

Honoring synchronicity

I want to discuss synchronicity as deep nature connection practice. While we cannot control synchronicities, we can honor them, by noticing and paying attention to them, and by being grateful for them; as we do we will notice how they can touch and transform our lives.

“Synchronicity” is a word coined by depth psychologist, Carl Jung, to describe *the meaningful coincidence of two events that are not causally related*. In recent years, I have been noticing more and more synchronicities; sometimes more than one in a day, and usually so low key that they could easily go unnoticed. For example, last evening I was running in a nearby forest listening to a recording of Jon Young. As I came around a corner he was talking about this Bushman elder he was with and he used the phrase, “He was nestled into a tree.” At that *exact* instant I saw a man just ahead of me lying asleep on the ground; his head “nestled into a tree.”

While an incident like this may appear mundane that does not mean it's trivial, and while it brings a smile to my lips it also awakens a sense of awe. As clinical psychologist and Native American, Leslie Gray, puts it, “Synchronicities are indications that we are in right relations with what's around us.” Wolf Wahpepah says, “They are breadcrumbs from Creator to help us on the way,” and he adds, “We Indians don't believe in miracles, we rely on them!” In terms of Systems Theory we might think of synchronicities as an expression of a feedback loop; confirmation that we are now located in an open, living system, rather than a closed system. I also think of synchronicities as indicators of “being in Tao,” which means being in deep harmony with the rest of nature. I think of synchronicities as the glow of the flow of connectedness. Just as light emerges as the electric current flows through the wire of a light bulb, so synchronicity emerges from deep connection.

I have noticed that synchronicities have been happening more frequently since I have been on the journey of deep nature connection. In part, this may be a matter of perception. As I am more receptive and respectful of these events than I used to be, I am likely to be notice them more. However, I do not think it is simply a matter of heightened sensitivity. I believe these events are, in fact, happening with greater frequency, and that this is related to my being more deeply aligned with the rest of nature than I was before.

I think of synchronicities as being one of two kinds. The first, the only ones that I noticed in the past, often have a dramatic or specular or shocking quality to them. They tend to cluster around “big” moments in life, such as birth or death, like a star over the

manger, or they may herald some significant breakthrough that is about to happen. The second type of synchronicity, which I think of as “everyday synchronicity,” while still having a quality of surprise, also has a matter of fact or mundane quality. For example, I think of someone who I have not seen for a long time, I walk around the corner and there they are, coming towards me. These are the types of synchronicities that I may be more sensitive to now than I was in the past.

In my experience, synchronicities with other-than-human beings happen more when we practice deep nature connection. While there is a certain freshness and a sense of wonder when something like this happens, there is no longer the element of surprise. It is not that we expect them to happen. It is just that when they do they feel like the most natural thing in the world.

An example of this, is what happened last weekend as I was sitting writing by the creek at La Casa. An Allen’s humming bird came and landed on the branch of a coastal oak in front of me, about seven or eight feet away. He stayed there for maybe two or three minutes. During that time I stopped writing and just watched him. I could see he was occasionally looking my way. Then he would go back to preening his feathers, fanning his tail a little, or just looking around.

As I watched him I was aware that my heart had opened wide, and it felt as though invisible chords of connection were thrumming between me and this little bird. Then, something strange began to happen. When I had first looked at the humming bird, he and everything around him had been sharply in focus. But then, quite suddenly, it changed; the branches, the light, the leaves went into this dotted background of green and white and brown, little dots of color and light, with only the humming bird remaining in focus; as though he was at the center of a kaleidoscope. At that moment I experience a wave of what I can only call “love” flowing through my chest; and while this did not feel personal, it was radiant with meaning.

A time comes in deep nature connection when meetings such as this become part of the weave of our everyday. As connection deepens, non-linear (“a-causal”) encounters with other-than-human beings happen more and more. I experience them as encouragement, “breadcrumbs” as Wolf calls them. They gift me with a sense that I am in the right place at the right time; that I am on the path I am meant to be on.

Here are some simple ways we can honor synchronicity:

- **Develop a practice of deep nature connection**
- **Anticipate that you will notice synchronicities with greater frequency**
- **Welcome synchronicities when they occur as a resonance of rightness, a sign that you are “on track”: an honoring of your journey, of your process**
- **Expressing gratitude for these events and sharing stories about them with others (who you know will understand such a story), completes a circuit, deepens connection, “feeds the family”**

And remember, we do not have to understand what something means to know that it is a meaningful and good thing. Allow yourself to be blessed in this way.

Michael Kearney, April, 2017