

Healing the Heart

Thomas Merton Brightman

On the third day of a week-long training, I was brought to waking by my guide. There was a sense of urgency in its movement. My guide was pulsing as if in alarm – seeking my attention. I was tired. The night had been short. I turned over as if to ignore the message.



Then, once again, I was bombarded by the brilliant green intensity of my guide. Brighter and brighter, more and more agitated, the messenger continued to seek my awareness. Finally, I opened one eye, then two. I looked toward the window to the room and saw golden morning light. It was warm and growing, but nothing to be alarmed about – or so it seemed.

Eyes closing, fighting awakening, I turned over again. This time the guide became rather forceful with movement and intensity of light. Once more, I turned to the light in the early morning window. I glimpsed what I thought was a heart suspended in the air. My vision was blurred. My glasses were out of reach.

In disbelief, I swung my hand out almost casually to see if I could grasp it. But there seemed to be nothing there. Once more, I turned away, closed my eyes and sought to return to sleep. Yet now I was receiving. A part of me knew I must look again.

As I peered toward the window, the white light was indeed a white heart, brilliant and vibrating. This time, I reached out to it, gently, lovingly, as if to cup a blossom floating on the surface of a pond. This time I believed. It came to me. I slowly and reverently moved it to my heart and when the two met, I was instantly transported to realms indescribable.

I don't know how long it was before I returned to my body, but when I was waking and standing, doubt returned. Did what I think happened, really happen? I walked to the window and looked under the table where the white heart first appeared. And, as I sought in doubt, evidence appeared – a metal hinge that could have refracted light in the shape of a heart. See, it was just a dream. Or was it?

I turned to the bathroom and began to walk. Then I stopped when I heard a message that told me to turn around, go back, look again. I turned as if not having a choice. On the top of the table was a hotel bible. It had been left open by someone. As I looked down, a Psalm leaped to my sight: “He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up the wounds.”

As I trembled gently and cried silently, I sensed great healing flowing through me. In time, I found myself in the shower. My body was in one reality, my spirit in another. The guide came one last time. For the first time in my life, it was in a new color and a new configuration. It seemed dissipated, exhausted, as if my resistance had worn it out. Then it left.

I finished that training in an extended altered state of reality. I sensed the healing. My heart stayed open. I glowed even when I trembled.

Fear came up for me some days later, as I could neither call my guide, nor would it appear on its own as it had for a lifetime. Was I on my own now? I was frightened to face life without my companion. But I did, and some months later my friend returned. There may have been need elsewhere and, after all, my heart was bound with loving light. What more could I need to vanquish my fears?