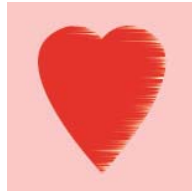


# Threads of love: A Valentine For You



So much is going on in the world and in the lives of those around me: struggle, achievement, joy, sorrow; the full gamut of human experience.

I'm reminded at times like this of a song written by Sherrin Loyd and sung by the Threshold Choir. Among it's lyrics are:

"Listen, Listen.  
The entire planet is filled with love.  
Listen, Listen.  
Through strife and violence weave threads of love."

So often we focus on the "strife and violence" because it makes a better news story or simply out of habit. Also, sometimes when we are in the midst of suffering, it can be hard to imagine that there *are* threads of love around us.

What if in the midst of our strife and struggle we focused on those threads of love? I don't mean to deny the struggle in our lives and around the world, but what if we sat with that suffering AND listened for those threads of love?

I invite you, in honor of valentine's day this year, to do just that. Imagine the threads of love around you. Take a few moments upon waking, or any time of the day, to think of just one thread of love around you. Once you have it in your mind simply take a few deep breaths. Experience what that love feels like.

If you can't identify any at first that's ok. Use your imagination. Think about what it must be like for a mother to hold her newborn for the first time, and the outpouring of love that might ensue. Imagine someone, somewhere in the world is falling in love for the first time. Somewhere, someone is so happy with, and proud of, the work they just completed that a tear comes to their eye. Someone you crossed paths with at some point in your life was on their way to do something nice for someone else as a surprise; just because. These threads surround you.

Think about the first time you ate what is now your favorite food, and how much you love its flavor and texture. Think about a place real or imagined that you think is beautiful. Think about a favorite color and how it makes you feel, a book you love to read, a person you love to spend time with, a flower or plant you love to smell. Before you know it, you'll have a tapestry of love wrapped around you, that can nurture you and you can enjoy throughout your life. All you need to do is take a moment to notice it.

Happy Valentine's Day!

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