

Practicing Metis
A Wisdom Community Half Day Event
October 5, 2024

Heather Ruce: Welcome everyone.

Welcome, welcome, welcome.

If you haven't had a chance to look in the chat you can see that we are gathering from all over the place from California to Maine to South Africa.

I just invite us to look around if you want you can put yourself back on gallery view and just feel and sense our collective presence right now all 80 of us from around the planet.

Just let that register in your being.

Maybe acknowledge the earth underneath your feet.

Acknowledge all who've gone before you on that land, plants, animals, humans, everything and just recognize that as we do that together we acknowledge this whole earth and not only those who've gone before us but also those who are to come.

So we are here and we are also accompanied and I'd like to just begin us by lighting a candle to honor that reality and to remind us that our coming together in this way is not just for our own practice and not even just for each other but for the whole.

So I'm Heather Roos and I'll be anchoring our day today and along with me is Andrew Breitenberg who I'll be turning it over to in just a moment as well as Nan DeLach and so our hope is that our time together today will be in service of Metis and service of the whole.

So we're here together for a time of practice and learning and sharing with one another focusing on this theme of Metis which Cynthia has been exploring throughout each of her wisdom schools on holding our planet.

It's a cunningness or a shrewdness and something we're invited to cultivate and she says that when Metis is taken beyond our own self-interest into compassionate skillful action that actually creates results it becomes imaginal cunning or imaginal Metis.

Imaginal being that which we can draw on from the imaginal realm, the kingdom of heaven, world 24, whatever language you want to use but it's this capacity to take effective, well-timed, well-seen, decisive, appropriate action in a moment based on three-centered awareness and we know that many of our wisdom practices support us

in building the capacity to show up to life in this way and in just a moment Andrew will be taking us through just such a practice by guiding us in a Gurdjieff exercise.

Some of you will be familiar with it so I encourage you to come to it as a beginner and some of you may have heard about these exercises but haven't had a chance to be led through one and for some of you this may be entirely new and you may not have any familiarity with it.

Wherever you are that's okay because we'll be brought through that by Andrew in a way that meets everyone where we are and then after that we'll have a chance to watch a teaching from the most recent Holding Our Planet Wisdom School which is about an hour long but we'll take a break partway through and then after that we will have some reflection time and then a time of sharing in smaller groups and then we'll close all together with the larger group.

So again I just invite you to tune in to this web that is all over the place and just allow yourself to set down whatever may be on your mind right now.

There's nowhere else you need to be, nothing else you need to do for this time together.

So just let yourself fully arrive, maybe even take a moment to let your human senses help draw you into this current reality.

Let your eyes move around, not assessing whether you like or dislike what you see, just taking in the shapes and colors, textures around you.

Notice what you hear, notice any smells if there are any, notice your skin, the different temperatures there perhaps where your clothes are, where the air is directly touching you.

When we tune in to our human senses in this way we will sometimes notice just a little downshift, a little settling in our human nervous systems.

You may even notice the deeper spontaneous breath.

So just allowing that to deepen for a few more moments.

And maybe even just dropping into your heart area, seeing if there's a reason that you came here today.

Listen for an aim or an intention that you might have for our time together, something that you want to stay present to through all our various practices and experiences.

Breathe into that, honoring yourself for being here and recognizing that each one of us has that within, maybe even accessing that wish or that desire that each of us stay present to whatever that is and that we strengthen one another in our aims.

So I'm going to pass it over to Andrew now who will be leading us in an exercise.

Andrew Breitenberg: Am I off mute?

Okay.

Well Heather you're just a genius in inviting the presence within.

I'll do my best not to totally disrupt that in the next few minutes.

Thank you and you know Metis, this teaching has been one of the most important teachings that I've received from Cynthia in a long time.

So I was really excited to be asked to participate in this one.

I will introduce myself.

If you already know me, you still showed up so that is much appreciated.

And if you don't, I'm Andrew Breitenberg.

I've been working with Cynthia since about 2015 when I met her at the Living School and part of the earliest teaching I got from her was about the fourth way model brought by Gurdjieff and especially concerning esoteric Christianity.

My own teaching I'm particularly drawn to the practical nature of the work, to the embodied wisdom that comes from our lived and actual experience.

So like how does all of this matter in life where the rubber meets the road without having to necessarily retreat to a monastery.

Although I do offer retreats as well.

I specialize in men's work and the other major emphasis of my own teaching is what we're going to be about now which are the contemplative being exercises developed by Gurdjieff and really given center stage in the last two decades of his life.

And some of you are even in my group so and others of you have as Heather said maybe not even done an exercise like this before so I'll ask you who are familiar with them to assist in holding the container for those who might be experiencing it for the first time.

And I will give a couple introductory remarks especially for those of you who are less familiar with all of this before starting the exercise today.

The metis teaching one of the reasons it's really important to me is because of its emphasis on one of the core principles of the contemplative exercises which is the unification of action and contemplation or of activity and receptivity which we'll work with as part of the exercise this morning.

And right action or this decisive skillful cunning is a really fun word that Cynthia uses.

It must necessarily include receptivity to higher energy to higher intelligence because we're talking about becoming instrumental.

And this instrumentality requires harmony in our three centers the body the mind and the heart or the Gurdjieff syntax would say the thinking center the emotional center and the moving center.

And this inner stability or three centered harmony is developed in a number of ways in the Gurdjieff work which is full of practical tools that would tackle this question.

But one of the foundational most important means at our disposal is releasing the tensions that we carry in each of these three centers.

Consciously releasing these tensions and Cynthia will probably talk about this although I haven't reviewed this specific recording.

Releasing these tensions prepares the centers for further purification and it establishes a baseline stability for our being like a place where these three centers can begin to communicate equitably without one of them just hijacking and dominating the others.

We all know what that feels like to have one of these centers or intelligences kind of completely take over and rule the mechanicality.

I did want to say at a place of three centered balance or awareness we really do have the possibility of opening to higher intelligence becoming conscious instruments of this force so that we can practice metis we can be for our planet for our neighbor.

We begin to develop the capacity to work from a deeper center of gravity or as we say in the work from the whole of our being rather than just one part of it.

And that's how we can offer our service.

So today we'll take an exercise to come to what's called like a collected state of being and we'll work on releasing the tensions that are habitual to us in each of those three centers.

And we'll also take the chance to practice this really important faculty of being both active and receptive at once.

This is sometimes called a division of attention and others would call it an expansion or an inclusion of the attention.

But in any case just do the best you can.

We'll all do the best we can.

And if you find yourself starting to think about getting it right or trying to follow the prompts too specifically or you sense that the mind is beginning to have more sway just release all of that.

Just know that your sincere effort at relaxing, sensing the body, it really is in it in and of itself a service and a support to the energetic container that we're all trying to create.

