







Beyond
Soul Growth

Awakening to the Call of Cosmic Evolution

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A.R.E. Press • Virginia Beach • Virginia





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by Lynn Sparrow Christy

1st Printing, December 2013

Printed in the U.S.A.

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A.R.E. Press
215 67th Street
Virginia Beach, VA 23451-2061

ISBN 13: 978-0-87604-732-3

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To my dear friend Elaine Lukasik.

Without her wise, intuitive counsel and steady encouragement I may never have made it through the extended birthing process that brought forth this book.







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Acknowledgments

No work such as this can take wing in a vacuum. While the core concepts of what has come to be known as evolutionary spirituality arose for me through a process of inner inquiry and from my interpretation of the Edgar Cayce readings, they found a wider context in which to flourish when I was exposed to the work of many others who have plowed this ground before me. Most notably, I am indebted to Ken Wilber for his sweeping integral vision. Undoubtedly, his writings have been my greatest source of spiritual sustenance since I first discovered Edgar Cayce at the age of sixteen. And while the integral-evolutionary community has spawned what I consider to be some of the most thought-provoking and inspiring thinkers of the modern age (many of whom are quoted in this book), I wish to give special thanks to Craig Hamilton, Michael Dowd, and Terry Patten, whose work has inspired me and whose respective Internet interview series with the spiritual giants of our time have enriched my own experience of evolutionary spirituality beyond measure.

In acknowledging those who have been most helpful to me in expanding my understanding of the profound connection between biological and spiritual evolution, I would be remiss not to mention Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. I first heard his work mentioned by a friend back in my college days. It is my loss that it took more than three decades for me to get around to reading him—and that was only after encountering a fictionalized account of his life and work in Morris West's novel *The Shoes of the Fisherman*. I would urge anyone with a serious interest in the subject matter of this book not to wait as long as I did to read Father Teilhard de Chardin's landmark book *The Phenomenon of Man*.

I would also like to thank Kevin Todeschi, Cassie McQuagge, and the publishing committee at A.R.E. Press for the blessing of knowing that I had a publisher even as I was writing this book. The motivational value of that cannot be underestimated when taking on a project like this! Similarly, it is largely because Rachel Alvidrez of Edgar Cayce eGroups commissioned me to develop an Internet-based seminar on this topic that I first put on paper some of the material that forms the foundation of this book.





The contribution of my longtime friend, Elaine Lukasik—to whom this book is dedicated—is difficult to adequately describe. It has been my good fortune to have a friend with the clarity of intuition that Elaine has demonstrated over the years. As a writer with a gap of more than twenty years between books, many were the times I despaired of ever completing another one. It was Elaine’s unwavering insistence that all was well and that I was only gathering more experience and knowledge over those years of writing drought as well as her assurance that I *would* write “the book” that often kept me from abandoning the idea altogether.

In that regard, I thank my husband Larry Christy for his continual support in all of the endeavors of my life. Easygoing and ready to flow with things as they unfold, Larry always knows how to encourage without nagging. He put application to his belief that it was important for me to write by cheerfully accepting disruptions to our routine, our meals, and our time together. In addition, Larry’s reading of early chapter drafts served more than once to keep me going when I felt bogged down or discouraged.

Few people besides Larry saw any portion of this book before publication, but to those few who did, I am grateful for feedback. I received some particularly helpful advice early on from my dear friend Mary Holden. I am also thankful for encouragement from my “Facebook friends” Anthony Brancale and John Greenhalgh, whose reading of some chapters constituted a small trial balloon concerning potential reader response from both inside and outside the Edgar Cayce community.

Finally, I want especially to thank my editor Stephanie Pope. Her editing was not only skillful and meticulous, but was also done with a level of sensitivity to my original text that every writer hopes for, but few are fortunate enough to get. Thanks to Stephanie’s professionalism, the last stages of birthing this work were almost painless.



Prologue

Beginning in early adulthood, I began to have recurring dreams about visiting theme parks. I distinctly remember the first one. Shortly after I had moved to Virginia following college, I had a dream about going to Kings Dominion, a theme park just north of Richmond. I had never been to Kings Dominion, nor did I have any plans to do so, but I couldn't help but notice the clear metaphor in the name. To one whose spiritual sensibilities were very much attuned to the ideal of God's kingdom manifesting "on earth as it is in heaven," the symbology of "king's dominion" seemed obvious. It represented earth under divine rule, and I took the dream as a call to an awakened, Spirit-directed life.

The theme park dreams continued over a span of more than three decades—in fact I still have this dream periodically today. Over the years, most people with whom I shared these dreams have jumped to the conclusion that the theme park image was a cautionary one—a warning about the unreality of this world. They saw it as a reminder that this world is just the arena of souls' play, a wispy fantasy place that diverts our attention from our true domain until we get tired of make-believe and then return to the "real" world beyond this earthly plane. To them, the dreams meant "This life has no ultimate reality."

