



Freedom Inside

A National Newsletter For Prisoners
Based on the CWG Material
Issue # 14 August 2003

Starting A New Life

Remember our new addresses:
Snail mail: Freedom Inside
B.P. 315
Lac Saguay, Que.
Canada J0W 1L0
E-mail: freedominside@sympatico.ca

Well, I've moved to Canada. I'm at my new address, with a new phone number, and everything associated with a new place.

I'm starting a new life, right?

Welllll, how am I supposed to do that?

As you all know, as you all have experienced at one time or another, changing scenery (the one here is fabulous!) doesn't change who you are. The only thing that changes is what is around me.

The illusion changes.

The illusion that I created.

To live in this world while remembering I am not of this world, that is my choice.

"My cup runneth over." I am surrounded with a great deal of beauty. Nature in all its glory.

Even so, I am somewhat de-

tached from it all. I know I am not a part of this beauty; it is a wonderful illusion.

"My cup runneth over." I am not of this world. I am a spiritual

"To live in this world while remembering that I am not of this world, that is my choice."

being having a human experience, not the other way around.

"My cup runneth over."

The illusion changes, I do not.

The relative world changes, I do not.

My thoughts change, I do not.

My feelings change, I do not.

I am a spiritual being.

"My cup runneth over."

How, then, do I start a new life?

I don't, of course, unless I choose to start a new illusion, which I do...for now.

It is one of the most beautiful feeling of my experience to know, to know completely and without hesitation that, "My cup runneth over". This is what I choose for the new illusion I am creating.

My abundance spills over everything and everyone around me. An abundance of love, compassion, kindness, wisdom, clarity, generosity, courage, patience, joy, understanding.

"My cup runneth over."

Please share a drink with me.

In love and light

Janine

Let's try something new

freedominside@sympatico.ca

Those of you who have access to the internet might like to help us with the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter. We have an e-mail address that you can use to send articles, poems, comments and/or questions. Please write to let us know if we can use your e-mail instead of your snail-mail address to send you the next issues of **Freedom Inside**. This would allow you to receive your copy more quickly while saving us the cost of supplies, printing, and stamps.

Thank you

Say Yes!

Is there a more powerful word in the English language than, "Yes". In any language?

Say, "Yes" to everything that has ever happened in your life. Total Acceptance.

Say, "Yes" to everything that is occurring now. Total Peace.

Say, "Yes" to everything that will ever occur to you. Total Trust.

Say, "Yes" to everyone around you. Total Love.

Open yourself, your Self to all possibility, to all your power and simply say, "Yes".

"Yes, I am here, ready to Be everything I can be. Yes, I see the perfection in everyone and everything. Yes, I see and accept the magnificence of the Universe, everyone and everything in it, including my most wondrous Self.

"Yes!"

Do you have a poem that reflects the message in Freedom Inside? If so, send it in, it just may be chosen for a future

POETRY CORNER

THE SKEPTIC'S CORNER

It's been said that the only constant in life is change. Personally, I'm not sure if that's good or bad, only that it seems to be true, for the most part.

I've been thinking lately that I've experienced quite a bit of change here in prison. It's almost as if the "me" that used to live on the streets is gone, and a whole new "me" has taken his place. I see that same change in most of the prisoners I've come to know, and I'm sure that you see some of it in yourself, too. Everything that I was is now different.

That doesn't seem so bad on the surface, does it? I mean, change is how people grow, right? How else could I re-create myself in the next grandest version of Who I Really Am?

But, here's what scares me: What do I do when (and indeed if) I get out of prison? The "me" that exists now has never been out there? It would be impossible for me to go back to the previous "me", even if I decided I wanted to!

Like many prisoners, the "me" that will hopefully walk through the gate one day will have no place to go, and nothing to take there. All I will have is a P.O. that will cause me even more problems than I'll already have!

Forgive me if it sounds like I'm whining, but this truly scares me. And, I have a feeling I'm not alone. I'll be too old to start over. Part of me doesn't even want to try. I feel as if the state has set me up to fail, again, and I don't want to fall into their trap.

I see so many people leave here and come right back again. Some are just criminals at heart, I guess, but the majority are people who just didn't know what to do out there.

Do you ever think about things like this? How do you do it? How are you able to convince yourself that everything will be okay?

