

The Unmistakable Message Of Red Coral: To Feel Is To Heal

BY HAROLD STEARLEY

I hike into the canyon and marvel at what surrounds me. It's Fall. Greens, golds, reds, oranges, pinks – a rainbow of leaves held tightly by the trees while others, released from that grip, float softly through the air to blanket the ground. Painting abstract portraits. Pastel pathways.

There are majestic mountains and underground streams. Dry stream beds until the elevation is ripe for the water's emergence. It trickles, then flows, then forms small falls over rock outcroppings. A damselfly lands on a horsetail reed. Metallic green, its wings shine in the sunlight.

This land I walk used to be on the bottom of the ocean. Fossil remnants confirm its history. Bivalves and crinoids and coral. These were once shells inhabited by animals, or symbiotic pairings of algae and invertebrates forming exoskeleton metropolises. All forms of calcium carbonate taking on infinite designs. All now limestone, and eventually dust, from which something new will rise.

The silence is broken by the cry of a hawk. Its flight interrupted by a raven that dive-bombs it. A battle ensues in mid-air. And the hawk acrobatically rolls onto its back. Inverted in flight it claws back at its interceptor. I've never seen a hawk fly upside down. Never. I'm amazed at its agility. What a true gift this vision is.

I am surrounded by life. I hear it, feel

it, taste it, smell it, touch it. I perceive it. Enter it intuitively. And yet I walk alone. Connected, yet separated.

Night time comes and I've returned to shelter. I think how much better the day would have been could I have shared the experience. To have gazed through more than my own eyes. To share laughter and surprise. A warm smile, shining eyes looking back at me.

Being alone is not the same as feeling lonely. Tonight, I feel alone.

How nice it would be to hold someone in my arms. Just hold them and feel their touch. Infinitely. Hear their breath. Their heartbeat drum. Feel their warmth. Their fire. Their love.

We all want answers to the big questions. They usually start with the word "why?" Why am I walking alone? But then "where?" Where do I find the answer?

My inner voice silent, I look outside into the darkness. The coyotes synchronize their howls. The crickets' high-pitched chirping. An owl joins the chorus. Life surrounds me in my solitude. Why?

We all have places or entities to where we direct these questions. Consult the ancient texts? Cast stones or charms? Read cards? Deep meditation? Extrapolate from dreams? We find affirmations from the world around us. Intuition is valid. These sources nourish it.

Tonight, I pull a book. *Sacred Path Cards* by Jamie Sams. I draw an accompanying card for a daily reading. "Coral." Some people might call this mysticism, paganism, or even heretical.

But isn't it strange how these ceremonies end up being spot-on.

Coral speaks to the absurdity of my question. It tells me to cut the "I am the only one" refrain. We are never alone. As the Seneca would say (Ms. Sams' tribe), we are continually surrounded by "All Our Relations." It's time to reconnect with All.

To paraphrase Ms. Sams:

Coral symbolizes the blood of Mother Earth. It acknowledges that all "two-legged" have the need to be nurtured from their own kind. But it reminds us who our true "Mother" is. Red blood runs through every creature. Water, the oceans, symbolize the blood of Mother Earth. And Red Coral, arising from those waters carry that representation. The "Water Nursery of Creation" gave birth to all life and Red Coral, and its connection to the sea water of its own origin symbolizes our birth and the connection to the "Mother Of All Things." Every life form, "All Our Relations," is sustained by Mother Earth. Using Coral can allow us to reconnect to our own blood and the waters of Mother Earth.

Once we reconnect, we can "develop a communication with our physical form that is not based upon addiction, compulsion, fear, gluttony, or selfishness." We can recognize that our physical body is our vehicle for connecting with our spirit and our needs. We, therefore, must learn to respect and care for our bodies. All nurturing is dependent on our ability to recognize our feelings and needs. And if we don't know what we need, how would we identify the needs of others to give comfort. "To feel is to heal." It is time for self-nourishment. For reunion with the Planetary Family. To listen to All Our Relations and acknowledge we are never alone.

While I ponder the message, I think back to today's hike. I

fumble through my backpack and produce a stone I found. I wipe it with vegetable oil and it comes to life. Patterns emerge. Skeletal patterns, flower-like shapes, concentric circles. It's fossilized coral.

Coincidence? I quit believing in coincidences a long time ago. Why did I pick up that particular stone for the later discovery?

