

Oriah's Newsletter- June, 2013

Dear friends, It has been a year since I sent out a newsletter. Life has been full and not without both its challenges and delights. Below is a reflection on the on-going journey of writing and living with the unfolding of a new book.

If you have not already done so I hope you will join the conversations on [Facebook](#) where I make small daily offerings (you can see them even if you do not have a FB account) also posted on [Twitter](#), or you can drop-in or subscribe to the weekly [blog](#). May the blessings of the Summer or Winter Solstice (depending on where you are on this tiny earth we share) be plentiful, Oriah

How To Be Here

I am late, stuck in rush hour traffic. I take a deep breath and am suddenly overwhelmed by the beauty of the roses blooming in front of the brick duplexes and modest homes along the street. There are low bushes and high hedges filled with blossoms- pink and blood red, white and pale yellow- wild and unruly, bowing and swaying on slender stems in the light breeze. I can feel my whole body smiling at their offering, at this abundance so freely given.

This kind of unexpected inhaling of beauty that lifts me has been happening more frequently as I work on a new book, tentative titled, "The Choice."

Writing, for me is an exploration. I write myself into the questions that matter to me. Working on a new book I live into the question, **How can I be here fully?** And then, one night in a dream I hear a voice whisper words I recognize from the writing of the nineteenth century Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore: "**We live in the world when we love it.**" The words pull me up out of sleep and I know Tagore is right- we cannot be fully with that which we do not love.

The next morning I get up and open a new book of poetry that someone has sent me. The slender volume, Mary Oliver's *Thirst*, sits on my bedside table- a promise of poetry that is as brave as I would like to be. Oliver's first line in the book's first poem, "Messenger," declares, "**My work is loving the world.**"

My throat and my chest suddenly fill with sweet tears. When we hear a truth we need the heart breaks open. I get it: To be fully here, we must each find our way of loving the world.

So, the question shifts, becomes, "**How do I love the world?**" I ask it when I awaken at four am with a searing migraine, and when I am with my father as he wanders in his Alzheimer's haze. I hold it close when my mother's Alzheimer's advances and she rages against losing her driver's license and then her home. I ask it when illness flares and lands me in bed for weeks. I keep it with me when I listen to news of war in Syria and wildfires in California.

The question does not provide easy answers, but to my surprise it shifts my attention away from trying to survive what is hard, to opening to the possibility of letting the inquiry itself guide me. It opens my eyes to seeing and receiving the beauty that is in each situation- the sweetness of watching the pre-dawn darkness give way to the light, the kindness of strangers providing care for my parents, the courage and generosity of those providing help in war-torn and weather-beaten areas of the world.

The Grandmothers in my dreams counsel me in how to love the world: **“When you open your eyes, your heart opens. When you truly see and receive what is around and within you, you cannot help but love yourself and the world.”**

And so it is, more and more each day. Oh, I don't want to imply that I have turned into some all-loving, always-centred, enlightened being. Ha! I still snarl at pain before I relax around it and notice the dawn, still worry about my parents before I surround them with love and prayers in my morning practise, still ache to hear of the suffering of others. But something has changed. I have found a willingness to return again and again to feeling my way into loving the world under all conditions. It may require action or stillness, work or play, speaking up or remaining silent. But always, as the Grandmothers remind me, it asks that I open my eyes and my heart.

And so, I continue to write, exploring how I might make the choice to be here by loving myself, others and the world deeply grateful to consistently find that what is needed to keep my heart open is provided when I am willing to see and receive.

Oriah (c) 2013

Other Offerings

Because the writing is my present priority I am not currently offering workshops or retreats but will keep you updated on future possibilities for gathering together. I do work with individuals via the phone and Skype, some in on-going sessions and others for one or two consultations. If you are interested in knowing more about this work please email me at mail@oriah.org and I will send you the information.

My books [*The Invitation*](#); [*The Dance*](#); [*The Call*](#) and [*What We Ache For: Creativity and the Unfolding of Your Soul*](#) can be ordered on line- simply click on the title here or go to the [website](#) and click on the pic of each book.