



Living in the Balance

April 2010

...If you follow someone else's way, you are not going to realize your potential.

It takes courage to do what you want. Other people have lots of plans for you.

Nobody wants you to do what you want to do. They want you to go on their trip.

Joseph Campbell

In his book, *Living Your Unlived Life*, Robert A. Johnson says that for every choice I made in my life I also made an "unchoice." Sometimes those choices were made for me....like my race, family of origin, gender.....but there are many, many choices I made. I decided to be a school counselor and administrator over many other careers which left many other professions among the "unchosen."

In the first half of life, I was not really conscious of how my choices would impact the rest of my life even as I was making decisions. I was busy building a life or having my life built for me. What leisure I had soon became consumed with work changes that demanded longer days. Increased community activities and responsibilities with aging or ill family began to take more time. Whatever creative passions I had lay neglected. The sewing machine was sold. The camera sat on the shelf.

Then one day, the long silent, neglected "unlived" parts of me began to show up as anger and resentment at those who spent their Saturdays hiking or taking a class while I spent mine trying to catch up on yard work or bill paying or committee meetings or other "duties as assigned." That anger came to a head on a spring morning when I threw the hedge clipper in the middle of the street and told my stunned husband that I was planning to run over the clipper with my car. Although it would have been easy to blame my frustration on the dreaded yard work, it was truly a righteous rebellion of the starving, languishing, "unchosen" parts of me. On that Saturday morning the creative longings called and were once again denied some life and "play" and then the entire crew mutinied and the hedge clipper walked the plank.

After I got over my tantrum with the hedge clippers, what I saw was that it wasn't the hedge that needed pruning; it was my life. I needed to open some spaces so that other parts of my *self* that were being choked out could grow. And we all get messages like this. They show up as envy. Or anger. Or depression. Or "I wish." "If I only had time to...." "How I long to...." "Look at Susie, Janie, Doug.....How do they do that?" "I always dreamed....." Jungian analyst James Hollis talks about how many of his middle of life patients are waiting for someone to give them permission to live their lives. He replies..... "No one is going to give you permission to live your life. You must seize your life!"

Then Hollis asks the question, "What got left behind for you?" That question made my eyes fill with tears as I thought of things I had done and stopped doing or things I wanted to do and was afraid I wouldn't be able to do. OK....I'm not going to be Ansel Adams, but what joy there is in spending an hour photographing every nuance of a statue in the park. And I've talked to others about the unlived life and almost to the person, their eyes become a combination of nostalgia and whimsy and longing. I am hopeful that Wisdom and the Divine will give us courage to listen to our souls' desires. Feed those yearnings in those unlived, unfed places for therein lie the vibrant, energetic pieces of "us" that are seeking expression. And inside those desires lies what will bring all our "selves" into one whole and expressive being that is uniquely "us."

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Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life by James Hollis

Living your Unlived Life by Robert A. Johnson

The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron

The John C. Campbell Folk School at www.folkschool.org

What's calling? What makes you come alive?

Zumba, woodworking, pottery, writing, collage, painting, metalwork, biking, bread making, dancing, hiking, meditating, vision quest, ballet, gardening, reading, yoga, stamp collecting.....just being in the moment...in the quiet.....soaking in the universe?

Events to consider.....

Anderson School of Theology for Laypersons.....50th Anniversary Celebration

Fall Lecture Series...."the theme of this series is the variety of ways in which religious texts, writers, prophets, and founders of the great religions have expressed what they knew and experienced of God. As modern readers and believers we must work to understand what we read and experience of God in our own lives."

October 12 – Experiencing the Truth – Dr. Stuart Sprague

October 19 – Imagining Truth – Dr. William Mallard

October 26 – Prophesying Truth – Dr. Tom Richie

November 2 – Singing Truth – Dr. Tommy Watson

November 9 – Practicing Truth – Dr. Barbara Brown Taylor

Spring Lectures

Parables By and About Jesus by Drs. Marcus Borg and John Crossan

February 18 – 19, 2011

www.astlonline.org

Haden Dream Conference

May 31 – June 4, 2010

Kanuga Conference Center, Flat Rock, NC

www.hadeninstitute.com



Other events to consider.....

The Dalai Lama will visit Emory in Atlanta

October 17 – 19, 2010

During his visit, the Dalai Lama will participate in several programs open to the general public and to the Emory community. For information regarding the Dalai Lama's visit, and to register for listserv updates, go to dalailama.emory.edu

James Hollis at the Jung Society of Atlanta

February 18 – 19, 2011

www.jungatlanta.com

Nexus Announces Speakers for Engaging Faith Conference

February 25-26, 2011

Alan W. Jones

Lillian Daniel

www.engagingfaith.org

Jerry Wright, Jungian Analyst, will be at First Baptist Greenville

October 22 – 23, 2010

A number of organizations in the Upstate area offer ongoing programs.....

The Interfaith Forum.....contact Steve Vance at srbanjo@charter.net

St. James Center for Spiritual Development at <http://saintjamescenter.org>

Kanuga Conference Center at www.kanuga.org

Asheville Jung Center at www.ashevillejungcenter.org





About Spiritual Direction —

- Offers a space and time for you to explore, reflect upon, and deepen your relationship with God.
- Provides a haven from the daily busyness of the outer world and opens a time to be still and to reflect on your inner journey.
- Is a companioning relationship grounded in dialogue and discernment.
- Explores ways you may integrate spirituality into your daily life.
- Is not limited to any one spiritual practice or tradition.
- May involve one or two meetings or multiple meetings over time.

You may wish to consider spiritual companioning if you are —

- Longing for a deeper relationship with the Divine
- Looking for a place to dialogue about spiritual questions
- Seeking ways to connect with the Spirit in daily life
- Questioning how the Spirit is working in your life
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a difficult crossroads in your life
- Exploring new or fresh ways to be in relationship with God

For more information about Spiritual Direction, please feel free to contact me by phone
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