



**THE CREATIVE EDGE:
THE WAY OF THE ARTS**

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THE CREATIVE EDGE THOUGHTS ON CREATIVITY (NL18)

by Donald W. Mathews
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**I must conquer my loneliness
alone.**

**I must be happy with myself
or I have
nothing
to offer you.**

**Two halves have
little choice
but to
join;
and yes,
they do
make a
whole.**

**But two
wholes
when they coincide...
that is
beauty.
That is
love.**

—*Peter McWilliams* (From *Constructing the Sexual Crucible*—Schnarch)

Seeing and being seen fully as the erotic beings we are requires great courage and presence. It requires us to be consciously and lovingly in our body and in the world with others. But this leads to wholeness.

We have two major forces or energies always cycling through us. They are the life force and the death force. The Greeks called the self-destructive death force Thanatos. It is what shuts down psychic or emotional energies, feelings and passions in life. Like all qualities from life, it is finally considered good or bad depending on how it affects life. Eros is the self-preservative opposite energy moving us into action and direct experience. It is known and feared primarily because of its sexual focus and procreative activity. It is the major tenant in the darkness of Pandora's box and must be freed if we are to follow the soul's call into a full and creative life filled with vital enthusiasm and passion. Wrestling with the darker hidden aspects of Eros is central for intimacy with one's self and

essential for relationship with others. Appropriate balance and control of these energies, of our erotic nature, is necessary for any significant human relationship and comes from full acceptance and direct experience with both forces.

Several years ago I was offered a Kingship in a dream and refused it. Recently this theme returned. For me, Kingship means *holding supreme excellence in leadership with sacred power to serve the common good—bringing peace, love and spiritual unity within the kingdom*. It is the task of royalty, King or Queen, through demonstrated effective leadership, to establish and model an inclusive way of life that transcends conflicting issues, needs and personalities. In this regard, royalty implies a connection to the inclusive higher or divine power we know as God. It implies service to all the subjects of the kingdom. In the outer world we are clearly in a major state of change with many conflicts erupting. Effective royal leadership has not yet emerged. People are deeply pessimistic and divided over many controversial issues. There is no clear course of action. I feel it is potentially very dangerous, yet, a very creative time!

I think there are both inner and outer kingdoms to consider. And both have many diverse figures with different interests. I also know the inner realms often reflect the outer world with its many contemporary problems. Paradoxically, the personal inner realms and interests are the hardest to know and understand. However, these are the only ones all of us are truly responsible for as King or Queen! I know many characters living in my psyche are in disagreement and often at war with the leadership of my ordinary personality and assumed roles in the world. These are the dark, and sometimes divine characters who seem so different than the parts of me I know. Normally they only reveal themselves in my dreams. It is very difficult to even consciously acknowledge many of these socially unacceptable parts of my self, much less establish a working relationship with them so there can be peace in the kingdom of my soul.

Generally, I have tried to ignore them and keep them hidden in the most private parts of my psyche. But, they have an embarrassing way of eventually showing themselves. However, it is this personal inner relationship work that must be done to heal, grow and achieve creative potential, to assume the heritage of our divine royalty and accept Kingship. First we must become intimate with ourselves, before we can become passionate and intimate with another. It is in the courageous act of revealing the full range of our inner most being to another that intimacy really is established. Artists are often great because they have found within themselves this inclusive core essence deeply reflecting all humanity and expressed it well so others might share the deeply moving experience.

The process of finding my Kingship clearly centers on intimate relationship. As I have circled closer to knowing and loving myself and not being afraid to follow the muse of my inner process, I am taking a supportive stand for the strange

callings that come bubbling up from my psyche or soul. Many choices seem to risk every thing I value and I must then wrestle with the choices. However, I have found the courage to remain present often without resolution while in conflict, trusting my intuition to creatively guide me on an appropriate path. Traditional rules of society are helpful up to a point. Then, a shift to one's own creative center or spirit is necessary, as the Greek poet Cavafy said, "...in order to go beyond the establish inadequate norm." This risky wrestling with the issues and choices sometimes evokes painful but profound creative growth as it did for Jacob in the biblical story wrestling with the dark Angel at the river (Genesis 32:25). It is never clear when the issue must be lived or more rightfully expressed symbolically. The answer for any person ultimately must be found within them along with responsibility for consequences. This is the mantle of leadership taken by a King or Queen. It is not a mantle to be taken lightly. It is a mantle of wholeness and divine inclusiveness embracing all creation with wisdom. It leads to wholeness and the Kingship I seek in my life.

THE CREATIVE EDGE LETTER BOX (NL18)

Carmel Valley, CA

I would also like to share with you some poetry that I feel illustrates the influence of living in this area and its' contribution to the creativity of its' inhabitants. I find the contributions from readers in your newsletter to be evidence of...fine work...

HALLOWED INTERLUDE

I stop my car.