And I'll just only add one more thing which is that this brings anything up or you have some questions or really want to follow up with something specific out of your experience with the exercise then please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

Okay so mostly I find that that the profusion of digital imagery and moving people and colors can be somewhat of a distraction for me.

If it's not for you that's fine but you are welcome to turn off your video.

I'll turn off mine.

And and really just prepare yourself in the room.

So in other words we're oriented towards a screen right now and to looking with our eyes and making these impressions.

But I will invite you to take a posture sort of oriented into the room or just adjust the orientation of the body which already in and of itself can start to invite a new kind of an impression.

So you can go ahead if you want to turn off your video you don't have to.

And then another way to really prepare well for an exercise like this is to remove anything on the body that's constricting.

So especially if you wear spectacles, glasses you can take those off.

You can take off hats if you want to loosen the belt buckle.

Any constriction on the body that you feel comfortable loosening up is welcome.

[silence] [silence] so we're returning to what Heather so beautifully began for us and continuing now to relax I relax the fine muscles around the eyes all the small muscles that control the facial features I scan for that releasing the whole facial mask releasing the jaw tension in the jaw in the scalp the muscles around the ears the brow [silence] I can move in relaxing the throat the whole of the mouth the neck [silence] I completely relaxed the whole apparatus for talking relaxing the shoulders chest relaxing the spine directing my attention to the large muscles in the arms the smaller muscles remaining available can I relax fingers I just relax the middle fingers or the webbing between the fingers and bring the light of my attention to these fine muscles these small small muscles continuing to relax them relaxing the chest completely dropping the belly [silence] inviting a flow between the trunk of the body and the limbs releasing under the arms releasing the hip flexors releasing the glutes moving down the body releasing the largest muscles in the legs relaxing into the joints into the knees for example the calf muscles the arches of the feet the toes this is a full relaxation of the tensions in the physical body it's a relaxing of the muscles of the joints so the body is available now to sensation especially in the palms of the hands or the soles of the feet I've become aware of sensation there a liveliness of vivifying sensation [silence] it may manifest as a tingling in the palms remember I find that sensation I let it flow and spread to include the volume sensing for example the backs of the hands and then sensing the full volume of the hands sensing the limbs you just take a moment to invite sensation throughout the body [silence] within the spinal column or in the head in the solar plexus [silence] and so the center of gravity is deepening dropping the attention and the effort comes from a deeper place and such a relaxing of the body invites relaxing of the tensions from thoughts [silence] releasing thoughts releasing also the tension from emotion from feeling coming out of whatever proceeded sitting down to this meeting stepping out of the future of what's to come this evening and so forth and stepping into this present moment in this room as it is in this body as it is [silence] [silence] And so I make a return, Like a coming home.

I experience something like peace.

And the tensions from thoughts and emotion, tensions in the body all coming to rest.

Finding that equilibrium.

Free of judgments or associations or commentary.

All of that is receding.

Those thoughts have no power to grab me out of myself.

I'm in a collected state.

I can witness them go by.

I haven't forgotten the face, completely relaxed musculature in the face.

We've made a preparation together.

This unique constellation of beings.

We come to a collected state.

As best we're able in these conditions.

And having made a preparation like this, we can take exercise.

We can practice.

From a harmonious three centered state.

We've already now been experiencing the active and the receptive at once.

Bringing the body.

Into the state of receptivity.

And availability to sensation.

By an act, an action of the will.

The attention.

I do this work, I maintain the effort.

This attention.

At the same time.

Consciously.

Receiving, being receptive.

Bringing the body.

And the emotions and the thoughts.

Into this receptive place.

And we can exercise another way.

I become aware of the breath.

And I can be aware of the body.

And I can be aware of the breath.

And I can be aware of the body.

I follow the breath of the organically breathing body.

I don't try to change it or force it into a different rhythm.

The body is relaxed.

And the intelligence of the body knows it's breathing.

The more relaxed, the more organic the breathing.

And I follow this breathing.

I'm aware of it.

And there is a finer energy, an active element, a higher force available in the air.

And I begin to breathe that in.

I take it in and retain it.

This very fine and useful energy.

I take it in.

And this thought, this higher awareness, this effort, can sometimes be accompanied by a contraction in the body.

So now I work to maintain at once this active taking in of this finer energy.

And at the same time, the receptivity of the body to that finer energy.

The body completely decontracted.

Well relaxed.

Receptive while I maintain the effort to take in this finer energy from the air.

I'm also aware that we are all of us working together.

Each one of us is here making this effort together.

So we can practice yet again this activity and receptivity at once.

I can offer it to the sincerity of my own effort.

Because we share a common aim having gathered today together.

I can send what I've received out to the whole of the group.

I can offer it.

At the same time, I'm receptive.

I can receive that assistance being sent.

And so I'm a living, breathing part of this greater whole that we form together.

I pour out freely what I have received.

I receive what the group is pouring out freely.

And that's enough.

Before the effort weakens, we lay it down.

Put the exercise down.

And bringing some movement into the hands and into the feet.

Slowly, slowly sliding the eyes open.

And perhaps sliding them closed again.

Noticing that inner, that rich inner space of sensation, of being.

And slowly sliding the eyes open again.

Aware of what the eyes are taking in and that inner space.

So feel free to take another moment, and when you're ready, turn on your videos again, should you wish.

Heather Ruce: Thank you so much, Andrew.

You've truly prepared us to, well, not only did we give and receive something deeply there, a deep being nourishment, but you have prepared us to listen to this teaching with the ears of our heart.

So I do invite all of us in a moment, we'll begin this most recent teaching on medicine from Cynthia at the Wisdom School in Burlingame, California.

And as you listen to this, I just invite you to, well, first of all, just to listen to your body.

If you need to stand, stand.

If you need to move around, do whatever you need to.

If you need to get a drink of water, all of that is more than welcome.

But I also invite you to have perhaps a pen and paper or journal, not to furiously take down notes, as you will receive the transcript of this video for later, but just to note what parts of the teaching really jump out at you.

Perhaps the ones you feel really drawn to, perhaps the ones that you might even notice a little resistant to.

Just be noticing what arises, what sensations in your body arise, what comes up for you as you listen to this teaching.

After we listen to, well, we'll listen to about 25 minutes, and then we'll take a little break and then come back to the rest of it.

And then we'll participate in a Lectio Divina practice on the teaching, which is why I'm inviting you to jot down some of the things that are really alive for you as you hear it.

You don't have to, of course.

You can just simply let it wash over you, and we'll have time to sit with whatever it is that has landed in you afterwards.

Cynthia Bourgeault: So as I said, in every Wisdom School we do, in every one of these iterations of the Holding the Planet topic, the results turn out differently because we're co-creating it with a group of people that are actually sitting here joining in mid-wifing the thing.

And one of the things that emerged in our work this time was this phrase that somebody coined, "imaginal activism."

