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Health, Society & The Environment

Dr. Wilder

Wild & Free

Homeward now shall I journey, Homeward upon the rainbow, Homeward now shall
I journey, Lo yonder the Holy Place.

-A Hopi Prayer

My name is Kendra and I'm an alcoholic. I share this because my whole life I have felt out of place and like I didn't belong with any group of people or even on this planet. I wore a mask everywhere I went and molded myself to be exactly like I thought people wanted me to be. When I first walked into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous I, for the first time ever felt comfort, felt like I belonged somewhere, and like I no longer needed to wear a disguise. I am not only an alcoholic, I am a daughter, a girlfriend, a student, a friend, a snowboarder, a climber, a wonderer, a teacher, an aspiring herbalist, a chef, a gardener, a writer, an activist, a traveler, a suicide survivor, and a healer. I am all of these things and more, and through naming the beautiful things that I am, I have found the intuitive power to heal myself from the destructive burden of civilization, which dusts the Earth with a deadly plague.

When I first registered for this class, I heard warning statements from former students telling me to mentally prepare and get ready for this rough class. I thought to myself "I know all the horrible things happening in the world, I know the earth needs our help, I'll be just fine". Sadly, after spending a semester learning the facts and truth behind human civilization, industry, and what really goes on behind closed doors, I was unaware of the magnitude of crisis our planet is really in. My eyes have truly been opened and now that I am a little more educated on the current state of trouble the world is really in, I am unable to look at things in modern society the same way as I did before taking this class. Now, when I venture out into the city

or engage in modern day activities, I know the truth behind their deception and annihilation. The current value system of the western world is incredibly out of whack. People care more about work and money than they do about spending time with their families, other loved ones, and creating a relationship with their bodies, with nature and with the food they eat. Money is at the top of the current social hierarchy and the people and groups with the most money have brainwashed people underneath them into thinking money is all powerful. The “working man” has been brain washed by big corporations and politicians into believing that we need to live the “American Dream” to be happy. Even developing countries are trying to be like the western world and the effects of this mind-set on the Earth are catastrophic. The current mentality is that we need to be married, have kids, get a high paying three-figure job, live in a big house with a white picket fence, each have our own fancy car, and have lots and lots of expensive stuff. This brainwashing has gotten so bad that I personally know people who think they are protected in this country, they believe everything they are told by “FOX News”, they live the “American Dream”, they consume just to keep up with the current trends and they have absolutely no concern with where their old stuff and trash ends up going; “out of sight, out of mind”.

The human body has not evolved to deal with the lifestyles of today. The heaps of diseases humans are now afflicted with are all of civilizations own creation. Stress has become a global killer, creating heart disease, strokes, heart attacks, digestive ailments, weakened immune systems, profuse mental disorders and cancer. The stress response, the fight or flight mechanism, is a tool for human survival. When our hunter and gatherer ancestors where confronted with a saber-toothed tiger the stress response would kick in, their heart would begin to work faster, and their digestive system would shut down in order to create more energy for escaping the predator. Today many humans are perpetually in a state of an active stress response. Their desire to get more money, and accumulate more power and more stuff causes us to work faster, longer and harder keeping the human body constantly in stress and unable to preform basic bodily functions. If we could all just step back

and stop moving so fast in order to find silence and stillness, a magical change would begin to happen. We would begin to listen, and hear what needs to be changed.

In the past five years I have found comfort and healing in the rooms of recovery. But I have recently once again noticed myself feeling slightly out of place in this setting. Although so many people find healing in 12step programs, myself being one of them, most have not yet begun to recover from western civilization. I can sense an endless disconnect when I walk around in the city and when I'm engaging in modern society; disconnects from nature, from community, from connectedness, from spirit and from love. How did the current state of society get here? I really appreciated Chellis Glendinning's book, *My Name Is Chellis & I'm in Recovery from Western Civilization*. I along with many other people in this world have experienced immense trauma. Glendinning touches on the contributing characteristic of original trauma. She believes that the complex world of trauma we currently live in started with the original disconnect from nature. Trauma, addiction and the evolution of modern diseases began "the moment we purposefully isolated domestic plants from natural ones, the moment we captured beasts from their homes in the wild and corralled them into human-built enclosures" (Glendinning, p. 60, 1994). This original disconnect from nature was a traumatic event for ancestral people and has caused the cycle of abuse and trauma to trickle from generation to generation exacerbating the cycle of addiction. Glendinning believes that if we could heal ourselves from our individual traumatic experiences we would be able to stop the suffering of an entire lineage that reaches all the way back to the original trauma of mankind's separation from the Earth. "We must address these deeper, chronic, collective imbalances as they appear in each one of us and in our way of life" (Glendinning, p. 66, 1994). This is so beautifully said; in order to stop the destruction of Earth and the cycle of trauma it is necessary to look within. A fellow classmate said that it is also important to hold space for both the trauma already experience and the goodness in life. It is paramount that we remember the trauma, as to not recreate more traumas.

Through my experience I have found that health is always evolving and growing. As I have grown mentally and physically so have my needs and values. The more I listen, the more my mind is expanded and the more I am able to feel what my body needs. When I first got sober, AA meetings and 12step work were my lifeline to health and healing from my old addictive patterns. Although 12step work is still very important to my health, it is not the only thing I need for preventative care and healing. I also need growth and change. I believe that is one of the most important connections I gained from this class. To overcome this crisis in our current fragmented world we must all come together in community, connectedness, education and health and put forth our own individual energy to promote change and growth. For me, to be a healthy individual is to listen deeply and connect with not only my body, but also connect with my mind, my heart, my emotions, my spirit guides, and with the Earth, people, plant and animals around me. It is so profoundly important that we human spend significant quality time in nature and developing a relationship with the environment. We will not find motivation to save the environment if we do not know it and reconnect with it.

I have always been a “why” thinker, always looking at the bigger picture. I have struggled with depression, suicide and addiction. I often wonder why I am here on Earth and what is my purpose. Throughout this class I have wanted to give up because the problems are so immense and overwhelming. I believe that disincarnated souls, or balls of energy, also know as spirits made the conscious choice to incarnate as humans on this planet called Earth. I also believe that before our souls came here they made a series of decisions and choices of what our embodied human form would encounter on Earth. These decisions would increase the intensity of light, growth, and wisdom within our souls and allow them to serve and give to others. Even in the darkest places of my confusion, I can find in the depth of my soul that I’m meant to be a white woman living in America during this critical time in the Earth’s history. I am here to make a difference, to be a healer of the Earth and to sever the train of trauma and addiction pulsing through the

generations of mankind. Come, help me create change; I cannot do it alone, but we can do it together.