

BE THE CHANGE - WEEK 6: Jan. 5-11

Wisdom, Social Intelligence & Love of Learning

I remember a long ago situation that taught me about wisdom. I had been asked to see a family of adult children and their mother, to try to mend a rupture that had blown the once-close family apart. I can still see myself, time and again, turning to the mother during our sessions, believing that because she was older, she was wise. Alas, it was a rude awakening to discover that the emotional intelligence and wisdom I had, until then, believed developed over time was nowhere to be found in this woman.

At that point I began to question, “What *is* wisdom? If it is not a given that comes with age, where DOES it come from?” Wikipedia didn't exist at that time but now has the answer I ultimately discovered in my family sessions: “*Wisdom* is the ability to think and act, using knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight.” Ah, the mother was lacking in several of these qualities!



Photo Credit: Ronna J. Biggs
“Lavender Bee”

Why is wisdom important to our “Be the Change” model of “Ready, Aim, Fire?”

Wisdom is our ability to effect change based on personal understanding and insight. To become a change agent in any arena, whether it is in your family, your business, a social justice movement - anywhere really – and to be good at it – requires the practice of tuning in to the other people with whom you are collaborating, empathetically responding to them and using the insight received from this, to “aim” the arrow of your intention.

This isn't so much the old “how to win friends and influence people” model but more about being a socially intelligent person, focused on learning from every person and situation to bring about positive outcomes and true, lasting change for your own benefit and the benefit of those with whom you are working.

To do this, first allow yourself to be more present, more available wherever you find yourself. See - really see - the ones you are with. Listen deeply, carefully to what they are saying – and what they are NOT saying. Be genuinely available to them. This requires stepping out of preconceived notions, out of our own “way we think it should be” and into a place that invites insight.

The TED talk I have chosen has a title with “compassion” in it – but I picked this one more for the discussion Dan Goleman has around emotional/social intelligence. I hope you like it!

https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_goleman_on_compassion

Right about now it becomes very easy to lose focus! Don't stop now – you've come so far. Renew your commitment to spiritual practice, reading and yourself!

I hope to see you on 1/15 for our second spiritual circle at CSL Bellingham from Noon- 1 PM!

Dr. Andrea



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This week's assignments:

- 6 Days a Week: Do ten minutes or more of spiritual practice.
- 6 Days a Week: Read the daily passages from Mark Nepo's *"The Book of Awakening"* - Jan. 5-11.
- Watch/Listen to Daniel Goleman's TED talk about social intelligence and compassion called "Why Aren't We More Compassionate?": https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_goleman_on_compassion

A Ritual to Read to Each Other

By William E. Stafford

If you don't know the kind of person I am
and I don't know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dike.

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,
but if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider—
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give — yes or no, or maybe —
should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.