And I can't even remember at this point back in the mills what it was all about, but it's an interesting and it's a wonderful catchword.

One person actually sent me this absolutely mordantly brilliant little response on one of the questions early on.

So she says, "What you're really teaching here is that you're showing us how to move from AI to IA." [laughter] Good.

But it's true.

If you take artificial intelligence as everything that's moving in the direction of creating an insentient and unconscious simulacrum of a human being, and IA, imaginal activism, really talking about how we support and uphold our planet, but at a different level of efficaciousness.

And it takes a certain gamble because we have a very, very long-standing tradition in our dialectical ways of thinking in the mental structure of consciousness that sees contemplation and action as opposites.

And saying, "Well, if you're a contemplative, you can't get too actively involved or you're going to get all by--you're all going to fall into dualization and anger and desperation and all these things that are not becoming for contemplatives."

And on the other hand, if you're an activist, there's often little patience for the amount of time that contemplatives seem to demand for this infernal righting and regulation of their being.

It's, "Come on, guys, you're fiddling while hell is--or while Rome is burning."

And so we tend to get these jumpy myths.

And I've realized more and more clearly with this group, and my contribution to the mix, that this is partly the case because contemplation needs to mature to the next step where it's pointing, which is not simply a lifestyle that favors silence and things, but a capacity to directly encounter silence as a presence.

This is what Thomas Keating was talking about so much in the final five years of his life, that this isn't just a lifestyle where we go quietly into the silence and empty our minds and just sort of vaguely sense the presence of God for self-calming and self-righting.

This is a more subtle--this is an introduction to subtle communication.

And when you take contemplation to the next step, you're directly face-to-face with the assistance we receive from the imaginal, from the great chain of being.

You're beginning to taste it, but you're tasting it in ways that are still sort of introspective and quiet and--yes, I sit here-- but what you're seeing, when silence becomes presence, this is huge because it means that a whole sensation, that your ability to pick up subtle presence, has all of a sudden kicked online.

And from there on, it simply is a matter of becoming proficient, navigating the streams and currents of the information that gets contained in these sort of transformations, without pulling it back into superstition and fantasy and all about me and my mission to save the planet, etc.

So that's great.

And what we've been working with with the whole imaginal is to realize-- and I've come to see more strongly than before in the presence of this group as a mirror--that really, as we begin to take up the challenge to work in holding the concerns for our planet at this level, we really come under the rubrics of World 24 with both its much vaster power and range.

I mean, when you throw in non-localized action and instantaneous, synchronous communication, you've got some big ones.

And to think that sitting there in your own little place, suddenly deciding that you were going to make a U-turn out of a negative state and move towards something that basically re-righted and elevated your being again, not just your impression of your being, but your real presence.

When you do that, that effect is known everywhere.

And we've tasted a little bit what happens miraculously when people work in the web.

And that everybody participates separately in an intelligence and an agency which is ultimately held collectively.

And everybody gets what they need as they grow.

So I think that we've ground-truthed here far more than I would have expected and far more than I've seen in any of the other iterations.

The actual practical applications of some of this, what can sound like just esoteric speculation, until you see where the rubber hits the road.

So with that in mind as a backdrop, this last set of reflections is on another quality that is needed in called for if we're going to face our world bravely, courageously, and flexibly without despair, without being undone, without spiritual bypassing or thinking that we're going to pull rabbits out of the hat.

What kind of characteristics of being and competencies does it require to wield agency in the integral structure of consciousness from the imaginal realm into this realm?

You can language it any way you want.

They're all sort of the same thing from slightly different perspectives.

And we've looked at qualities like vigilance.

We've worked a lot on how to ground ourself and reawaken in the mercy, and we discovered that the fundamental nature of the transaction between us and the higher realms is covered with this kind of tender purposefulness.

We've touched that.

We've touched qualities, you know, the faith, hope, and love are always there.

The fruits of the spirit are always there.

But I want to touch a special quality that may slip through the cracks that nobody kind of ever mentions it directly, and I think it's absolutely crucial to effective action as we begin to work effectively in alignment with consciousness at the imaginal, you know, using the agency of the imaginal realm.

So this is the quality-- I first heard the word that really nailed it for me from Peter Kingsley.

The quality is called metis, M-E-T-I-S.

A little circumflex over it.

It's Greek.

Peter Kingsley, who some of you may have bumped into because he lived in the Bay Area for many years, was a golden Sufi up there in Inverness, was also a classicist by training, and his specialty was Parmenides and some of those early Empedocles, some of the very, very early Greek pre-Socratic philosophers.

So he combed their works, and he brought together works that were combined with this sort of one-of-a-kind spiritual erudition and intellectual erudition.

So he coined this term "metis" and introduced it to me for the first time, and I said, "Aha!

That's it."

Metis basically means--if you look it up in the dictionary-- it means cunning.

Cunning.

It means a kind of shrewdness that knows-- and it's often and almost typically kind of put in with a trickster or outlaw mentality, but it's the kind of person that knows how to work with-- all of a sudden does something that upsets the apple cart and turns the tables.

So it can be used for cunning, certainly.

But if you move it to the other level and look at it from the point of view of-- if you want to call it a "magical metis," what it really means is the quality to be able to act boldly, skillfully, and decisively out of Three-Centered Awareness using only the materials available to you right under your nose in the moment.

So it's a quality that-- the closest term out there is "skillful means" that the Buddhists provide, but the term "skillful means" for the Buddhists, at least as I've encountered it, lacks this element of panache.

You know, that you see it, you take it, you grab it, you twist it.

It's the ability to catch the turn, pick up the third force, move on a dime, and move rightly.

Not out of impulse, but out of a very fast, attentional, Three-Centered Awareness that grasps everything that's there almost instantly and puts them in a combination that works with interaction.

And so to give you a couple of some examples of it, just so that we're all on the same page about what I mean when I think of metis, two of these examples will no doubt be quite familiar to you because they come right out of the Bible.

The first is Jesus, when they try and conner him about whether it's okay to pay taxes to Caesar.

And this is another of the many kind of set-up encounters.

You know, his Pharisee opponents kept trying to lure him into a cul-de-sac.

So they had a pretty good checkmate there because either way he answered that question, he was going to be in trouble with somebody's law.

If he said, "It's not okay to pay taxes to Caesar," well, the Romans could just scoop him up, you know, he's advocating insurrection.

But if he says it is okay, he flies in the face of the whole Jewish temple law.

I mean, he essentially is desecrating his whole covenantal relationship with the Lord.

It says, you know, "We pay taxes to nobody, we bow to nobody, but God."

So one way or another, you know, do you want to die by fire or ice?

So what does he do in that moment?

You know, I know what I would have done.

I would have sat there and said, "Well, let me think about it."

In these circumstances, Caesar has a point.