While I was on top of the ridge, and while I was down in the bottom of the canyon, I was standing on the ancient ocean floor. The sea, the blood of Mother Earth, once flowed here. The many connections I made today with my "Relations," why did I try to separate myself from them? They all visited for a reason.

The damselfly with the power of light. The hawk with its visionary power, the guardian. The raven, the magic shapeshifter. The coyote, the balance of wisdom and folly. The cricket, the bearer of luck and success. The owl, its silent wisdom, the visionary of the night. And even the ocean creatures frozen in time.

While it's true, I seek connection with another "two-legged," I have that connection as I share my story of the struggle. Like the hawk and the raven, we internally battle. Visions versus fleeting images. Mirages and echoes. Our self-deception. The denial of our eternal connections.

Others can experience what I have, see it through my eyes, brush my hand with theirs, share the joy. I wasn't alone, and I can be nourished by nourishing others with my words.

We are never alone.

Heart Howl: A quiet mind can “see.” A loving heart can “see all.”

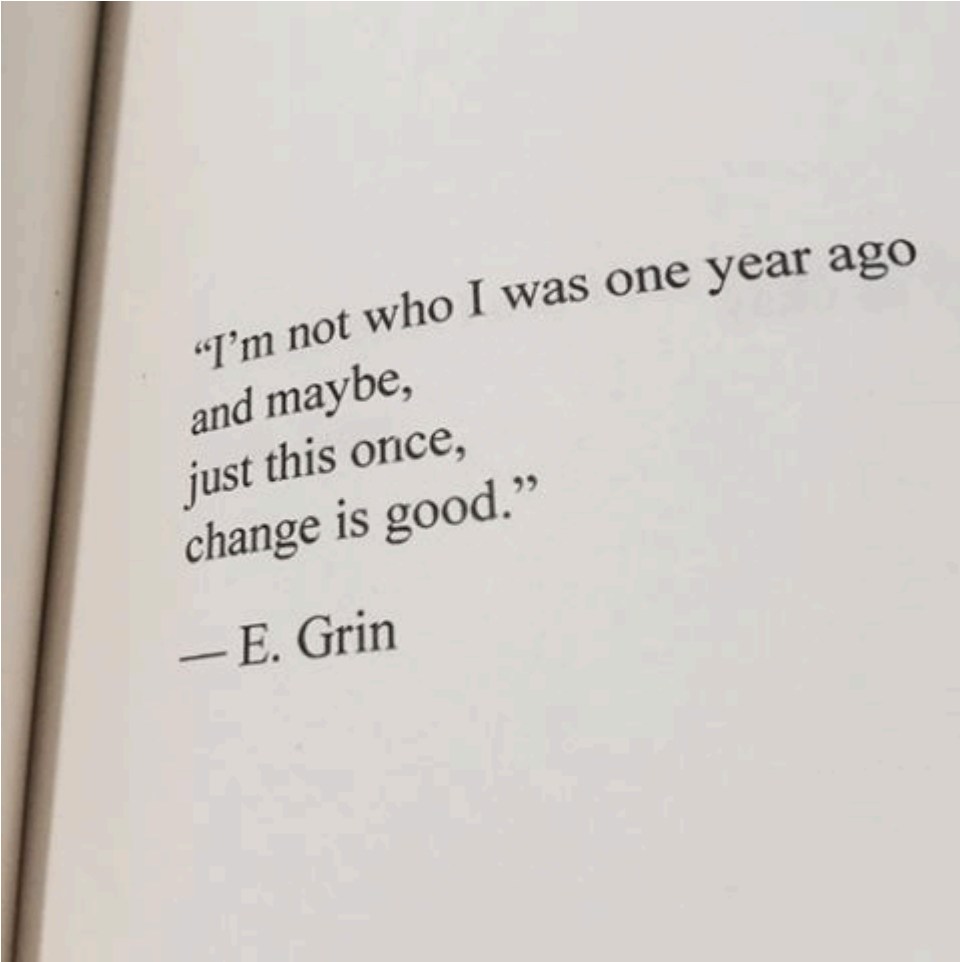
For more self-study, [The Urban Howl](#) recommends [The Desire Map: A Guide to Creating Goals with Soul](#) .

Sip a little more:

[I Am Broken – Only To Be Reintegrated Anew](#)

[Writing’s A Bitch – So Is Soul Searching](#)

[Found Your Arrowhead? Seek This Counsel In The Natural World](#)



“I’m not who I was one year ago
and maybe,
just this once,
change is good.”

— E. Grin

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