

TransmutationPoints – January 2013
Issue 5 – Elizabeth Frediani
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Inner alchemy is a core aspect of our spiritual work in Earth school. It is here, in body, that we enter the intricate dance between self and soul. And it is here that we at times become entangled, confused, wounded, and/or lost from our essential nature -- and where we learn to find ourselves again.

This quarter's first article focuses on the heart chakra and its essential role in our alchemical process and spiritual maturing. An energetic practice is included. The second piece is actually the curriculum for an upcoming monthly class on nonviolence. I invite you to read through this article and bring into focus the complex and nuanced learning we undertake when committing to the transformational practice of peace. I hope you join us for this awakening and soulful class.

In gratitude,

Elizabeth

Heart Chakra - Your Sacred Vessel of Transmutation

The heart chakra, like all chakras, embodies and expresses a focused field of consciousness. This means that it is activated by a certain spectrum of experience, of challenge, and of self-expression.

The heart chakra engages and responds to our experience of being heard, seen, valued, respected, and kept safe -- and also to our experience of being denied these. The heart awakens when we experience loss, joy, forgiveness, and/or connection. Soul-deep knowing comes through this chakra. And most profound, the heart chakra is the center through which we digest life experience and transmute what is not essential -- what is limiting or detrimental to our relationship with life and with soul.

The alchemical work of the heart chakra draws on soul energy -- its resolute light and its transformational power. It is through the transmuting energy of the heart -- that our most grievous judgments resolve into compassion, devastating betrayal transforms into release, and deep loss transcends into gratitude.

Transmutation is an active, alchemical process of meeting ourselves and penetrating the resistance, attachments, and pain carried within our own consciousness. This process, in its deepest form, is also known as the dark night of the soul -- when in the crucible of our own darkness and through the unwavering presence of spirit, old identifications disintegrate. We then birth into a truer expression of being.

Transmutation Practice:

~Focus your attention in the physical center of your heart chakra. Go to the deep core of this chakra at the center of your body, just in front of your spine. This is your heart's transmuting vessel. Sit here in meditation, staying focused and present in this spot.

~Take your challenges, pain, choices, and/or losses to your heart and hold them in your heart vessel. (Take one at a time.) Stay present in this place and a natural unfolding of awareness and feeling will occur.

Breath will open you. And your knowing will surface. Your knowing may come in the form of tears, recognizing right action, finding forgiveness, and/or seeing to the heart of an issue.

If you are transmuting a very deep experience, you can sit in focus intermittently over a few days. Each sitting will bring a new layer of digestion and knowing -- and each sitting will carry you along the path to wholeness and peace.

Through heart consciousness we realize our spiritual maturity. We learn to walk in union with dark and light and dissolve the veils of life's experiences.

We *are* alchemical beings.

Curriculum for The Practice of Peace: Nonviolence for Personal and Social Transformation

Gandhi viewed violence in substantive and broad terms. He included in his definition of violence: acting in haste, not telling the truth, and withholding what is needed. When I first read these words, my heart awakened in recognition. And for 30 years now, my personal commitment to nonviolence continues to deepen my learning and practice.

In bringing nonviolence work to groups, including two classrooms of amazing young children, several truths have become apparent. Most practical of these is that we need safe containers and forums for exploring the obvious and the subtle expressions of violence in our culture, our world, and in our personal lives. For despite its pervasive presence, violence is a taboo subject. Violence is our shadow. We project it, judge it, and run from it. And consequently, it often takes center stage, shaking us -- as it should -- to our core.

Over the years I have honed a curriculum that has become *The Practice of Peace:*

*Nonviolence for Personal and Social Transformation*SM. Below you will find an eight-class overview. A class is scheduled once a month, beginning in March 12.

I. Identify your experience of violation and define violence. By naming violence in its most personal form we are able to peel away layers of desensitization and commit to nonviolence in a genuine way.

II. Healing violence against self in all of its subtle and layered expressions. Exploring the interrelationship between powerlessness and violence and between well-being and nonviolence.

III. Listening as a transformational practice. How to transmute reactive emotional responses; transform reactive behaviors.

IV. Penetrating the oppositional dynamics of conflict and utilizing the creativity inherent in every polarized situation.

V. Learn to effectively support what you value and uphold it without frustration, fear, or apathy. Exploring Martin Luther King Jr.'s focus of our cosmic companion.

VI and VII. Conscientiously asserting yourself to maintain integrity, boundaries, personal power, and safety. Clear use of will and noncooperation with violence.

VIII. Course completion and a commitment circle: sharing what each of us values and will take on as our work and love in the world.

The practice of nonviolence calls us to align heart, will, and soul in our choices and our actions.