



SOAR WITH THE EAGLES

Spring Equinox 2010 e-zine

Mind, Heart, Spirit, Soul: Don't Just Survive, Thrive!

Victoria C. Leo offers a comprehensive approach to getting you from where you are to where you want to be through Reiki Energy Healing, through her unique Guided Journeys, Intuitive Reading of Goddess, Angel and Animal Totem cards, through seminars and workshops and through professional life direction coaching. She is a Master/Teacher of Usui Reiki, a certified Life Coach, a career coach with 13 years experience, an Intuitive Reader, a certified Past Life Regressionist and a Clinical Hypnotherapist with two graduate degrees.

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On March 21st, the Northern Hemisphere celebrated the Spring Equinox while the Southern Hemisphere experienced the Autumnal Equinox. As we here in the North head into a much-awaited spring – after the most hellish winter the US has experienced in many a long year – our Southern neighbors are heading into the fall. For us in the springtime, we see the earth coming alive after its long sleep. The bulbs are giving us glorious colors. Every April I attend the Tulip festivals in north-west Washington State. Glorious colors for as far as the eye can see, it takes my breath away. The roses, the trees, the shrubs – everything in my garden is awakening. I can feel the thrum of the life force as it revs up. The season of Light is the season of Action. During the dark times, our souls rest, introspect, create dreams and imagine futures. During the light times, we take action on our dreams and turn them into experiments. Who will we evolve into during this coming season?

As part of my yearly Equinox ritual, I gave thanks to the spirits of the life forces all around us, and I pledged to be grateful for all aspects of my life. Fortunately for me and for others subject to the Winter Blues/SAD, this was a less-grey-than-usual winter in the Puget Sound, and I took a six-week hiatus in the sunny parts of the USA, doing research for my new SAD book, and for another book about my mother and Alzheimer's. These spiritual rituals that I enjoy nine times/year are an opportunity to get my life back into balance. How easy it is to let the self-care slip! I get busy taking care of clients and I forget that I have to meditate, to Reiki myself, to journal – especially about gratitude. The more time I spend genuinely giving thanks for what I DO have, the less energetically I feel the pull of resentment for what I DON'T have.

I have a wide variety of friends. The really close folks tend to have asameness [earnest, spiritual/ethical, funny, trustworthy to the max, constantly learning]. The outer layers are the leavening that I need to keep me connected to Planet Earth and its variety. SO I have a pal who knows what Sandra Bullock is wearing and which Hollywood celebrity is cheating on who. I can't spend too much time around her because that kind of chatter bores me to tears and in large doses makes me long for a root canal, but it is sometimes a path to wisdom.

This afternoon she shared with me that Bullock's husband is cheating on her, and isn't it sad that all these men married to beautiful women can't keep it in their pants. And an enormous light bulb went off in my head. You see, I am running a group 2 nights a month, composed of mostly women, for people who want to lose weight. Or say they want to lose weight. If they really did, they'd make a commitment to showing up. Ahem. The women are convinced that the reason their marriages broke up or they lost their jobs, etc. is because they were ten pounds overweight - which turned into 30+ pounds overweight when the devastating news broke, of course.

All evidence to the contrary. If Sandra Bullock, etc, ad nauseum, aren't stunning enough to prevent a jerk from being a jerk, then your beauty isn't the issue, is it? None of these Oscar-winning actresses has an ounce of fat on them, except in all the culturally-admired places, and they are absolutely stunning of face.

Your life may get better after you get beautiful. It's certainly easier to get dates and jobs when you look attractive by your society's standards. One researcher was able to predict which middies would end up with high rank and which would not, simply by looking at and ranking the handsomeness factor of their Annapolis graduation photos. So, sure, healthy-weight and cute can make a difference.

But they are not going to make you happy, by themselves. Happiness can help you stay thin, but thin can't help you stay happy.

You will lose the weight without so much effort [and you should, for serious health reasons] when you have better methods of dealing with the feelings in your life. Carbs and chocolate are easy and they are completely under your control. You can't make someone love you and you can't change the nature of the I've Got Mine, The Hell With the Rest of You current American culture. But you can change you. Learning Reiki takes at least one 10-hour class. But Reiki energy healing will actually get at the root of the problem - give you peace of mind and confidence - and it is completely under your control, too. I like the idea of turning on a source of power that is completely under my control, and works. You can feed yourself what you really need, while you are doing something else.