But then on the other hand, you know, if we interpret the law, and everybody would have been bored, the shackles would have been on his hands anyway, it moves too slowly.

What he did was he instantly asked for a coin, says, "Whose face is on it?"

"Oh, Caesar.

What belongs to Caesar?"

Give it back to him.

Brilliant.

He wriggled out of the whole thing without having to hang himself on the petard of, you know, is it okay or not okay.

He simply changed the term quietly through his mirth.

Okay, well, obviously this thing belongs to him because it's got his picture on it, so let him have it.

Sidesteps the whole question.

Brilliant.

Now, he saw what was there in the moment, the coin, the picture, the reality, the way of shifting it.

It requires a kind of three-centered alertness.

And what will often drive it, what will typically drive it, is the moving center, our much underutilized and underappreciated moving center.

And so I'll go with that into telling you my own favorite story of Metis that none of you will ever have heard of unless you've sat in my wisdom school before and listened to me tell the story.

But it was a teaching story and a true episode that happened to me in one of my early years working in the Gurdjieff work, and it changed--it completely rearranged my head.

So I worked with the Halifax group, and they were a little satellite group that had bigger sort of-- they were all under the supervision of New York City, and there was a group in Toronto and the New York City group and the Halifax group, and in the summer they would all gather together for a 10-day work period.

And for various reasons, which you can guess, they all loved to come to Halifax in August as opposed to Toronto or New York City.

So all of a sudden this tiny little place, which was what an eastern Canada bungalow, not much bigger than the smallest of the small houses you see around here, where we had our work center, kind of clumsily additions stuck out of it, but still we're talking about a space that's maybe a third the size of this room, had to serve as a multipurpose room for 125 people.

So here we served our meals, we cooked our dinner, and then we quickly had to clear the floor of everything in order to be able to hold a movements class, like we do down in Sequoia.

So there were teams that were in charge, and there were very, very quick turnarounds.

So I was on a team that was on put-away dishes from the kitchen, and the idea was we had to get all these wash dishes out and put in a cupboard that happened to be directly behind the piano needed for the movements class.

So I came clattering in, the time was kicking, we had 15 minutes left before we turned the whole thing over, got all the dishes back, got everybody on the movements floor calm and stable and pretending that none of this had ever happened.

And I'm clattering around in my usual way, and encounter there the movements teacher who's sitting there, you know, getting ready to play the piano and get things set up, and then directly behind her another member of my team, who is also putting cups away, but using this as an exercise to slow down and sense herself.

I am sensing my fingers against the cup as I move it to and place it carefully and attentively on the shelf, you know, it's like Buddhism in slow motion.

I'm going like this, you know, my cups are rattling, I mean, what's wrong with this woman, doesn't she understand?

I mean, totally lost in internal considering.

And also the movements teacher looks at me and looks at Jackie, and of course the normal thing that most people would have done in a position of authority would have been to reprimand one or the other of us.

Either to say to me, "Slow down, you're about to knock the whole thing into a shattered heap on the floor, and don't you respect her work?"

Or to say to her, "Speed up, the world is about more than you."

And I mean, nine out of ten teachers would have done that and used it as an opportunity to exert verbal correction of the guilty or party.

Not Elsa.

She took one look at the situation, assessed the whole thing, and then did something extraordinary.

She took cups off my tray, grabbing their handles about four at a time, so she literally, with two hands, got eight cups transferred from my tray, matching my frenetic speed, slowing it down in mid-air, and beautifully joining the rhythm of Jackie's, as if there was all the time in the world for each cup to be tenderly and sensuously placed on its shelf.

And my tray was empty in five seconds, and I was halfway back to the kitchen to get the next load before I realized that I just witnessed a miracle.

Without judging either one of us, realizing that we were both doing our level best to meet the aim as we understood it, she simply, through the extraordinary skill of her own body and her own heart, harmonized.

She became fully reconciling in that situation that honored both of our work while teaching us all about seeing and working from a higher place.

It was one of the most beautiful gifts I've ever seen.

I would thoroughly have expected to be thoroughly chastised by clattering and banging habits.

She did nothing that was not just drenched with this deepest respect for both of our work.

And yet the job got done.

Metis.

Moving center Metis.

And she could not have done that without her years and years as a movements teacher and as a piano player herself.

She just understood how bodies can move to resolve situations.

One of the reasons we get into such a mess in our dying, deteriorating mental structure of consciousness is that we think that things are not solved unless they're solved verbally.

If she wanted to be even more impossible, she would have put two chairs out and said, "Well, let's sit down and talk about the situation.

Can you express your hurt and woundedness here?

Can you apologize to Jackie?

And can you respect..."

It was like, "Ahh!"

I would have gotten in the car and driven home.

But a lot of stuff does not need to be talked out to be resolved.

It can be prayed out, it can be held in an atmosphere, or it can be resolved in the moving center.

So as we learn to let go of our illusion that we control everything by languaging it correctly, then we begin to see and open to other forms of Metis.

So the third example of this is the famous Old Testament story of Solomon and the baby.

Here he is, and this is interesting because this is one that's directly related to judgment and having to make a decision that's going to affect the lives of many others.

So here he is, this legendary wisdom king we had taken.

Two women come with one baby, and each one claims to be the mother, the authentic mother of this baby, and wanting Solomon to decide the thing, to decide between their two claims.

So how do you do it?

How do you do it?

And in a way you'd say the one with the more dramatic story wins, but Solomon didn't go there.

He assessed the situation and then took this daringly bold move.

He says, "Oh, okay, well, they each want the baby, so let's cut the baby in two and give half to each mother."

And one woman instantly says, "No, no, give it to the other woman."

And he says, "Aha, that's the real mother."

And it was brilliant because he was playing his card.

He put all his eggs in the basket.

The real mother would not cost the life of a child to win an empirical victory.

But it was daring, and once again he's working directly in the stuff at the moment at high stakes cost.

But these are all variations on the theme of what I mean by metis.

But it's a skill which will really allow us to unite contemplation and action between the reconciling force in situations that seem to be at standoffs.

So it requires, in order to find this skill, and some people come closer to it naturally, but like almost everything in the spiritual vocabulary, what you have as natural gifts in this world are only temporary head starts.

It's like the people on the movements floor who have 14 years of ballet under their belt.

Yeah, they're going to look better on the movements floor for the first year of classes because they already know how to move.

They're already at home in their body and have some basic posture positions.

But in a way, they're going to be sheltered from the struggle, the initial struggle that everybody else comes up against.

And they're going to have their own scruttle as they begin to learn that in certain ways the movements and postures they learned in ballet don't fit with the idiom here.

And sooner or later, even for the most moving center gifted person, the movements will defy you because it can't be done with one center alone.

And I've watched the great ballet dancers, and I finally get my moment in the sun because I can use my mind to count canons backwards and do things like that.

