

Weekly Meditation May 19, 2010
By Rev. Teri Lubbers

Letting Go of Pain

Oddly, it's often easier for us to give up our pleasure than our pain. It's easier to give up our sex life, our hot fudge sundaes, or the pats on the back and such, than to let go of our pain, fear, and insecurity. We identify with them, we really hold on to those conditionings...When we go beyond attachment to pleasure and pain, allowing the long-conditioned responses to be met by awareness instead of being compulsively acted out, we experience a deeper happiness. An opening of the heart and mind occurs, a feeling of fulfillment in the moment. ~ Stephen Levine, "A Gradual Awakening"

Don't know about you, but I confess that I talk to myself. It can take many forms: a friendly chat, a nagging lecture, a playful nudging, or getting chewed out because I have caught myself doing "it" again, whatever "it" happens to be.

I just got home from visiting my father in Arizona; the first time I have seen him since my step-mother died two months ago. I came home sad. About Dad and June, and also about how easy is it to slip into conditioned ways of being, especially when it involves immediate family. My fifteen-year old self can show up in a heartbeat – complete with all her fear and pain, insecurity and fragility – given the right setting. Every one of us is comprised of a cast of characters, who wait in the wings for just the right moment to make an appearance.

So I had to remind myself today that it is possible to go beyond pleasure and pain. Awareness and Spirit can penetrate those conditioned responses. So while I had a good cry, I didn't have to cry the whole day. It is possible to let go of pain and compulsive acting out. It is possible to experience a deep happiness that doesn't depend on attachment to pleasure or pain. It is possible to open up instead of close down, to release instead of tense up, and to relax instead of hold life with white-knuckled fists.

Sometimes awareness comes in a flash. Sometimes it's gradual. But it comes...

Prayer: God may your grace surround me, and transform old conditioning, energies and attachments that no longer serve your purpose for me. Open my heart and mind that your spirit may flow freely in me today. Amen.