Living with this fear is not what I want to be doing. This is not Who I Want to BE. Help me out here, my friends. Help out all of Us who don't know how to be free outside.

So far, Your responses to Skeptic's Corner (and the rest of Freedom Inside) have been great! I personally want to thank all of You who've written and encourage you to continue.

I'm sure...positive...that if we continue to put our heads together, we can all figure out how to be free, inside and out. After all, we are all One.

Looking forward to your responses,

J.M.
The Skeptic
Arizona

POETRY CORNER

(...)

I usually have a purpose when I write, whether it be for a card that I am making to send home or for someone else based on feelings they tell me. However, this poem came to me with no purpose other than to share it with others. I was laying in bed one morning after breakfast, trying to go back to sleep until count time. The first lines kept going through my head and I couldn't stop thinking about it to sleep. I got up, finally, and wrote down the lines so I wouldn't forget them. When I laid back down again to try to sleep, the next few lines came to me. Again, I got up and wrote them down. This time, I stayed up and continued to write. Within 15 minutes I had the whole poem written. Something moved through me that morning, and I hope that your readers will be moved as well when they read it. M.S. from Florida

Dear M.S., thank you for sharing your beautiful Spirit with us. Is there any doubt where your inspiration came from?

With love and gratitude that you heeded the call.

Janine

<i>As I sit here, I look around</i>	<i>Others long for alcohol or a line of coke,</i>
<i>I listen carefully to the sound</i>	<i>Or their pain pills or a blunt of smoke.</i>
<i>Of women laughing and carrying on,</i>	<i>Many of us have families who wait,</i>
<i>Talking of ones who have already gone.</i>	<i>But it is only us who can decide our fate.</i>
<i>Each of us has our own story</i>	<i>Can we get out and still be strong,</i>
<i>Of how we first fell from glory</i>	<i>Turning our heads from the street's beckoning song?</i>
<i>Now each of us has done a crime</i>	<i>We ask for forgiveness from the Lord above,</i>
<i>And here we are, doing our time.</i>	<i>And while we are here, we show Him love.</i>
<i>We hope for each day to go by fast,</i>	<i>But the real test is when we are free,</i>
<i>So that we can finally go home at last.</i>	<i>Then will we still be true to Thee?</i>
<i>But what waits for us are the temptations of life</i>	<i>Another one is packing to leave today,</i>
<i>That often dig in like the blade of a knife.</i>	<i>And tomorrow she will be on her way.</i>
<i>Some long for the day that they can go back</i>	<i>Be careful, my sister. I will pray for you.</i>
<i>To the life they had, to smoking crack.</i>	<i>Just remember one thing, To thine own self be true.</i>

**M.S.
Florida**



Harmony's Way

This letter is from the Internet. It is food for much thought. I thought it very appropriate for Harmony's Way since truth and harmony go so well together.

It is written by Tom Atlee (<<http://www.co-intelligence.org>>)

Subject: Lies, and our odd relationship with truth

Dear friends,

There is a lot of attention right now on the question of whether the US government is lying to We the People, probably with intention to mislead. In some circles there is also dismay (and cynicism) at the ability (and sometimes apparent eagerness) of We the People to be misled.

There are many political dimensions to this, being reported by many qualified commentators. But here I want to dig a bit into our odd relationship with truth. It is a complex relationship and, I think, an important one to pay attention to.

Much courage is required to dissent from a dominant but incomplete "truth." Even greater courage is required to remain open to ALL types and sources of information and perspective, recognizing that all "truth" is, in the final analysis, incomplete. This recognition doesn't have to degrade us into vague moral and intellectual relativism. It might instead make us more curious, interested, compassionate, open to what is new, different, and challenging.

We so often say we want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. And we say we don't want to be lied to. But when you come right down to it, few of us REALLY want to know all there is to know about anything, nor to be confronted with too much complexity, seeming contradiction or mystery -- all of which are natural companions of Truth as it becomes more comprehensive.

When we say we want the truth, what we usually mean (without saying it or even admitting it to ourselves) is that we want to hear acceptable truths couched in acceptably bent truths, half-truths, reframings and appropriately excluded information -- all crafted into a picture that "makes sense" to us.

In other words, we want a story that fits with all the other stories we tell ourselves about the person or subject under consideration. We don't want the messy big picture so much as we want coherence, because it is the coherence of these stories that we use to "make sense" of our world. Supported by that sense of coherence, we can then call our stories The Truth.