But that construction never fit with the "king's dominion" frame set by the very first dream in the series, nor did it account for the spiritual intensity that these dreams always awakened in me. No matter how the details of my theme park dreams may have varied over the years, two conditions are always present: First, I feel intensely alive and engaged with everything around me. I am struck with the beauty and wonder of it all, there is so much to see and do, and I feel exhilarated by the sheer number of possibilities. Second, time is always short. It is near closing time, and I often regret not having gotten there sooner. There is an urgency to do and experience as much as possible before time runs out. Right alongside my ecstatic joy in being there, I feel a deep ache over the shortness of time.



For me, these dreams have embodied in both symbol and felt experience the intangible something that bubbles up within me when I hear the evolutionary call of Spirit in this world. The universe becomes a place of endless possibilities, a place that invites us all to delight in the wonders of the creative impetus that brings worlds into manifestation. From this perspective there is something new to discover around every bend. It can be a wild ride at times, when the best we can do is fasten our seatbelts and hold on for dear life. And it *can* be a place where we indulge appetites that are less than spiritually nutritious. But then it is also the place where the best of human ingenuity and problem solving can find a fertile field for expression and where visions of perfection can be molded into visible reality for others to experience and enjoy. And while it's true that if we look closely behind the scenes, we may find ourselves disillusioned by a mercenary taint on some of this world's most delightful offerings, there is also much innocent joy to be found, if that is what we look for. Perhaps most important of all, this world is a place that holds magic for each generation of children born into it, if only we will take care of it and pass it on to them in better shape than we find it in now.

Just as I wrote these words, the day's mail arrived. As if to remind me to mention that this universe is alive and speaking to us, the delivery included a special offer for a "Fun Pass" to the Busch Gardens theme park.



Chapter 1: Why Evolution Matters

“ . . . The earth’s sphere, with the first creation in the mind of the Creator, has kept its same Creative Energy, for God is the same yesterday, today and forever . . . ” 900-340

“The creation of the world did not take place once and for all time, but takes place every day.” Samuel Beckett, Proust*

Mine is the generation that came of age as strains of “this is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius” wafted through the airwaves to our car radios. A lot of us eagerly looked for the signs of that dawning any day. Now, more than forty years later, we can look back on a number of dates and years that various prophetic voices declared to be the Big One. We’ve harmonically converged and fired the grid. We’ve awaited 1998, and once that year came and went, set our sights on 2012. It seems to me that for my whole lifespan thus far we have been waiting for the Big Event that would transform our world.

As I write this, anticipation continues to build all over the world around the great hope that many of the spiritually minded hold for December, 2012, as a pivotal point of prophetic destiny. As you read this, December 21, 2012, (selected largely because the Mayan long count calendar ended on that date) will have come and gone. Now what? (The joke will be on me if December, 2012, turns out to meet its advance press. But in that event, this book probably won’t have been published, so it’s all right!) Depending on how far this date has receded into the past, by the time you are reading this there may well be yet another future date that has become the object of much hope and—dare I say it?—hype.

It’s understandable, really, this human tendency to latch on to particular times and dates as the fulfillment of our spiritual yearnings and the answer to the problems we face as a human race. Who can deny

*Samuel Beckett, *Proust*, retrieved from goodreads.com.



the allure of the expectation that in a single day or year all of our spiritual yearning will be fulfilled and that all of our unfinished business, our failures of will, discipline, and purpose, and our too-often lackadaisical service to a higher good will be swept aside in an influx of transformative grace such as this world has never known? And lest we think this date watching is a distinctly New Age phenomenon, we need only look to the *Left Behind* books, enormously popular among evangelical and fundamentalist Christians, as just one recent link in a chain of apocalyptic expectations that stretch all the way back to Jesus' disciples asking, "What will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?"²

Nor can we deny that, historically, there have been many threshold times of great transformative significance. The harnessing of fire, the development of agriculture, the first writing of language, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution—these are just a smattering of examples of transformative epochs that forever changed the face of humankind on the earth. Each furthered the reach of our combined knowledge, culture, and know-how, and thus in each of these we can see what was, in its time, a truly new age that brought the peoples of the world a little closer together.

Living on the Threshold of Change

Looking around us at the world today, it does not take much of a stretch to think that we, too, are on a major threshold. Global challenges on the economic, political, and environmental fronts rivet our attention. An unprecedented worldwide cross-pollination of spiritual perspectives as well as scientific breakthroughs and technological advances hint at solutions that will be a quantum leap beyond old ways of dealing with our problems. Perhaps most significant of all, the effective shrinking of the world through the Internet and other modern communications systems suggests that, for the first time in human history, a unified humanity is within the realm of possibility. Add to that the astronomical fact that, because of the precession of the equinoxes, Earth's vernal equinox is transitioning from the constellation of

²Matthew 24:3

Pisces to that of Aquarius, and maybe the dawning of the Aquarian Age does not seem so far-fetched after all.

The interesting thing about dawns and crossing over thresholds, however, is that these movements are *processes* that occur over some period of time. There are multitudinous factors leading to the approach of a threshold, and complex internal forces propel individuals to become pioneers in its crossing. Who can delineate, for example, all of the influences of philosophy, science, mathematics, art, and politics that came together to produce the Renaissance? And what forces were at work within the makeup of an Isaac Newton or a Leonardo da Vinci to propel them over the threshold, thereby making them such influential figures in the widespread and lasting transformation that the Renaissance became?

