

## Oriah's News: Spring 2012 - How We Choose Life

### Ways to stay in touch:

**Daily reflections & conversation:** Each day I post and participate in conversations on Facebook at <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?MountainDreamingProd/8a4cb344d1/TEST/bd8e48b8d5> - (You do not need Facebook account to view the page.)

**Weekly blogs:** Every Wednesday I publish a blog that explore what it means to live our spirituality in the context of an ordinary human life. To receive the blog in your email inbox scroll down the blog page and put your email address in the spot at the bottom of the green panel on the right-hand side. <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?MountainDreamingProd/8a4cb344d1/TEST/e43bab55c5>

**Tweets:** Yes, I have finally opened a Twitter account- so you can follow my attempts to share in 140 characters. <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?MountainDreamingProd/8a4cb344d1/TEST/37e0ab8d48>

**The Books:** *The Invitation, The Dance, The Call, Opening The Invitation* and *What We Ache For* are available. If you are ordering through Amazon please go to my website <http://www.oriah.org> and click on the book cover to be taken to the ordering page.

**Upcoming Giveaway-** Sometime over the next six months (giving myself lots of time to learn the techno end of things) you will receive an email asking you if you would like to stay on this list. If you click to continue, you will receive an mp3 of a guided meditation I am in the process of creating. This same recording will be available to new folks coming onto the mailing list.

### I will be spending my spring and summer writing a new book.

#### The New Book- What It's Not

Publishers always ask writers to articulate the "take-away value" of their book. So, for fun, I decided say something about the new book I am writing with the working title, *The Choice*. It probably says something about the curmudgeonly side of my personality that I start with what the book is not.

This book is not going to give you a formula for getting thin, rich or famous. It does not hold the secret to finding your soul mate, or participating in mind-blowing ecstatic sexual intimacy. It will not provide a program for becoming fully enlightened, being perpetually at peace, or setting anyone (you or me) up as a spiritual guru.

If you don't read this book you will some day die, but most likely not before you have experienced loss, sorrow, grief, and illness.

On the other hand, if you do read this book you will some day die, but most likely not before you have experienced loss, sorrow, grief, and illness.

Hopefully, whether or not you read this book, you will also experience joy, peace, laughter, love and intimacy with yourself and others.

Because that's what life is like for human beings- for embodied souls in this world. If you are fortunate your

choices will line up with a multitude of factors largely beyond your control- particular genetics, early environmental influences, and the political economic realities of the place you live- that will allow you to get old before you die and so experience the gradual, unpredictable and yet inevitable breakdown of your body and possibly your mind. I don't know what happens after we die, and (at the moment) I am okay with not knowing. So this book will not offer you promises about what happens next.

Okay, I admit, as advertising copy this may leave something to be desired. But the truth is, I don't find what I have described here depressing. These are some of the realities we live, and I don't want to waste any time pursuing promises that imply I can or should transcend these realities or get rid of the anxiety, ambivalence, or ambiguity that sometimes arises.

**No matter what you do- no matter how hard you work, how diligently you practise, how sincerely you want to change, how many times you fail to meet your aspirations or are not as disciplined as you imagine you'd like to be- you will not wake up tomorrow as anything more or less than a human being, an embodied soul living in this world.**

### **The New Book- What It Is**

***The Choice*** is about how we find our way into choosing the life we have in this moment, with this body-mind-heart-spirit, in this world- even if the present moment is filled with challenges. **It's about how we find our passion for living here when the flame of that desire has been dampened by loss and pain, confusion and despair.**

As many of you know my "here" has been challenging over the last couple of years. I've experienced a prolonged relapse of chronic illness (CFS/ME,) the sorrow-filled end of my marriage that had been limping painfully along for several years, and watching both of my parents spiral downward with Alzheimer's.

These kinds of challenges can stir up old wounds buried in the body and heart and all of this, quite reasonably brings to consciousness the often unasked question at the center of every human life: Do I really want to be here? How we answer this question in general terms and perhaps more importantly in our small daily choices, determines the quality of the journey we take.

When I was young, to survive I often left my body, my awareness focused on other worlds- seen and unseen, imaginary or real. Later, this gave me an ability to do some of the shamanic training, practises and healing ceremonies I came to explore, value and teach.

And now. . . I want in- all the way in, deeply in, completely in, fully in- even knowing life includes pain and loss. I'll probably always be able to leave my body, but what interests me now is how I can be fully in this body, fully in this world and this life until I am gone.

**This book is about the times in life when that choice, the desire to be here, has not been clear- when I've wanted to want to be here but was unable to connect to the fire of living and wondered if I was simply "done." It's about the journey of coming back from that edge of despair, rediscovering the center of my own being, and making the choice to be here in this messy, complex and spectacularly beautiful human life.**

If you wish to be on the mailing list, please email your address to [mail@oriah.org](mailto:mail@oriah.org)