



Living Whole: A Time of . . .

by Maggie French

A New Year has begun. Full, some would say, of trepidation for all that is unknown.

Is that not the future, a place unknown, that can either be full of foreboding or alive with possibilities? What is it of the human spirit that has some excited for what might be possible "out there," and others worrisome of possible turmoil?

They are equally possible. How can we ride the present changing world and see the possibilities ahead while managing through this unfamiliar territory?

I became aware of a possible answer one morning late in the fall. I was driving along Queen Ann Road taking in the changing colors, the deep blue in the autumn sky, the brilliant red and gold of the leaves.

As I came around a curve in the road, just before the open fields of conservation land in our town, I found myself in audience to that annual dance birds perform as they prepare for their migration to warmer climes.



I was mesmerized with this ballet of swarming creatures making ready for their traditional exodus south. The harmony of these tiny birds massing was beyond comprehension. The diving and circling in solidarity was hypnotizing. (Not the most appropriate state to be in when one is driving.)

I was struck with their ability to come together in such great mass so quickly and to pirouette, harmoniously, from the trees on one side of the road to trees on the other, as if they had been doing so all summer. It was fascinating to watch this blending in preparation for their dramatic flight from the harrows of a New England winter.

This had me ponder the sublime phenomenon of Nature: to know what to do in times of change. From early spring through waning days of summer, these birds led individual lives. Singularly, they sought out food, raised young, and traversed the skies for shelter.

When the change to autumn began, the impending struggle of winter nearing, these birds came together and began this elegant dance providing structure and support for the arduous journey to a place where, again, they would take up individual lives.

How is it that nature so easily knows the value of amity in times of struggle? How is it that committees are

unnecessary to define the problem; projects unnecessary to organize what needs to be done?

Simply, seamlessly, these birds come together knowing together what is to be done to "weather the storm" and find that place where they will regain their individuality.

A Coming Together...

As I watched this mass converge for a single purpose, I thought of the well-known V-migration of Canada geese, another structure of support and unity. At the point is the lead goose representing ability, strength, and courage to guide the group to secure landings.

How is the lead goose chosen? It is a position based on just that – ability and strength. Apanage and social position, superficial characteristics.

More astonishing is the lead's ability to know when that strength to lead has waned, and relinquish lead to another, without hubris. What of this spirit of comity can we take into this New Year to weather present storms?

The whole of Nature's structure is captivating. While we focus on the point of the V, the leaders, it is the legs of the V that provide the staying power sustaining the whole. Each goose moving up and back in support of one another, unshaken in the entity's ability to go the distance.

What is most intriguing are the last few flyers of the formation, the ones that bring up the ends, following all the others, yet fully accepted in their part and place.

There is no chastisement for lack of leadership or substantive support. The ends of the V are where new beginnings start. Here is where latecomers along the way "fall in," become part of the whole, and find where they benefit the group best. Again, without preconception of proper place or validity of reason for being there.



How inspiring. This coming together is not measured – deserving/undeserving; able/unable; needing/un-needing. This coming together is in a knowing that only collectively will they make it through the struggle. They will survive their long trek and continue living because they came together, supporting one another, to navigate the trials of distance and flight.

What we can learn from these creatures?

I think of where we are as a people. The variant world we live in technologically, economically, socially. How we prize our individuality. How we define ourselves by this uniqueness. Yet what is one's individuality with all that is shifting in this world?

We are in a time of change. How can one weather alone when one does not know what is before them?

Maybe in the actions of these birds is our solution, our opportunity. Maybe coming together in community, combining our individual abilities in unity, we will weather these changing times, and together migrate through this cultural, economic and technological winter confident of the arrival of spring.

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What Is Your Question of Balance?

"I have been looking for work for well over six months. I have found short-term temporary jobs, nothing lasting. What can I do to find a long-term sustaining position?" Josey

These are, no doubt, different times. What do you think if I say it is in identifying your differences that possibilities abound for work that sustains and fulfils? It is a journey, a journey that begins with connecting with what is important to you. What you value. To find sustaining work you must bring your Self to your work because this is what you were born for...to bring your unique importance to this world.

To identify or re-identify what is important in your life, what you value, click on this link to download this exercise: [Values Assessment](#)

First rate the values listed. How do they resonate in your life? (6 being Significant, 1 being Minor)

Next, rate each of these same values as to how you are living these values. (6 being Strongly, 1 being Not Much)

Third, spend the next two weeks aware of when you are working with these values. What are you doing that embodies

these values, e.g. working in your garden living the value of beauty?

At the completion of the 14 days, what six values resonated most? What were you doing? List them. Here the foundation of work that sustains is built.

In the next issue: Step 2 – The Framework of Work That Sustains

Do you have a question on how to sustain your balance? How to live whole?

Email your questions to maggie@livingwhole.net and together let's search for an answer.

All Photographs Courtesy of Maggie French



A whole life is about finding your balance.

Living Whole Coaching's focus is to assist you in identifying what creates your stability.

What do you value?

What is your reason for being?

What do you want to accomplish?

Living Whole Coaching has individual and workshop offerings for the exploration of the answers to these and other questions that will bring harmony into your living and the means to live whole.

Your Complimentary Consultation

A Complimentary Consultation is an opportunity for a 1-to-1 personal consultation to experience the power of coaching to bring personal growth and balance to your life.

In a consultation three things happen:

- o We will talk about how things are going and I will learn about you, your goals, dreams, what is working and not working for you;
- o You will learn about me and how our working together will benefit you; and,
- o You will experience the coaching process and gain value from the coaching.

Have you ever said...

I wish...

I want...

I can't...

Call 774 212 1826 or [email Maggie](mailto:maggie@livingwhole.net) to schedule a Complimentary Consultation today.

Experience the Power of Coaching



Maggie French is a certified, ICF-credentialed coach. She specializes in work/life coaching, because "If you want to makes improvements in one, there will be effects in the other."

Maggie collaborates with several organizations on the Cape including WE CAN, the Harwich Chamber of Commerce and the Cape Cod Chapter of ABWA.

Visit maggie's website: www.livingwhole.net

You can reach Maggie at 774 212 1826
or email her at maggie@livingwhole.net