Unlike a fix that swoops down from above, transformative epochs have always tended to rise up from within the participants. Even the birth of Jesus, held by those of Christian faith to have been the major transformative event so far in human history, was described by Edgar Cayce as coming in response to “continued preparation and dedication” on the part of those who knew the potentials of their day and organized their lives around it accordingly.⁵ We should expect no less a requirement of us if our day is truly to be one of transformation to a new age. In that context, we might look at the Aquarian Age as an invitation for us to participate in the next stage of a process that is synonymous with evolution.

At least that seems to be the Cayce readings’ take on it. The only time that the readings spoke about the Aquarian Age by name occurred in 1939, when Edgar Cayce was asked if he could name the date when the crossover from the Piscean to Aquarian Age would happen. His response was that “In 1998 we may find a great deal of the activities as have been wrought by the gradual changes that are coming about. . . .” He went on to further clarify that “. . . This is a gradual, not

⁵5749-7 (Edgar Cayce readings are referenced throughout this work according to the numeric designation assigned to each reading. The first number represents either a person [whose name has been removed to protect privacy] or a topical grouping of readings. The number following the hyphen indicates where the reading falls in the sequence of readings for that individual or topic. In this case, it is the seventh reading in the 5749 series, a topical collection of readings about Jesus.)

a cataclysmic activity in the experience of the earth in this period.”⁴ This emphasis on process and gradual transformation rather than sudden, cataclysmic change matches the very essence of evolution (which is defined as a *process* in all of its dictionary definitions).

Elsewhere in this same reading he said that where the Piscean Age brought the consciousness of Emmanuel or “God with us,” the Aquarian Age would mean the full consciousness of the ability to communicate with or be aware of our relationship to “Creative Forces” *and the use of these creative forces in a material world*. The opportunity of our day, then, would seem to be conscious engagement with the Creative Force behind all things and our own use of such creative capacity right here in this world. This is, in essence, a call to an evolutionary lifestyle, a spirituality based not on seeing how quickly we can “graduate” from the earth, but instead on how well we can participate in the process of creation. What else might we expect from a body of spiritual teaching that consistently links co-creatorship to our core purpose?

For us in this early twenty-first century world, so fraught with both peril and potential, the stakes have never been higher. The potentials of our time call us to engage with *processes* that will take us over the threshold into the attributes of the Aquarian epoch, rather than wait for particular dates that will bring it all together for us. In the language of the Cayce reading cited above, our astounding opportunity is to learn how to use creative forces—the same forces that have brought worlds into being—right here in this material world where we find ourselves. The perils of our day make the maxim that we cannot solve a problem from the level of consciousness that created it all too obvious. Rather than fix our gaze on some hoped-for event on the horizon, where a previously unattainable state of spiritual consciousness will fall like refreshing dew, *today* is when we must actively engage in pushing past the boundaries in our own consciousness to *be* that consciousness which will approach the world’s problems in an entirely new way. It is time for us to find the ways we are called to be the embodiment of evolution—a process that is leading us toward a new threshold for life on this planet. As we learn to nurture those forces within us that will help nudge us over the inevitable hurdles that any

⁴1602-3

threshold will entail, we will rise to the evolutionary potential of our age.

What's Distinctive about the Evolutionary Approach to Life?

Just what is it that makes the evolutionary approach different from other spiritual paths? Isn't all spirituality, by its very definition, evolutionary? Well, yes—and no. We might say that the main difference is one of context. From any spiritual standpoint that includes the long view of the soul's history, we're used to thinking of evolution in terms of our personal path of development. Traditional spirituality often presents the path to enlightenment as an evolutionary one, whereby we transcend the bonds and limitations of the flesh and this three-dimensional world and return to fully realized consciousness of our oneness with God.

The evolutionary world view would agree that this opening up of consciousness is crucial. But it sees that as not an end in itself but rather as the *means* to an ongoing evolutionary advance that can be traced back to the Big Bang. And the primary arena of that evolutionary advance is *here*, in this world of flesh and blood and rocks and plants. In other words, a spiritual path that emphasizes getting out of this world is not evolutionary in the sense that I will be using the term here. "Evolutionary spirituality," as presented in these pages, is a world view—an interpretation of the facts at hand—that holds central the idea that the manifest universe is evolving. Not just the cosmos, not just plants and animals, *but consciousness itself* is evolving on a cosmic scale, influencing every atom of manifest creation. Therefore, evolutionary spirituality is a commitment to take responsibility for bringing consciousness into our thoughts, our bodies, the world, and creation itself.

For that reason, this world of three dimensions has intrinsic meaning and purpose. It is far more than just an illusion to be rolled away or a dream to be awakened from. Furthermore, our purpose here in this earthly realm goes beyond personal spirituality and "soul growth." We are called beyond soul growth to participation in an ongoing creation. In one sense all living things are participants in ongoing cre-