Finally, I'm useful.

But all centers are required in the coordination and in the transcendence of all centers.

So it's like that.

Some of us have a natural, convenial head start on being able to move sort of decisively, flamboyantly with panache in the world.

Others of us are terrified.

But it doesn't have to end up there.

Just because you've got the printout that you're an Enneagram 5 and a withdrawing type, it doesn't mean that you're going to withdraw forever.

As a matter of fact, to use these things as cast in stone descriptions of how we will always act simply takes us farther in the direction of the mechanicality.

Why can't a 5 turn and say, "Hell no, get off my back and go away"?

Why do they always have to leave quietly by the back door?

Why don't they throw everybody else out?

You can do it.

Everything is in the repertory of a human being.

As soon as you find out how to give yourself permission for that to happen.

Heather Ruce: So in a few moments we will take a little break from the teaching that Andrew's going to set us up for how to be present throughout that break.

It will be just over 10 minutes and we'll come back at 30 past the hour, whatever the hour may be for you.

Andrew Breitenberg: Did you do it?

It's just me now?

Thank you, Heather.

I wrote down "situously placed teacups."

I always have to write down when Cynthia makes up a word which somehow means more.

It's a gift.

I just want to invite you to situously place teacups during the next 10 minutes.

This is always my favorite time of wisdom school.

We also call it practical work.

It's when you get to go be in your body and do something with your hands.

So I will just encourage you to just, even if it's just to stand up and move around the room, if you can, go outside, put the sun on your arms or something like that.

If you have a chore that will take you five minutes that you can do with the body while allowing some of what Cynthia was teaching to be embodied through the task, then go for it.

And we'll see you at 1:30 and 12 minutes.

Heather Ruce: We will continue on listening to the teaching.

Hopefully whatever you situat--situously did over this time supported you in regrounding in your body and your--or staying connected to your body, rather, and all three of your centers.

So we listen again with the ears of our heart to what is arising for us as we hear Cynthia's teaching on metis.

Cynthia Bourgeault: So each center, in order to be able to effectively work with the gift of metis, each center requires a purification.

That the head has to be released from its entanglement to rumination and strategy.

And these are slightly different things, but rumination, of course, is its tendency to go inward and think about things on the screen of your mind and check out, "How do I feel about this?"

It moves too slowly.

And of course, strategy is pre-planned.

It's using that calculated mind to sort of figure out the moves in the chess game in advance.

And it gives you, as I say, an initial head start, but it very, very quickly becomes a crutch.

And again, in an analogy from the movements floor, I know very well that if you lose yourself in where you are with these things, that you can stop and work and you can deduce and you can say, "Well, if the file on this side of me is doing this, and the file on the other side of me is doing this, then I must be doing this."

But I find I have a greater and greater reluctance to use calculation to pull me out of situations in the work, because it really sort of traps me in the wrong brain.

It takes me out of the three-centered awareness, and my mind is going in, "Let me figure it out," and you get the calculator out.

It disturbs the overall flow of the work.

I'm getting so I would prefer just to wait a couple of minutes more in anguish until something in my body and the subtle thing kicks in and reminds me.

You catch, when you're quiet enough, the pulse of what the other people are doing.

You almost know what movement they're going to take, the gesture, before they take it, and you don't have to look at it and calculize.

You know.

It takes a little bit longer, but I myself prefer to actually cultivate that skill than to default to the great brain, which pulls me out of the flow of things.

But these are the things that metis is always situational.

It can't be preplanned.

Jesus did not go into that situation with a vest full of coins just so that he could play this trick when the time came right.

The honesty is that you're paying attention in the moment, and in the moment you see the necessary prompt and scripting.

It's one of the reasons I've really gotten more firm and more clear nowadays in trying to start good habits from the start.

My senior wisdom students now are in outrage and shock that I've outlawed taking notes.

I don't put that on beginners, because there's a time.

But at a point you realize that when you're taking notes, it becomes a crutch, and it helps for a while for some people because the kinesthetic thing gets it in your mind.

But there's a different quality of attention that's called forth when you have to simply pay attention with the whole of your being, knowing that what you catch, you catch.

What you miss, you miss.

I ought to assign as a penance to people that insist on taking notes beyond five years into a thing the assignment of having to read every note they've ever taken. [laughter] How much have you actually ever gone back to those things?

Burn the books and set yourself free.

But you see what I'm doing is-- And one of the reasons, again, why I hate the whole thing of printing out music or printing out scriptural sermon texts is people simply read.

And reading--the dialogue between the eyes and the brain runs on a whole different track than learning by heart, as they used to call it, which is a literal biological description of the neural lining.

But anything that takes us into the more abstract intellectual presence is going to decrease your alertness to present moment awareness.

And teachers--I can't believe we've been invited, a bunch of us, to this conference they're cooking up at Harvard, which is going to be really interesting in December because it's putting together classic teachers of the work, as it used to be transmitted in groups, with some of the new scholars and saying, "What is legitimate transmission?"

And it's a very cool and interesting question.

But I couldn't believe when I read about it, the person who has sat around and extended the invitation says, "And yes, we would like a copy of your paper by..."

I'll sit there and say, "What the hell?"

I'm sitting on one side with Roger Lipsey, who is one of the senior people in the American work, and on the other side with Alexandre de Salzmann, who runs the whole thing from all over the world, trained in deep listening dialogue, and I'm going to read a paper?

It's like, "Hello!"

If I were to so much as walk in with a planned script, it's like, "How am I, nine months from this conference, going to have a clue what's happening?"

The whole thing is based on how to be alert in the moment, how to see what's needed.

Our paddle comes later in the day, so there will have been a lot of water over the dam before it.

All these things have to factor in, if you're going to say anything that has any aliveness.

You have to learn to get off the book almost before you're ready, to just walk out there and make a fool of yourself, rather than rely completely on forms that are by nature going to trap you in the past.

When you read a speech, you're taking everybody back to the past of when you wrote it.

So we've got to-- That's how, if you see how the intellectual center gets in the way, and the more you can train yourself to prepare by living alertly in three-centered awareness, rather than by preparing by getting your notes in line, and your cards in line, you'll be a lot better teacher, and you'll be a lot better in metis.

So the emotional center has to get purified of its tendency to get enmeshed in the drama and pathos of everybody's story.

Sentimentality, pathos, clinging, any of those emotional agendas will absolutely kill metis, because you get too much of your own shadow stuff enmeshed in it, and the deep capacity which you really need, which is feeling, gets co-opted by that lower level emotion, sympathy, empathy.

Nurses have to work with this a lot in training, because the tendency, particularly when you're working with people that are terminally ill, to get emotionally enmeshed in their stories, and then the kind of empathy that you can bring, loses its cleanness.

It begins to become sticky, and it becomes so much about your fear of death, not their fear of death.

So learning how to keep it clear.