But when we open ourselves to the actual vastness of multifarious Truth, we find it much bigger and more complex than any one story could ever contain. That's a hard reality to grow into. That's why I think the ultimate truth in the universe may be "There's more to it than that." No matter what's going on... no matter what we're being told... no matter what we believe, it helps to remember that "There is more to it than that."

Yes, we can be sure of that one truth in every circumstance -- there's always more to it....

Lately I've begun to wonder if Truth is, in fact, a fabric woven of many stories. Some of them are neat and tidy. Some look neat and tidy on the front, but are quite messy on the back, like tapestry. Many of them go on forever, and can be terribly connected to everything else. A disturbing number of them seem to contradict each other or disturb our own favorite stories. It's almost as if when things seem very simple, that's a sign we're not really keeping our eyes, minds and hearts open enough for more Truth to get in.

But there is a kind of sense-making that comes from opening ourselves up very wide - wide enough to include every story that comes along, or at least to allow it to participate in shaping the larger story that emerges in respectful con-

versation. But in the face of many hotly conflicting stories, I find it a real challenge to be that open - especially when my own dependable stories seem threatened.

Furthermore, I think that many seemingly divergent stories can only make sense together when we view them in good light, from a distance - or from very close, through our hearts. In order for this to happen, of course, these stories must be fully heard -- which is quite rare nowadays. Sometimes healing or transformation happens simply because someone fully heard someone else's story. Real listening seems to turn walls and battlements into doorways, paths, sometimes even glorious sky-wide sunrises....

There is such a close kinship between story and truth (or reality). The poet Murial Rukeyser tells us "the universe is made of stories, not atoms."

So how much of "truth" is actually to be found in facts, and how much is to be found in the stories we tell ourselves and each other about what's happening and what that means? Facts may, indeed, get whatever power they have from the stories they tell.

In myself and others I see selected facts and logics coalescing around good stories they support, while other facts and logics (which don't fit so well) are ignored, actively rejected or even fought. After all, if we let the misfits in, we might have to change a good story or two - even lose confidence in the fundamental stories we use to make sense of everything else -- our Truth. We might have to live in uncertainty, puzzled or excited, vulnerable to whatever came next that could shake up our world.

This is not a comfortable place to be. But I can imagine it being closer to The Truth - where The Truth is not a story or anything very solid, but an opening into greater vastness, greater detail, greater diversity, deeper layers of every story that comes along, and the natural co-creativity that bubbles up out of all those stories interacting -- an awed partnership with the wild unfolding of the universe.

It might be a healthier place to live, in the long run, than any of the places where we decide we know enough to leave our uncertainty and openness behind.

If we got accustomed to living there, I suspect we might even become wise. But I'm not sure we'd even notice we'd changed. We'd be too busy exploring each other's worlds and finding our way together into shared stories that make temporary but powerful sense to us all.

So perhaps the lies of politicians are best seen as mirrors in which to see more clearly our own ambivalence about Truth and our passionate love affair with Story, that we may step through the looking glass together, with eyes open, to co-create a new civilization where power is less toxic and Truth is in love with Mystery.

On the other hand, perhaps we should just fight the lies, since official lies lead to mass ignorance which leads, in turn, to wave upon wave of collective catastrophe. Or perhaps there are new institutions we could create that would officially make more of the truth more available to more of the people more of the time. Or perhaps it is time to take stock of our own half-truths and biases, dictated by the need to create positional stories solid enough to survive the political battleground. Perhaps it is time to re-think the trade-offs involved.

The journey towards greater Truth proceeds along a thousand paths. There is room for all..



Freedom Inside
B.P. 315
Lac Saguay, Que.
Canada J0W 1L0

Know anyone who would like to receive this newsletter?

Name: _____

Address: _____

Send to : *Freedom inside / subscriptions*
B.P. 315
Lac Saguay, Quebec
Canada J0W 1L0

Our e-mail: freedominside@sympatico.ca

DONATIONS

*It is my intent to continue
sending Freedom Inside to
you at no cost.
Donations would be grate-
fully accepted from anyone
able to contribute.*

*Thank you,
Janine Cantin Gutierrez*

*P.S. Please make checks or
money orders payable to me*