the manner in which all living creatures interconnect and relate to one another and the earth.

There is a horse farm behind our property, and nearly everyday I observe the horses and colts frolic and run so joyfully and gracefully. Getting to “know” or at least become very familiar with the animals that live on or visit our property is a privilege and a blessing. All are sentient, playful and beautiful. Each has a unique personality. Each offers special gifts; each one has a purpose for living here alongside of and with us. I am, thankfully, in constant communication and attunement with the natural world – of which we are all apart and from which we are all descended. This communication and attunement leads to a communion with the Creative Force and Power responsible for the existence of all life. It is virtually impossible for me to think of any form of life on earth as purposeless or insignificant.

The time I spend with my twenty-two rescue dogs is truly a gift. They are a further link with the Natural World. These innocents, who have been neglected, abandoned, tortured and abused are forgiving and nonjudgmental. They love unconditionally and are both vulnerable and pure of heart. They live spontaneously “in the moment”, and other than digging in my flower beds on occasion, cause no irrevocable destruction to anyone or to the environment. They bring me great peace, comfort and joy. They are natural “healers”.

How far away is the time that we revered Mother Earth and the Natural World instead of exploiting her gifts, beauties and bounties? Why have we become so negligent, greedy and irresponsible? We have “dominion” over the earth and her creatures – which is, in actuality, “stewardship” or “guardianship” and the obligation to love, respect and appreciate our home and all living creatures.

We must reassess our values and reprioritize them. Our greed for more money, more property, more power along with our ignorance and arrogance can lead to only one outcome – our own demise and the destruction of our planet. We have been warned! We have witnessed recently and over time the vast power of Mother Earth. The recent crisis in Japan – a 9.0 magnitude earthquake, tsunami and subsequent nuclear disaster – must surely remind us that Mother Nature can destroy not only people, but also countries, continents and the international economy instantaneously!

We must heed this wake-up call and come to the aid of our ailing planet. We must abolish nuclear weapons – we must focus once again on the beauty, majesty and power of the earth. We must learn to respect her and her creatures - we must make a strong and concerted effort to become wise stewards of our fellow creatures. Now, more than ever, is the time to come to the aid of our peoples, creatures and planet...