

I read something the other day that struck a chord. Well, much of what I read does, but this in particular goes to how I think many of us feel about our world today. It read:

"Stop thinking this is all there is...

Realize that for every ongoing war and religious outrage and environmental devastation, there are a thousand counter-
balancing acts of staggering generosity and humanity and art and beauty happening all over the world, right now, on a
breathtaking scale, from flower box to cathedral.

Resist the temptation to drown in fatalism, to shake your head and sigh and just throw in the karmic towel.

Realize that this is the perfect moment to change the energy of the world, to step right up and crank your personal volume;
right when it all seems dark and bitter and offensive and acrimonious and conflicted and bilious...there's your opening!

And, finally, believe you are part of a groundswell, a resistance, a seemingly small but actually very, very large impending
karmic overhaul, a great shift, the beginning of something important and potent and unstoppable."

*-Mark Morford*

Okay so not so easy to do when much of the world around us is falling apart it seems. I know all the adversities and tragedies we witness, and those we personally face, sometimes take us to the brink of hopelessness. They are buckets of cold water thrown on our spiritual flames. We get down on the world, and that feeling just trickles down to our personal lives.

There comes a time, however, when regardless of what is going on in the world we live in, and in our own homes, we have to look deep inside and we, ourselves, have to take care of keeping that flame burning. Doing what we must to keep that light going or we will live in inner darkness. Sure, the world may seem chaotic some days, especially if you watch any

one of the news channels, where grim images are continuously shown, and yes, some of it in truth is just that grim. But like Mortford points out above, we must resist the temptation to give up, because there are other things, wonderful things, taking place as well in the world today — most of them triggered, ironically, by these dark moments of human and environmental activity.

Thinking this is all there is can be a form of inadvertent expectation, and expectations, right off the bat, set us up to self-induced predetermined outcomes. I've always been big on expectations and have felt its wraths. At the same time though I've always been big on hope. Fortunately, because we live and learn, I've learned to turn my expectations into hope instead, as much and as often as possible, and I have seen how looking at things through a hopeful eye can make a difference.

At a time when "change" is what most people seem to think we need and want, maybe that change should be to start believing that the darkness of this world cannot extinguish our inner light, as long as we spend most of our time controlling the environment within us, and what time is left on the environment around us. Let's realize that this is not all there is…that there is more to this world than meets the eye.

*-by Connie Perez*

> Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all. *— Dale Carnegie*

> Courage, it would seem, is nothing less than the power to overcome danger, misfortune,
> fear, injustice, while continuing to affirm inwardly that life with all its sorrows is good;
> that everything is meaningful even if in a sense beyond our understanding; and that there
> is always tomorrow. *— Dorothy Thompson*

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