If in the Solomon story, if Solomon had gotten messed up in empathy, let's say he liked one of the mothers better, let's say that her particular schtick was more compelling than the other ones, he would never have been able to do that, because his partiality would have skewed his ability to walk that tightrope of the judgment.

So it's hard, and once again, it's one of these places where we go slightly against what's coming to us from our psychological culture, which says that empathy is a good thing because it allows us to really get inside the skin of another.

It does up to a point, but if we replace their insides with our insides, we've done neither one of us a service.

So it's learning soberly and lucidly to notice when your projections onto another become more about you, more about your fears, your subtle needs to control, your subtle needs for feedback, your instant gravitation to this or that person.

This type reminds you of somebody in your life who was a former boyfriend way back again, so you feel more comfortable.

You've got to get that kind of lower level disorder out of the way before the emotional center can really join with the moving center to see through feeling.

And finally, the body needs to be purified of its two major bad habits, and they run in opposite directions.

The first is impulsivity, and it's a major, major trip up.

You'll start to go this way, and all of a sudden something will jerk you and say, "Ah!"

You're walking along with your books in your hand, and you're moving, and all of a sudden you see that somebody's struggling to open a door, and it looks like an older person, and all of a sudden you jump out of line to try and do this because you want to be polite, and trays and things go flying because your body wasn't prepared for the movement that you suddenly made, and so it becomes graceless.

I remember once turning around, and I was sweeping a floor in a kitchen when I was on a kitchen team, cakes and a meringue on the table and all this prepared for dessert, and I noticed that the leader of our group, this distinguished teacher from New York, was coming in the back door, and I turned to clear a path for her, and the back end of my broom handle hits the cakes and the meringue and sends them flying off to the floor. [laughter] But that's impulsivity in action, and I have to thank and honor my colleague, Kambir Helminski, for really calling attention in his book about presence, Living Presence, to how we often don't distinguish clearly enough.

We call it intuition or insight, but more often than not, impulse has an entirely different feeling, and it will nine times out of ten come from preconditioned agendas that all of a sudden take over.

"I ought to do this," and it very often has to do more with the story of myself, and you notice because its pattern is always jerky.

It interrupts a smooth train of things, introduces the sudden startle, and it's one of the major ways that we lose our bearings.

We've sometimes done work tasks where you set an intention, a very simple intention, to walk across a room from point A to point B, and all you have to do as your work is to do that.

It sounds simple, but it's amazing how many times when walking across the room you get distracted by this, that, and the next thing you know, "Oh, yeah, I'm here.

"Oh, yes, I should put this on the piano "because we'll need it later."

Before you know it, you simply have distorted your intention with all these kind of collateral side alleys that your mind has suggested, and again, it's a factor that dissipates.

This doesn't mean that you can't be alert to opportunity.

In fact, you have to, but you have to be shrewd enough with your instrument to tell the difference between what's genuine opportunity, the situational new in the moment, what's called upon to do, and what you're simply taking on by an old habit.

The other thing that the body needs to be purified of to work is our well-established repertory of postures and gestures.

And I swear that even now that you could blindfold me and put me at the end of the hall, and people in this group could randomly walk past me, and I could pick out quite a few of you simply by your gait, by your pace, by the way you put your feet down.

We carry so much of our presentational style even simply in the way we walk.

Many people make a deliberate attempt to present themselves as heavier than they are.

And you feel this kind of walking that this...

You know, that tromp, tromp.

And sometimes it's to take up space.

I exist, but it doesn't have that upward "I am here" feeling.

And, you know, others like me run like a chipmunk and scurry and burrow and love to do the steeplechase through people and always bring this kind of backwind of rush wherever I go.

You know, we all have our repertory of gestures.

And very often a position that we take will be so immediately imprinted with an emotion we feel that you can play it any way you want.

And the anger and the displeasure begins to enter.

Or the anger and the displeasure begins to enter and you do it that way.

Either one is the same end.

The somatic and the emotional experience of things have gotten so enmeshed that you really can't tell the difference.

So one of the things that the Gurdjieff work tells us is so helpful and is now being echoed in a lot of kinesthetic modalities is that you can unravel the knot from either end.

You can certainly change the emotions and maybe free up the postures.

But it's amazing the extent to which you can change the postures and free up the emotions.

That as you become increasingly aware of these kind of habitual things you do and ask yourself, "Well, do I need to do them?"

Is this essential to how I manifest?"

Or even more playful, and playful is always good when you're doing inner work.

"What would happen if I did something else?"

What if I was a different O.J. for the day?"

And you really just almost like an actor, you decide, "Well, let's see, what if I play a different part?"

What if I'm in my body in a different way?"

You can do this, folks.

You're allowed to play with yourself, to present yourself differently and subtly as a way of studying your repertory of automatic postures.

What do you do when you're trying to command authority?

What do you do when you believe that you're absolutely right and the ones you're talking to know less?

Where does your voice go when you're talking to a child or to your house pet?

Pay attention.

Because these are valuable clues into where you're leaking energy, as one person said with their aim.

And again, to the extent that the moving center is captured by impulse or by a whole heavy trousseau of automatic behaviors, it's less free to participate in metis, to shape-shift to the demand of the moment, because it has its shape and its shape is cast in stone.

So those are the purifications.

And I'm really interested and very much amused at how these line up with the classic monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

And I'm not the first to begin this inquiry.

Valentin Tomberg, in his wonderful book "Meditations from the Tarot," introduced the idea that these monastic vows are actually archetypal practices for the emergence of the finer, you know, the second body from first.

He doesn't use that language, but he's pointing it that way.

They're the archetypal language for the calling forth of a more subtle conscious presence within myself.

They're not just a bunch of things that monks have to sign on a dotted line in order to be fed every day.

So let's see how they plug in.

I think without any doubt that the value, the virtue that goes with the emotional center is chastity.

Because, you know, our emotional center is a whore.

It goes around and lies down in everybody else's bed, doesn't it?

[laughter] That's just the poetic way of picturing our lives getting enmeshed with others.

But it does, you know?

And so the vow of chastity hobbles the emotional center and forces it to stay within its own virginity, its own purity, its own self-sufficiency or impartiality, where it can pay attention to a situation without having to get into bed with your partners.

So that one's clear.

What is interesting is the other two, and you can play it either way.

The classic way is to put poverty with the head and obedience with the body.

So that the idea with poverty with the head, "Blessed is the poor of spirit," you know, is to say, "Take a fast from all the stuff that you're putting in your head, all the information, all the..."

But I rather like to do it the other way.

I say, "What if you said that the major issue for the head is obedience?"

That it has to learn that it doesn't run the show.

I mean, I've even been really aware of this time of a shorthand that everybody uses.

We talk about the head and the body.

We say, "Bring your attention to your head.

Bring your attention to the body."

Well, hello.

