



Notes & Quotes from Dawn

Stay calm and age on. . .

August 2022

Having recently celebrated my 79th birthday, our 40th wedding anniversary, and now preparing for our youngest daughter's wedding in a few weeks, my husband and I are keenly aware of the turning of the wheel in our life cycles. As we navigate this adventure called aging, we are both in good health; yet we are often surprised as we find ourselves confronted with memory lapses trying to recall the title of a book or movie, when we last visited a particular person or place, or if even if we brought in the mail that day. We're sometimes surprised at how tired we find ourselves following a few hours spent relating to a group of people in a social setting, or after laboring for a hour or two in our gardens. We are learning how essential it is to maintain a sense of humor, and to focus on the positive aspects of aging such as life goals achieved and the understanding and wisdom that can come from life experience. We have more time for meditative practices, reading, writing, learning or creating something new, offering help to others, enjoying the luxury of spontaneity, and so on.

*Welcome the present moment as if you had invited it,
because it is all we ever have. (Pema Chödrön)*

Staying focused in the present is becoming more crucial. Every moment with a loved one, every moment we have to appreciate the natural wonders that surround us, to witness the smiles, growth, and successes of our grandchildren is something we can no longer take for granted. Aging—like marriage, like parenting, like all things—is a spiritual practice. And, since aging, especially if we are blessed with a long life, is inevitable, learning to embrace is essential. As many have noted, aging is beyond our control; however, the attitudes we hold toward that process are up to us.

I participated, with over 400 others from around the world, in a Upaya Zen Center zoom workshop with Frank Ostaseski and Roshi Joan Halifax

“When you love someone, you have to offer that person the best you have. The best thing we can offer another person is our true presence.”

—THICH NHAT HANH

entitled Love and Death. It was often quite moving and poignant. Frank led a powerful ending ritual. The process consisted of ten randomly chosen individuals (of which I was one) reading [The Five Remembrances](#) from the Upajjhatthana Sutra. We each in turn read aloud all five verses, twice, before putting our hands together in the Namaste gesture.

I am of the nature to grow old. There is no way to escape growing old.

I am of the nature to have ill health. There is no way to escape ill health.

I am of the nature to die. There is no way to escape death.

*All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change.
There is no way to escape being separated from them.*

*My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the
consequence of my actions. My actions are the ground upon which I stand.*



Photos: Eroding rock near Jemez Springs in New Mexico, Oct.2017; my beloved grandmother, Nana, on her 90th birthday, wearing the wedding ring she wore for 69 years, the same one I have now worn for 40 years.



All of my books are available on the internet in more places than I ever imagined they could be, some at prices way less than the cover cost. Just put the title that interests you into your search engine. I greatly appreciate any comments you may have and are willing to post by way of review wherever you chose.

May we live this day compassionate of heart, clear in word, courageous in service, generous in love. (Adapted John O'Donohue)

with gratitude for our interconnectedness ~ Dawn

