



Seeing True to Break Through

Thoughts from Ron Chapman

May 2007

Greetings!

On more than a few occasions, I've mentioned Sam, my long-term mentor and very dear friend. Last month I visited him at his home in a small town north of Austin, Texas. We used that to stage a road trip to West Texas to visit two ranches, one of which is a learning site for Holistic Management International (HMI), www.holisticmanagement.org.

We're both complexity junkies, immensely enjoying attempts to unravel the proverbial universal questions, and frequently studying the world around us to try to understand everything from social concerns to variations in landscape. This fit well with the trip, since Holistic Management is designed to address the complexities of healthy land from which a healthy world can be sustained. Suffice it to say that we were a bit over the top with complexity.

We stopped for gas and snacks in a small town in route, and saw a flock of birds seemingly grounded by a storm system which was pushing through the area. We'd never seen anything like them before, and asked a number of people what they were. No one could tell us. So we hypothesized all kinds of explanations, eventually concluding they were probably cave swallows.

While some people might feel burdened by such mental exercises, Sam and I thrived on the discussions. It was just plain fun.

Shortly after the road trip, someone asked me about my motivations and philosophy for living. (I obviously run with a complex crowd!) At about the same time, I received an e-mail response to the last newsletter from a long-time friend in Seattle. In commenting on the structured approach to deciding when to back off of something that may no longer be productive, Rob observed, "Check in with what your heart says. Maybe that's part of having fun?"

Therein lays a marvelous truth, in fact a simple truth. Perhaps the only reason to ever do anything is because it pleases us, or brings us joy, or is just plain fun. Perhaps that inner sense that tells us something is not going to be fun is the Divine, the higher self, or the universe telling us to steer clear, to choose another option or path. Perhaps the reverse is also true, that anticipated fun is good inner guidance.

Sam has told me over the years that one mantra has always served him well. Whatever it is we might be considering, do it for fun and for free. Do it without an expectation that it will necessarily produce anything other than a pleasant experience. The idea is similar to the adage to do what you love and the money will follow, though we must admit that sometimes the money does not seem to follow. Yet if all we're focused on is the enjoyment, anything else it produces becomes an unexpected pleasure. The idea of such a simple approach has appeal, especially since it is expectations which lay the foundation for disappointment and discouragement.

Of course, the world is filled with stories and anecdotes of individuals who followed their bliss and found more than they ever anticipated. Some even suggest that the outcomes will exceed our wildest dreams.

My favorite story along these lines is the tale of a little girl who wanted a puppy more than anything else in the world. She prayed it and dreamed it over and over, despite the fact that her mother would not permit it. Undaunted, the girl kept the wish alive in her heart. That wish propelled her through veterinary school, after which she started a very fine, small animal clinic specializing with dogs. Now her days are filled with every imaginable kind of dog, and every joy and heartache that accompanies them. Not surprisingly, she donates a lot of her time for animal care. It's safe to say her heart and soul are filled with something that brings her great pleasure.

Who would guess that a singular wish could create such a huge outcome? Who could plan such a course from early childhood? What can we do other than honor, trust and follow our hearts?

Do it for fun and for free! And pass along your story. Someone needs to hear it.

In-joy,

Ron

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