Is the head not also part of the body?

But we so routinely do this that we don't even notice the strangeness of it.

And in this kind of way, we prejudice, and the head is kind of the signal post above this visceral goo, the hat rack that holds our head up as we go through life.

And even in our languaging, we're prejudicing the situation.

So the head is part of the body, folks.

The problem is not that the head is not part of the body.

The head is a disconnected and arrogantly alienated part.

So for me, obedience comes right along with putting the mind in the heart.

It's like learning not to use the head to solve everything.

But it's sometimes to enter and abide in that state of not knowing as you put the mind in the heart.

Again, what I was saying about the movement floor a little bit earlier, if rather than using my calculating mind to try to figure out where I ought to be, I sit, put the mind in the heart, accept the humiliation of the moment, something always emerges from a deeper place that shows me how to make the next step.

And it's so delicious to wait and see what that thing is.

And so as the head learns to obey and wait, to wait, or you could call it higher guidance if you like traditional language, the inner guide if you like more New Agey guidance, but wait for something that's a deeper knowing that we have party to and not jump the gun to save its skin or arrogantly arrogate to itself a kind of knowingness it doesn't have.

So I like it that way and that also helps for me a lot with what we do with the body.

Traditionally in spiritual teaching the body would instantly be, as we use it, see what we're doing it right again, the lower body, would be given the task of obedience.

And even in Gurdjieff and certainly in all ascetical training, you get the thing that the body is the site, the seat of our sinful self-will ridden with desires, impetuously compulsorily gluttonous or angry or envious or lazy or slothful, and that it has to be trained.

And up you get in the morning to take your cold shower and run, but there's this whole, you know, St.

Francis called the body "brother ass."

It's not a good attitude because it's this continuing prejudice and disrespect that continues the relationship of inner warfare and doesn't acknowledge the extraordinary gifts of knowing that come from full body, from being in something more than just the head.

So I like to put it the other way, that what the body really needs is purification by poverty.

What it needs is to be quietly liberated from all these things that lard it up, both physically and spiritually, emotionally.

You know, at the physical level, there you would get the gluttonies, the habits, the indulgences, the self-pampering, self-consolation.

But in the spiritual sense, it's the things we were talking about earlier, the heavy weight of conditioning and postures that frame our responses to everything, and as we learn to allow our body to become poor, it also becomes lighter.

Not just physically lighter, but spiritually lighter.

Again, Kabir Helminski gave me a wonderful clue when he says, "In Sufi training, the reason for fasting is not because you want to punish yourself in front of God, but because too much food hardens the heart."

And we're not just talking about arterial sclerosis here.

We're talking about the fact that when you satiate yourself and glut yourself, you notice that the whole system is no longer working at a right attunement.

You've paid for it.

Did I really want that piece of French toast?

Did I really want it?

It was fun to eat, but what you pay for it is this general feeling of deadness and over-satiation.

And to learn to keep your body running just a little bit lean on all levels, not quite satisfying the desires, touching them, but leaving a little bit of the cup unfilled, is kind of an optimal place that most ascetical cultures have said is the absolute optimal place to work.

It's not a punishing, it's not a training, and it's not brutalistically.

If you deprive the poor thing of food altogether, you're not going to get enlightened.

You're going to get anorexia.

So it's, again, a balance, but to find what works.

What works in service of the aim?

So for me, you can use them either way.

You can flip poverty and obedience back and forth, but how I'm working the turf at this point, I find it much more immediately practical to my own work to place poverty with the body and obedience with the head.

And I know that that will keep you well occupied for the next year, at which point I have the liberty to switch it back if I want to.

All of these things are not rule books to be followed, but guides for an inner exploration.

And if you started with what would happen if, if you take any sort of a spiritual training, what would happen if I tried poverty as the thing for the body, and then try it out in your life and see where it leads you.

That preserves the experimental rather than the rule book attitude towards it.

So I think in just wrapping that up, I would say that when we have people in that configuration working with the purifications of each center that is required in order to really sustain a three-centered awareness presence, "metis" grows.

And you begin to discover that in the now is everything you need to take you to the next step.

And you begin to pay attention to what's there, and you begin to learn to work much more boldly and creatively with what's just there.

That's the quality of "metis."

And for me, it really is the third force that bridges between contemplation and action and throws them both into a new ballpark, imaginal activism.

It requires a little training.

I mean, I think it's probably harder in some ways from the activist side because it looks like, "What are you doing?"

Fine-tuning and getting yourself into an ordered state?

There's so much done, needing to be done in the world."

I've had the accusation that my teaching is spiritual bypassing hurled at me by many an angry activist.

"You're just wasting time sitting there.

What is this, calming your body?"

But the point is that apart from three-centered awareness, you cannot act skillfully.

Test it out.

You'll have occasional lucky shots that will usually be followed by some sort of a fall or backlash.

But to maintain skillful, steady, moving in a direction action, you have to attend to bringing yourself into three-centered awareness and using the atmosphere, your atmosphere, not only to sense that in yourself, but as the element, as the agent you use as you pass by each other, like you did so beautifully yesterday in the hall, to join and move and interact with other atmospheres.

And there can be a dance to it, a very harmonious and beautiful dance, when people have done the work.

But to come in jangled and angry and reactive and not in touch with where your feet is, as so much of dialogue is in our culture today, is not going to get anything more than just fire built on fire and going back to the old things that have already been proven not to work with more venom and more frustration.

So the only way out is to take the time to tune the instrument, and then we can begin to use the instrument.

And you do do them simultaneously.

It's not like, "Well, I'm going to take ten years to prepare my body, and then I'll go out and act."

Both are required at any moment, and your skill will increase as you do the work.

But it doesn't mean that you have to reach a certain level of proficiency before you can engage in the world.

It's just that you're going to be more efficient when you've reached a level of inner competence.

So keep working with the practices, and I think from the contemplative side, the challenge is to say that sitting in silence twice a day or however much you do, leaving a quiet and more ordered lifestyle, is all beautiful and all helpful and preparatory.

But it's a lifestyle.

It's not a religion.

It's a preparatory state in the capacity to understand that silence is presence, that second body is real, that we receive help from above, but that having received that help, we need to distribute, to act.

And without that natural flowing, we become, the danger is becoming something like the Dead Sea.

Water flows into the sea, but it has no outlet.

And so eventually the water turns to salt.

There's a beautiful line that I remember from Raimon Panikkar in his book Christophany, which is almost my favorite exit line.

He says, talking about identity with God, he says, "I am one with my Source, insofar as I too act like a Source, by making all that I have received flow again."

Isn't that beautiful?

Source is what Source does.

And if you want to be one with your Source, you make all that you have received flow again.

So you begin to learn not to hoard your contemplative silence, to hoard your lifestyle, to put castles and fences up around it, or make idolatries out of it.