**Absence of noise
throbs in my head
so conditioned am I
to the growl of motor,
din of radio,
hiss of wind.**

In the new quiet,

**I notice eight oaks
ambling single file
along the crest
of a plump hill,
silhouetted by an amber
descending sun.**

**Crickets fiddle
tunes at twilight,
serenading the silent
steady drift of fog
enveloping the mountains
to the south.**

I yearn

**to possess time,
capture it motionless,
enshrined
in this peaceful moment.**

Laura Bayless

Michigan City, IN

I'm a little shocked, substantially uplifted and very grateful. ...most times I am fortunate enough to grasp my place in the mix, and more importantly humbly perceive what it is that constitutes my contribution, and purpose for existence. But on this particular day...a man I did not know was stabbed to death in front of my cell. One might think a person would become accustomed to death inside a prison, The reality is it just isn't so. Loss of life at the hand of violence instills an all encompassing, foreboding, emptiness in any other being; in or out of prison. I sat alone in the dark within the confines of my drab six foot by eight foot cell. Feeling completely numb from the intangible conversations which create a continual drone, a hive like hum which pulsates, growing and receding like waves reflective energy within our dominion. I found again for the umpteenth million time, I could instinctively sense generations of emotion encapsulated within the flaking layers of paint in a spectrum of colors. But why were they all so dull? Gray, tan, brown, slate blue, butterscotch yellow...? The blue smoky haze generated by 100's of burning cigarettes entwined in the shadows with nothing but tension swirling about a single halogen lamp. Obviously in conjunction with the nicotine stained fixtures and dismally bare walls, positive attitudes are not all that opulent.

...Almost more hate and vengeance than most human minds can fathom, beneath psychological stresses which have driven many over the edge, magically appeared a bolt of sunlight in the form of Creative Edge.

...Granted Creative Edge is not the New Yorker or Atlantic Monthly, but I am at loss to imagine gleaning any greater pleasure from seeing my words in print.

...I feel like a bird ejected from the proverbial nest. It would seem I vaguely comprehend the feeling of flight and appreciatively recognize what it is that causes birds to sing. I thank you kindly for allowing me into your sphere, I welcome you into mine...A little pleasure relieves a whole lot of sadness.

Jeffrey Ford c/o 901029 CCH-270, ISP DOC
P.O. Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46360-0041

Valvermo, CA

Thanks for sending me issues of The Creative Edge. The modern monk does not need to wear a hairshirt, for he is scourged by an avalanche of junk mail ... What is a pleasure is to exchange letters with friends and to receive a few bulletins in areas in which I am interested, and your bulletin is one such. I especially want to thank you for your essay in No. 17; Don, this is fresh spring water and it includes the ecstatic name of God. God bless you for this.

Father Gregory Elmer O.S.B.

East Lansing, MI

Daily my thoughts reach back to the sitting room at Walker Ground Manor and to the hills of Cumbria. I feel they are a link to each person who sat there with me experiencing poetry. That lovely old house with its ambling rooms will hold me in its warmth and the rocky paths of the Lake District (England) will continue to carry me into their healing beauty. My poem:

I WALK A PATH

**I walk a path that isn't mine,
a lamb set free, a traveler,
In a valley wide with crispen air,
and call of lark and plover.**

**The spongy soil beneath my feet
abreath with birth's dark murmur;
With wind to sting, Oh, let me stay,
with starck grey cliffs to shelter.**

**With emerald moss and golden cups
that spill through thwaite and meadow,
 With wispy mists and running cloud;
I would not grasp or gather.**

**But home is not a place for me,
a stranger, I, a traveler.
I merely lay a hand to tell,
the throbbing and the thunder.**

Frances Tripp

Carmel, CA

**His strong gentle hands
Stroke my back, my hair, my face
As he showers me with precious honey-words.
His sweet breath is music to my nostrils
As he lavishes tender kisses over me.
I move his hand to my breast.
His silent gasp does not escape unnoticed.
This man, this dear friend,
This light of my life
Is about to become my welcome lover.**

(Continued)

**Our lips, our mouths, our tongues,
Our arms, our hands, our bodies
Share quietly in the intense dance of sweet passion.
Suddenly
I awake
And sob salty hot tears into my pillow.**

Victoria Bliss

Downers Grove, IL

I have been enjoying The Creative Edge for the past year, and I thank you and all who contribute for the insights you offer. I notice when I read each issue, something deep inside breathes a large "Ahhhhh." I know that this comes from a very satisfied inner spirit, which receives each quarter's offerings as welcome nourishment.

Betty and I are adopting a 16 year-old young lady. The evolution of trust and relationship is quite a creative process, in itself, and not always an easy one. As you might remember, Betty and I have not been parents before, and so we are learning to parent, largely by reaching into our heart of hearts and trusting what the Spirit offer us. Yes, we have taken classes and read books on parenting, and we use that information. But, we end up following inner guidance in responding to the needs of our daughter.

Johnny North

San Jose, CA

I've been meaning to write you and share my poem with you which I wrote at Brughs' dark side conference in Jan. 93... Perhaps some of what I feel might be the darker sides of our oneness and unity with the Earth.

