

The Bucket Or The Bliss

Description

“Why?”

That's about the best I could do at that moment.

Why am I here? Why am I doing this? What was I thinking? Can I go to sleep? Can I go home now?

It was early in the morning of the second night of Ceremony... 2:00am, 3:00am... Time no longer had meaning for me. Hours, minutes, days, aeons... what did they mean? The only thing that mattered was this moment, and the choice I had just been given...

“**The bucket or the bliss.**”

I was journeying with an ancient, Sacred Medicine... one that can have, shall we say, **interesting effects on your gastrointestinal system.**

Throughout the night I had been blessed with glimpses of the beauty and grandeur of the Cosmos and of our true nature as Divine Beings. I had been shown, again and again, the infinite Divine potential that is our birthright. A clear invitation has been offered... an invitation to embrace and embody my Divine Nature and step into that beauty.

And throughout the night... my answer was NO!

Here I was... the door open right in front of me... but as a musical mystic once said “**the ride ain't free.**”

What waited for me on the other side of that door would not come to me. I had to choose to walk through that door. I had to decide to accept that invitation and say yes to that bliss. To do that meant leaving behind the faulty perceptions I held about our reality and the truth of who I really am. The Bliss wasn't coming to me and I couldn't step into the Bliss carrying all those old beliefs and thoughts.

So I had to make a choice... a choice that was both literal and transcendent.

“**The bucket or the bliss,**” the Medicine said to me.

I could choose to say YES to my true nature. I could choose to witness the awesome mysteries of creation. I could choose to step through the open doorway and into the infinite bliss that is my birthright... Or I could choose to stay small and “safe.” *I could choose to hold onto my suffering and pain.*

In other words... I could choose the bucket.

Sounds like an easy choice right?

Not so much!

I chose the bucket. Actively, consciously, fully aware of my choice... **over and over again I turned away from the awesome grandeur that is the truth of who we are.**

And in that moment I understood just how attached I am to the human experience of suffering. I fully grasped the deep truth of Marianne Williamson's quote:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God."

Light we fear - edward mills

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When I was shown the truth of who I am... when I saw the brilliance that is my birthright... that is ALL of our birthright... when I stood at the threshold to bliss... I discovered what REAL fear feels like.

... and I chose the bucket!

Why?

Why do we choose suffering? Why do we choose to turn away from the truth of who we are? Why do we choose to deny our Divine Birthright?

We have this choice every day, every moment... not just in the midst of Sacred Ceremony.

Perhaps I chose the bucket in that moment because some part of me recognized that I wasn't ready to choose bliss in the moments that would follow... after the ceremony. Perhaps I knew that **saying YES to bliss in Ceremony was actually a much bigger choice**... a choice that meant *committing to that choice in "regular" life*.

It's not always easy to make that choice. So much of our world is designed to keep us small. The "easy" choices in life... the choices we make by default, every day, are often the choices that perpetuate our suffering.

In that moment, I recognized all the ways I have become numb to my own suffering – and the suffering of others. It's become such a constant pattern in the weave of my life that I don't even recognize it as suffering anymore. And so I cling most tenaciously to the very things that keep me in the suffering... And I choose the bucket... over and over... every day!

Most of us have become so immune to the experience of suffering, associating that suffering with what we believe is safety and comfort. And for some of us who are particularly invested in perpetuating the structures of that "safety and comfort" (like me!) it is only by reaching the depths of that suffering, by being literally broken down by it, that we can break the cycle and make a different choice.

That night, **I became very intimate with the bucket and with my attachment to suffering.**

I wanted it to stop. I wanted it to end. I wanted to sleep. By the time most of the others in the circle were coming to the end of their journey, mine was still getting stronger.

The Medicine would not let me off so easy. My word of intention at the start of the Ceremony has been **Peace**.

But if I was to have Peace that night it would not be the limited sense of comfort that masquerades as peace. No, the Medicine was opening the door for me that led to a much deeper and authentic experience of Peace.

Finally, exhausted, with almost everyone else asleep... nothing left inside of my to release... physically, emotionally, energetically... no where to run, no where to hide, no sign that the invitation was going away and completely unable to do anything to end the suffering, **I gave in, I gave up, I surrendered.**

I put down the bucket and accepted the invitation to enter into the bliss of my true nature.

And in that moment I experienced what our Great Teachers have described as the **Peace that Surpasses Understanding**. I entered what Rumi has described as *the field out “beyond ideas of right doing and wrong doing.”* For a moment I stepped into the Promised Land that Mystics have spoken of for thousands of years.

It was beyond words as I was blessed with a glimpse into my potential... into OUR potential.

And it left me humbled and uncertain...

For I knew that with this blessing came the responsibility to **do my very best to choose bliss in daily life**. In each moment I will face the choice: Suffering or freedom.

And even as I felt that peace and the responsibility... **I knew that I would fail**... I recognized that this moment of opening and surrender would not last. In the “ceremony” of life there would certainly be times when I would choose the “bucket” again.

Yes, in some moments I will choose the bliss... I will choose to remember the truth of who I am and I will choose to embrace my true essence... I will choose freedom and peace and bliss.

In other moments, I will forget and I will turn away from my true essence... I will choose suffering.

And in each moment of choice and in the choices I make there will be the opportunity to learn and grow.

Each time I choose the “bucket” I will get to feel again the suffering that has been such a potent teacher in my life... And it will give me the opportunity to rekindle the compassion that is the antidote to that suffering. Compassion for myself and for the moments when I choose suffering. And compassion for those who may not yet be at a place where they recognize that they even have a choice.

And each time I choose bliss, each moment I choose to remember the truth of who I am and to turn towards that truth – rather than away from it – I will be one step closer to finally walking through that open door once and for all.

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