

Epilogue

It is now September 22, 2008, which is the Autumnal (Fall) Equinox, and the book is finally ready to be launched. And it is only fitting that it be launched now, along with the Autumnal Equinox, since—at age 58—it represents the fall season of my life and the harvesting of much of my life experience.

And the Equinox is such an important time of year for me that it feels very appropriate to be bringing the book to the world at this time. The Equinox is important to me because—as you already know—it is the time of the year when the length of the day and night are equal or in harmony. And my entire intention with the book is to enhance harmony on the planet so what could be more perfect.

This perfect timing is the work of the divine universe, not me.

In my own human imperfection, I had felt a need to rush forward and get it printed as quickly as possible when I got back to Mentor in April. But then a wondrous thing happened—I realized that I needed to let go of the illusion of control and just let the process unfold with its own divine timing, and that my task was to go with that flow and just pay attention to what the universe wanted me to learn.

And I had a lot yet to learn.

As you know from the book, my life journey has been marked by the need to heal my wounds and face my fears in order to move forward and live a more conscious life. And by a conscious life I mean one where I am secure enough in my inner self that I can allow the divine to guide me and, by so doing, co-create a more loving, grateful, and peaceful existence for myself.

And a conscious life is a wonderful place to live. It is a little like moving to a new city—everything is fresh and new and exciting. And you have to find your way around this new place and it takes a little time to feel settled and comfortable. It also requires patience with yourself as you make the wrong turn to go to the grocery store, but you learn from your mistakes and make the right turn the next time.

That clearly has been my experience—the chutes and ladders aspect of the process of becoming more conscious. Forward, backward, forward, backward—but always making a little more progress along the way, until finally you reach a summit and know that your life has changed forever. There may be more than one summit—there certainly was for me—but you are still making progress every step of the way.

At this time in our evolutionary history, the concept of living a conscious life is talked about but is not yet the mainstream way of thinking. So it will take courage to walk this path and stick to it when you are surrounded by people who still think very differently.

But I would hope that this book will encourage those of you who are on this path to keep going, and open a window to others who are just starting to consider this new way of being.

I do believe that it is our evolutionary destiny because it is the truth, and because it empowers all of us as individuals to be the best person that we can be. And, collectively, it empowers us to heal the world—which we obviously have a very real need to do.

And while I would certainly love to see more collective action to heal the planet, I would not want us to underestimate the power and impact of our individual commitment to peace and healing. If each of us became just a little more loving towards ourselves and others, we would experience a very different world.

Each of us has a unique journey, and we hope that by sharing our journey that you will feel more empowered on your own life path.

I believe that we are all on our own unique paths towards consciousness—whether we know it or not. And I believe that becoming a more conscious person is what we are here to do—it is the natural evolution of our species.

As time goes on, I also believe that this “work” that we are all engaged in will become more acceptable in the mainstream and a natural part of our understanding of ourselves and others.

There are many avenues through which our consciousness can be expanded. In my life’s journey, certainly taking the time and making the sometimes painful effort to examine and heal my personal wounds and see the lessons in those experiences has been important. Spending time in nature and letting its presence heal me has also played a key role. Facing my fears with courage and perseverance has certainly been important to me, particularly in the last several years as shared in this story.

But certainly the most obvious and perhaps most dramatic catalyst in my life journey has been Max. Ever since he came into my life, I have been head over heels in love with him and, because of that love, determined to meet the challenges that he brought into my life. And, as you just read, he brought me quite a few—and big ones at that.

Max has taught me a great deal, including:

- He taught me how to slow down enough to be present in my everyday life. I am reminded of that every day on our morning and evening walks.
- He taught me to honor my body and my mobility with the broken leg experience. That experience also taught me patience and endurance—in great measure.
- He taught me to appreciate and love nature—and to relax into it—in a way that I never fully understood before. He is so present with nature that I learn just by watching him.

- He taught me to have confidence in myself and my abilities, and that I could indeed handle a big dog, a big motorhome and any other big challenges that come into my life.
- He showed me how to love unconditionally, and taught me how to do it as well. He helped me learn to love myself—and that I didn't need to be perfect in order to be lovable.
- He taught me how to be present in the now, in every moment of every day. He still does it much better than I do, but I'm learning more all the time by watching him do it.

And I'm sure that there are many more items to put on the list, and that the list will continue to grow in the years ahead.

I just feel very grateful and very blessed to have Max in my life, and very appreciative of all that he has taught me and is continuing to teach me. I know that he serves as an instrument of the divine, and that they couldn't have given me a better teacher.

And I know that I have changed from all of these experiences, and that my view of reality has shifted in fairly dramatic ways. This is what I now believe:

- I see the world very differently than I did a few years ago; namely, I believe in the divine universe, and in the power of divine energy as love to heal ourselves and our planet.
- I believe we are all connected through one divine energy field and that we can communicate with each other and “influence” each other (both positively and negatively) through that divine energy field.
- I believe we need to watch and manage our thoughts at all times and live with as much positive presence as possible; and to learn to allow the divine to guide us in our daily thoughts and actions.
- I believe that our purpose in life is to learn to live through this new perspective in order to bring service and healing to ourselves, to other people, to animals, and to everything else on our planet.
- I believe that by living a life of joyful service that each of us can bring light to our little corner of the world and that is important in and of itself.

These beliefs have emerged from my life experiences—many of which I have shared with you in this book. I believe that our experiences in life are our most powerful teachers if we just understand them as such.

And I am happy to report that I have listened and learned from all of the experiences, and they have made it possible for me to “put my closet back in order.” The mess on the floor that I couldn’t see how to organize earlier in the book has been straightened out and neatly put away.

Keeping it that way will, of course, be an ongoing process, but that’s life. We will constantly be receiving new things in our lives that need to be sorted through. That keeps our life fresh.

And everyone has to learn to do this for themselves. And I have confidence that we can all learn to do it, and do it well.

No one will ever know you better than you know yourself. Other people might be able to support you and encourage you, but they can never replace that powerful inner knowing that is yours alone.

So please listen to and honor that inner wisdom—it is your key to learning to truly love yourself and everyone and everything in your world.

And that, my friend, is the path to inner peace.

May peace be with you.