

What are the great voices of the universe? When do we know that something glorious is flowing into us? My mind reviews the “biggies;” the sun, the moon, the stars, our living, breathing planet Earth, human companionship. These are soul-stirring and universal “voices” available to one and all.



Something leaps in my spirit, and perhaps in yours, at the coming of the morning sun and its setting in the evening; at the rise of the full moon each month; at the untold number and layers of stars on a clear, crisp evening; at the profound bond between mother and newborn regardless of species; at new shoots of plant life in early spring; at the fullness of summer, the colors of fall, the stark beauty of winter ice and snow; at an eagle flying upriver; at the hummingbird at my feeder; at the swarms of insects hovering over the river. I am inspired by the resilience of humans in good and difficult times –long-term relief efforts in post-earthquake Haiti and flooded Pakistan; by the grit and stamina of the Chilean miners caught underground for more than two months and the creativity of their rescuers; by lifelong peacemakers, justice-seekers and environmentalists; by humans, especially the poor, and other creatures struggling to attain the basic needs of everyday life; by the faithfulness of treasured friends ...

All of these are voices of the universe. Each one – and each of us – has 14 billion years of radiance pulsing in its being. Each one can “wow” us into wonder, delight, thanksgiving, reverence. What is needed is inward and outward atunement – eyes to see, ears to hear, and an open heart. While the great wonders and struggles of the outward world have tremendous pull for us, we miss the point if we limit our sights to them. In fact we need not (perhaps cannot) move from our personal experience. Our own breathing, the beating of our hearts, the experience of another’s presence or touch, the taste of food, the power of the wind, the smell of flowers or rain, another’s smile, the beauty of stirring music, of intentional prayer, of experiences of healing or of peaceful suffering and/or death – these likewise are voices of the universe in which something glorious, something radiant flows into us and also flows out of us. How can we not rejoice and be glad?

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