THOUGHTS FROM A WARRIOR

**Some ships go east others west
by the self same winds that blow
Tis the set of the sails and not the gale
that determines the way we go.**

**Like the ships at sea on the waves of fate
As we voyage along thru life
Tis the set of the soul that determines the goal,
And not the calm or strife.**

(Continued)

**The wounded child's tears,
Salty steel-hardened by time
Falls on the Earth, pollutes the rivers,
Barren mother...barren earth
Choking life!!!! mine.**

**We seek to fulfill in pattern and deed
Our calling, our fate...our destiny.**

**With a limp and a fart we seek out our heart
Taking strength from the earth
Which has set us apart.
Mother of tender mercy and Father deliver of time
Show me the balance to embrace
The whole that is mine.**

**Relax and surrender...!!!...conquer and kill
are two sides of the same fix-it pill
To wound and to heal are one in the same,
As pleasure and pain spring forth from my name.**

**Envy, greed, lust...!!!...honor, integrity, loyalty...!!!
the battling forces within!!!!
Shape the ego, seed the dark
Welcome, embrace the soul.**

**Abandoned storms fury, unsheathed sword bathed in blood
Twists of deceit, turning dagger in flesh
Carnage and scorn blindness in dark
Suddenly so quiet so still...Unsettled in rest.**

**On high is the dragon to swallow its' tail
breathing fire and lightening the sky.
Redeeming storms fury, I thank you for rain
To wash away sorrow, anguish, and pain
The torrent of torments we share in this place,
Is but a dance in the outer of our own inner space.**

**With courage and confusion I seek harmony and peace
Amid chaos, anger...a restless soul
May we all live in Peace.**

Russell P. Farkouh

Carmel, CA

I was inspired to weave... the purpose of your gathering and... offer the enclosed poem in place of my presence.

DEEP VOICE

**It will not arrive
Announced on sword and shield,
Stepping ashore where
Prow of boat has scarred the sand.**

**Nor could it come
On the red ribbon of life force,
Death cry,
From wound and puncture.**

**It will not appear
From behind Rock at cave mouth
Ghostly shroud of luminance.**

**It will not be seen above the trees
Perfect pyramid
A mountain cut and moved
Rearranged in clever block
Cut to perfection
Result of sweat and hunger**

**Not even in the supplication
Of priests to men, sun or stars,
Complex symbols of obfuscation
To order imagined**

**But one day—out of silence
Just when mists have cleared.
And Spring has reached its' full potential
There shall it be—complete
Like the coming of a bride.**

Tony Schaurer

Raiford, FL

It's nice to be a part of something...to be thought about, cared about. I appreciate your sincere kindness and purpose.

Enclosed is a poem of mine. It's about "death". You see...I died once...actually was pronounced dead by an M.D, drowned at 12 years old. My father ignored others efforts and continued CPR...and lo and behold...I'm still here. But it was a rather mystical intimate and pleasurable experience to say the least!!

FEAR NOT

**And there was light...
that couldn't be held, nor seen in ones hand,
A volition to be one...whatever they can.
T'was light to behold...in the seed of ones soul,
for without it...are we?**

**And in the light of darkness
one's soul sees much more
more than meets the eye or jostles ones' mind,
for can a soul in darkness without light be?**

**Sometimes I close my eyes to see clearer the light.
that guides me in darkness to fear not the night.
for in darkness without light are we?**

**Some say that a darkness dubbed doom could be hell,
Though I drift in solemn memories.
of a rapture to tell.**

**Hell's goal, Heaven's gates, perhaps an undeniable host,
If preference bestowed me, I'd choose the holy Ghost.**

**Soon we'll meet again...oh darkness of light
Contentedly I beseech you...for that eternal right
For God's everlasting light...in the life of Death.**

Bruce C. Jonas

San Jose, CA

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

O, gracious Father...

Bestow on me your nature.

Impart in me your Holy Character.

**Sanctify my steps and direct my thoughts in a pathway
of loving service.**

Fill me with your wisdom that does all things well.

Vitalize me with Your infinite energy.

Whatever is lacking to my being, O Lord, supply that to me.

Make me like yourself, most richly blessed.

Lead me by your own hand through this uncertain maze of life.

I am Your warrior, ready to act in accordance with Your will.

**When my mortal end shall come, make my earthly existence
an honor to Your Holy Presence.**

Receive me into Your endless service on high.

Amen

Father Jack LaRocca

San Luis Obispo, CA

I was extremely pleased and “tickled” to see letters from Jeff, Bruce, and Steve in the newsletter. It’s almost like some kind of brotherhood or alumni. I also appreciate and fully approve of what you chose of mine to publish. I do hope that what we said DOES find meaning in the hearts of others. The current dis-ease in public mentality of killing for killing, and even taking a persons life (in the free world) for a petty theft, horrifies me that we have become so vengeful and inhumane in our responses. What happened to history?... I just hope you realize how deeply rewarded I feel over this experience of doing time. A little singed perhaps, but I have acquired the basic tools I need to be more real.

August 20th is my day of metamorphoses according to paper, but... I will believe that when I see it and live what happens next.

Kevin Lock

Thank you for your letters and creative offerings. I invite you to look for emerging themes from your own or other’s intuitions and creative works. Then, I invite you to comment on how they facilitate your life journey. I look for words and work I feel supports sharing and understanding of the creative process. I will add your address (Regular or E-mail) when you approve.

The Editor

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