

Oracle of the Soul: Discovering Gems of Understanding



By Frosty Wooldridge

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This Christmas Day, I wish you and your family the spiritual joys of this sacred moment. May you gather with your family and friends, and celebrate this miraculous event called, "Life." It's fleeting. It's grand. It's your chance to thrive. It's your moment of spiritual affirmation.

On a bike ride through Tennessee, I happened to stop by a WarmShowers host. That night, in his back yard, we sat around a campfire with four other cyclists who had pitched their tents on his green lawn. Of course, his warm shower was appreciated!

The WarmShowers concept interests me because I think it creates international goodwill and friendships. I've hosted dozens of international visitors from China, Japan, India, Holland, Norway, Italy, France, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Mexico, Africa and more—at my home in Golden, CO. Sandi and I live on Route 40, the main drag from San Francisco to the East Coast. We're the last stop as you exit the Rocky Mountains to enter the Great Plains.

It's really special when you meet people with an interest in exploring our planet on bicycles. Last fall, we enjoyed dinner with Sue and Pete Reah from Great Britain. They cycled

across America coast to coast last summer. We still keep in touch. We met Lars and Maud bicycling the Continental Divide; they hailed from Holland as they stayed for several days. Lovely couples.

That night in the hills of Tennessee, our host told us a story about the 'Gems of Understanding' he had learned on his travels around the world.

As the embers burned and the smoke curled into the night sky, he related about a special sage in a king's court in medieval times:

"As you grew up, you experienced different lessons along your life-path. You discovered a hot stove hurt when you touched it. A candle flame caused pain when you passed your finger over it. A rosebush thorn made your finger bleed. A bee sting caused you terrible agony," he said. "From those experiences, you avoided the obvious in your daily meanderings. Marching into your teens, you discovered friendship, jealousy and betrayal. A bully beat you up. A girlfriend undermined you in your pursuit of a boyfriend.

"In nature, you learned to run for cover during a lightning storm. When a dog gave chase, you picked up a stick to protect yourself.

"You learned life-lessons either by your parents advising you or you learned the hard way by direct experience.

"As you grew into your twenties, relationships grew more complicated, you worked a job with acerbic bosses and cantankerous fellow employees. You discovered many different aspects to how people operate in the world.

"Along the way, you picked up new understandings and created game plans on how to deal with your circumstances.

"All the while, you became a better you. But sometimes, you

wondered about your choices or predicaments.

"I'm reminded of the ancient king who held court each day. He beckoned the local sage for words of wisdom. Each day for a year, the sage brought the king an overly ripe piece of fruit along with a witty statement. When the sage left, the king tossed the fruit into a hole in a pillar where it fell to the basement, untouched.

"One day, after the sage gave the king the overly ripe fruit, he turned to exit, but noticed the king tossing the fruit into the pillar hole."

"What are you doing?" asked the sage. "Did you not know I gifted you with a gem in the middle of each fruit?"

"The king made an excuse before the sage exited the throne room. Quickly, the king ordered a knave to recapture the fruit."

The king cut it open to reveal a valuable gem. He said, "I never knew such beauty could be found inside an aged piece of fruit."

"The king ordered his staff to recover the gems from all the fruits in the basement. The gems of knowledge enlightened him, which allowed him greater understanding. He became a better king for all the people of his realm.

"The great writer Thomas Moore said that every person faces the deadly turpitudes of living: obsessions, addictions, depression, loss of meaning, judging others, violence, anger, hate and prejudice.

"It's your challenge to connect with the divine in you. You might call it the "spiritual" within you. Choose to identify with your higher self. That quest creates a transformation that leads to your better well-being and better choices.

"When bad things happen to you, decode the experience to see

the gem. As you discover the synchronicity of the lesson, take advantage of it. Synchronicity coupled with purpose equals "coincidence."

"Once you step into the "flow" of life, those synchronicities multiply because your energies coordinate with the natural vibrations of the universe.

"Engage these talents: walk in the light, walk tall, walk with a song, walk strong, walk wise, walk with hope, walk with joy, walk with purpose and walk with passion. People notice your demeanor. You attract them to their own higher self.

"Take advantage of a bitter experience, betrayal of a friend, unfair treatment by another or any of the overly ripe experiences of life. You will find a "gem" in the rotten fruit that will enhance your life beyond all ordinary understanding."

That night, after his story about discovering the "gems" of life, I sat there with an appreciation that everyone brings 'skin' to the game of life. Whether it's a campfire with strangers or spending time with your family, this thing called 'living' allows special moments, special times and special people you meet on your bicycle travels. And, to those of you I am going to meet this summer while I pedal across America, I'm excited to greet you. I'm excited to share with you. I want to hear your story. Together, let's make this a better world of understanding and acceptance. To that, I say, keep pedaling. It's a hell of a ride.

And, YES, Merry Christmas!

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