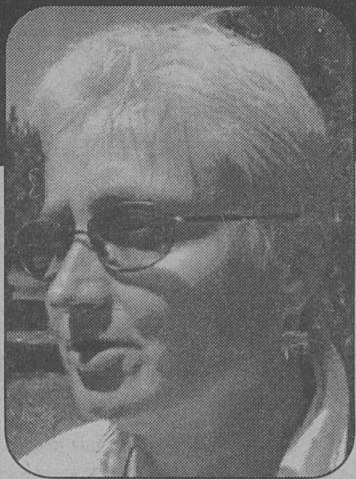


Ma Vie En Jade.

by Jade Wolfe



Tea and Crumpets

Understanding where our deep-rooted beliefs lie (within us) – how they are firmly planted into our consciousness – is a life skill worth cultivating. An individual can accept more of themselves if they take a few risks and open up to inner discoveries. Learning new things is worth the potential changes that inevitably happen. And change is a ready excuse for many of us to avoid knowledge, if by obtaining it “change” is deemed warranted.

We can appreciate all the changes others have experienced. Can we accept the different choices we all make when confronted with change?

We have more than our intellect to guide us. For sake of this moment, “intellect” is restricted to those mental thought skills functioning on a conscious level. Our hearts guide us as well. If there were not some validity (even to hardened skeptics), I pose this question: When you fall in love, rationalize out all of the obvious, practical reasons you feel attraction for this person, you are still left with the warm, affectionate feelings even separate from any sexual feelings or supposed “chemistry” there are feelings coming from your “emotional heart” that feel real enough to you, to be part of a decision-making process. The feeling is a real factor in how you respond to this person’s presence.

As it is true for individuals, so is it true for groups of people. This can even occur when the basic beliefs challenged by accepting new, better knowledge are not sanctioned by a major institution.

Interconnectedness is a different way of saying “community.” Every community has a few walls formed around it. The perceptions linking personal needs to beliefs form a pattern of safety for individuals. The subtler walls endure the longest. They provide insulation when we need to avoid exposure to danger. Knowledge that would serve to enlighten and empower remind us of our individual responsibilities. Accepting knowledge as in new growth challenges us to move beyond doing, acting or believing as an accepted member of a group. This can pose quite a threat. Choices are narrowed when we must believe certain things in order to belong. Thus a wall is in place to make sure unnecessary growth will not threaten the cohesiveness of its individual members.

The simplest of knowledge can enlighten. The most basic “aha!” experience can be very empowering, if empowerment is an acceptable option. Empowerment brings more choices and at times, we do not wish to choose. Change often occurs when we choose out of new experiences or knowledge. The civil union legislation tested the walls surrounding the world community, the United States community, the Vermont community and the gay community.

The quiet lives of the GLBT members who were unexpectedly placed under a limelight certainly were changed. Individuals and couples who had lived in a kind of rogue state have the option to legally be in a committed relationship with a same sex partner. Even though this has been a small step, nonetheless it has been made. So communities of what used to be outright extremes are peeking over their walls toward one another. The fear-based, religious dogma ties many people to a labyrinth of rhetoric. However, when more of us can understand that all lives are different, thus equally deserving of respect and acknowledgement, perhaps the next step will be more pleasant for everyone. Because this fear of “letting go” is addictive. Elements of prejudice are nurtured into accepted prejudice.

Change in attitudes reaches back into our basic belief systems. Some of the resulting feelings are uncomfortable and difficult to resolve. Guilt with realizing that maybe ... maybe homosexuality is not a disease or a sin is an important factor. Homosexuality has been a convenient “trash can” for countless generations. Whether it was an ignorant narration of a dispute where one person was gay (along with being male, a doctor, a Norwegian, etc.) or a typical joke, bit by bit as the trash-can filled, anti-gay feelings have been promoted and legitimized.

And as evolutionary waves go, let’s face it, when it comes to needing a “trash can,” we humans have a healthy, active addiction. There is such an easy trap in needing an enemy. It is convenient. We can project our anger onto an enemy. Hold a grudge, wage a war, feed a prejudice and ensure continued ignorance.

Everyone is being asked to re-examine how they feel about homosexuality. Not only the “other than homosexual” living or friendly people are feeling this evolution. Much pain and hurt has been absorbed by GLBT people. So this is one choice to consider, “letting go” of the pain. “Letting go” in general is another of those nasty, irritating experiences of growth. Choosing to let go of anger, pain, prejudice, grudges, or not so great eating patterns are indications of healthy growth. But that brings me back to that damn trash can. We all contribute to it in some way. Holding on to negative energy adds a sizeable chunk to the pile. And change can be a matter of trust. Trust is tricky. For some people, having never been gifted with it in childhood, it is a begrudging consideration but takes a great amount of courage and perseverance to experience. And even if we had our basic emotional need basket filled in childhood, trust is still problematic.

We are already growing and changing as an overall species whether it is comfortable or not. There are concerns as to the validity of enhancing the GLBT community’s connections with our larger community. I offer a few beliefs. In order to love anyone else, I need to love myself. In order to accept others, first I need to accept me. When I have faith in myself, I can have faith in others. This sense of self or accepted thought structures of mine feel right to me. The world around me periodically reinforces them, but not always. It is a matter of trust for me to nurture and sustain these concepts within me. I have succumbed to my own addiction. I enjoy and keep revisiting: the vibrance of an opening mind, the beauty of an accepting, welcoming heart and the brilliance of an ever expanding spirit.

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