The world is not going to collapse if you miss a sitting prayer period.

You hold things lightly with the emphasis on the flow.

And you honor and respect these contemplative practices as sacred vessels of transformation.

But you don't allow the worshipping of the vessels to substitute for the transformation.

The bottom line is the action.

And the world cries for the action of enlightened contemplative hearts.

Heather Ruce: The world cries for the action of enlightened contemplative hearts.

We're going to take some time now to do a Lectio on this teaching.

So I invite you just to close your eyes for a moment.

Again, checking in with where your intellectual center is.

Drawing that down into the heart.

Allowing the emotional center to be included there.

All sensation.

Our hearts are part of our body.

And yet somehow beyond that as well.

Just notice your breathing for a moment.

Flowing in and out.

And without losing connection to that, either keeping your eyes closed or opening them.

And I invite you just to reflect on, or review rather, some of what you might have jotted down throughout the teaching.

Or just if you didn't take any notes, just to review inwardly what struck you, what drew you.

The parts that were particularly juicy.

Might have been stories that she shared or ideas.

But just see if there's something that is standing out to you.

It could even be a word or a phrase.

And then begin to be attentive to what you notice in your moving center.

Notice what sensations arise.

So we're just going to tune in right now mostly to our moving center.

So just like we read scripture or sacred text, we're going to read this teaching.

And be aware of that which is calling us.

Noticing how that is experienced in our moving center.

We'll take just a few minutes in silence.

I'll ring us in and out as we are present to what happens in our body.

What felt senses arise.

And also notice if there are any postures or gestures.

Could be that there's an impulse in your moving center that arises. [bell rings] [bell rings]
Continuing to linger with whatever part of the teaching drew you, that's particularly juicy or alive for you.

Staying attentive to what you notice in your body, begin to increase your awareness, expand your awareness, as Andrew spoke about earlier, to include whatever may be arising in your emotional center and whatever may be coming up in your intellectual center.

We'll take a little bit more time to really move into that meditation, that meditation that is engaged, like we're chewing on whatever teaching has arisen for us.

Listening with our heart, inviting that spiritual organ to reveal to each one of us how this teaching might be speaking to us in our life today.

You might even sense a presence of Yeshua or Mary Magdalene or another ancestor or teacher, maybe speaking to you through this teaching.

So we'll take about five minutes or so, continuing to linger, to chew, to see all that arises in feeling and thought that comes up, and again, listening.

What do you hear?

How's this teaching speaking to your life today?

What might it be showing or saying to you or calling you to see?

All those questions are there in the chat for you.

And again, we'll take around five minutes.

I'll ring us in and out.

You might decide to be present to those questions either inwardly or through writing.

[SOUND] >> It's an honor to be here with all of you.

Thank you very much.

>> Thank you, Lori.

>> Well, hi, Nan.

Sando.

Conscious circle of humanity.

Wow.

I think that's what we were just, we are, we are living in.

Not losing sight of the fact that this comes in with holding the planet.

And where we move next is an adventure to be, to be hold and to be held.

Thank you.

And to be held here altogether.

Yeah.

This is Ellen.

This may be an unusual thing to do and I won't do it for long, but it's this. [singing] >> I'm hoping in the near future we'll be able to hear this again.

They are, they have recorded it and they will post it.

Thank you.

It's been so good.

Thank you.

It's wonderful to be here with you.

Thank you, Kathy for beautiful.

>> I guess what I would like to offer is that I, I know that I feel a deeper awareness that I am an instrument of this presence.

And that gives me, that gives me purpose and, and maybe some discipline now, unless through listening to this and the section on obedience and to apply some of that, you know, to my life.

So I just, you know, reach out to all of you and hope that all of you to feel a sense of how you are an instrument of this love that we love so much.

And not to be afraid to offer it, to be that instrument.

So thank you so much.

It was really a wonderful teaching and sharing.

Thank you.

An instrument.

A new knowing for me is to embrace the silence, and its presence.

Thank you.

>> And Anna says a wonderful teaching and blessing to be with you.

Thank you for the melody and song.

And Sarah, so meaningful to keep and hold the atmosphere with the group.

I met with palpable presence, and I'm grateful.

I would just like to thank you so much for this evening.

It's been really, really wonderful.

All of it has been really, really, very, very challenging, but very, very powerful.

The meditation that Andrew did was very, very powerful.

One of the best things I've ever heard.

Really took me into a different place.

I would like to thank him very much for that.

And I would like to thank you and Heather, too.

It's been a remarkable evening.

Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> I just feel like I got thanked by the queen herself.

Thank you, Maxine.

>> And Susan wrote, I received an image of a falling leaf, letting go, nothing planned or scheduled, floating in the air, letting itself be carried, and landing wherever it lands to do its next work.

>> Maxine?

You have to unmute.

>> I've spoken already.

Thank you.

I was unmuted.

>> I've had just a body gesture prayer that came to me, just very simple.

>> I'm going to try that.

It's just making a heart, you know, opening, opening the hands, making a heart, bringing it to your -- >> Thank you.

>> I'm just so grateful to see people that I've missed in the past, and thank you for that gesture, Jeanette.

>> I just want to say thank you to everyone for being here as we each are, knowing that who we are is enough, and that that presence will continue to come for us and be within us and lead us.

>> And especially with such a crowd across the world, my heart knows that the little place that I live in is just a little place among many, and that the work is being done everywhere.

Thank you and blessings.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> I think what's so important with this time together is that the imaginal flow is never more concretely manifested than when we're together, particularly in the breakout rooms, and the giving and the receiving becomes one part of a web.

Thank you so much.

>> Thank you.

>> Well, thank you, everyone, for being with us today.

>> And let's just take a moment with all that has been shared verbally, somatically, energetically, and perhaps the visible and the invisible, coming back to what it was that brought you here today and noticing what it is that you've received, that you take with you.

>> Thank you.

>> I know I take with me that we are all instruments to be tuned and then to be used, and to do that simultaneously, trusting our skill will increase in efficiency and competency.

>> And so as you said, Sue, it's so wonderful to know that there are so many co-travelers on this path around the world that each one of us are holding down our corner of the universe, no matter how small.

>> And just a reminder that all of the resources from today will be made available to you and that there are many resources on Wisdom Waypoint's website, as you probably know, and there's always more that you can discover.

>> And so I invite us just to take another look at everyone.

>> Just leaning into the collective here.

>> If you're not on gallery view, placing yourself there.

>> Let us extend our hands to each other.

>> And then let us offer that up to the whole in some way that it be perhaps some kind of medicine in seen and unseen ways, our gathering together like this.

>> Thank you all for being here.

>> Thank you.

Thank you.

>> If you want, you can unmute and say your goodbyes.

>> Goodbye, everyone.

I love you.

>> Thank you so much.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you so much, everyone.

>> Thank you.