So remember Sandra's pain today and every day you are tempted to say "If only I were thinner/prettier....." What you really mean is "If only I were happy...." And you don't need "If only...". You can do it now.

Go to my website and find something that you've never tried before, either a healing technique or a class, even an intuitive reading or Past Life. Buy a really special Birthday or Mother's Day gift – everyone loves a really interesting gift. Dinner and chocolate gets boring every year. Or give your special someone a gift certificate to your favorite massage practitioner! Ooh!

**Call or email before May 1st and you can lock it in for 70% off the list price!
[You don't have to book the appointment before the 1st, just buy it.]**

Have you seen the film *Invictus*? It is a very small part of a story that will give you hours of amazed and inspiring reading [rush out and buy the book, right now]. Reading about hope. Reading about leadership. Reading about how one man launched a “charm offensive” that turned what could have been a bloodbath into the most famous peaceful transition from tyranny to democracy in the modern world. From the depths of savage apartheid to a functioning multi-racial nation – how did he do it?

I won't be spoiling the book for you if I tell you that he did it the same way saints and sages through the ages have been telling us to live our lives. *He did it by deciding what his enemies wanted, and giving it to them, with such grace and charm that they were moved to reciprocate.* He dished out respect and courtesy, instead of anger and revenge. When you are dealing with decent people who are acting very badly, it is the golden road to success. He went from hated terrorist to beloved President by bringing all the stakeholders to the table. He did it by connecting to people's hearts.

As you may know, I married in early December. During times of serious financial stress, I sometimes revert to an older, controlling dynamic with my environment. I was apologizing for an outbreak the other day and my honey told me, “It used to bother me, but it doesn't any more. I realized that you do it because you worry about my safety and you do that because you love me so much. So when you get that way, it just reminds me how much I am loved.”

Wow. If I could bottle that change of perspective and sprinkle it over the world, what a change. Please note: I am not encouraging people to ignore instances of real abuse and disrespect in a relationship. But in the instances when someone means well – and it actively working on their stuff – if we all could see the situation in a new light, it changes everything. If we switch from a belief in realism – what I see and interpret is real – to a belief in social constructivism – my mind takes raw sensory information and interprets it in accordance with my chosen paradigm – we would all be less reactive and more kind, less prone to take offense and more prone to praise. I'm an imperfect spouse in any interpretation, but I can either be seen as a jerk or as a very loving partner who occasionally gets scared and has an unskillful way of trying to protect her loved ones.

We all make that choice every day, in every moment. Part of Mandela's power over the Afrikaners is that he made a transition from someone who hated them to someone who worked to understand them. When he did, he didn't want them kicked out of Africa; he wanted them to take the good parts of their history and stitch it into the fabric of what a multi-racial Africa could become.

Here's another news item that has also been teaching me to look below the surface.

Somali piracy. Everyone knows that since Somalia collapsed as an effective nation, the guys who used to go out fishing are now going out in more and more sophisticated rigs, fishing for ships to capture for ransom.

So – they're bad guys. They saw a weakness and callously decided to capitalize on it. Clear, right?

Not quite.

The backstory: with the disappearance of the Somali Navy, fishing fleets from nations that I won't specify, but you can figure out, started strip-mining the seas off the Somali coast. We're talking waaay inside the territorial limits, folks. The formerly law-abiding Somali fisherfolk started to starve. Nobody cared. They picked another option. Now everyone cares. We have a problem that is big and hairy, there are too many merchant ships for the concerned nations' navies to protect, and the ransoms are being used to buy bigger and better weapons for even more piracy.

What's the lesson?

Plan for the future: start caring because it's the right thing to do; don't wait until your own ox is being gored. If the world had protected the Somalis when they first asked the UN for help, we wouldn't be in this mess today.

On Feb 5 last year, in Williamsburg, VA, President Obama said, "Everything we do and everything I do is subject to improvement. Michelle reminds me every day how imperfect I am."

I am considering this comment on several levels today. No doubt, many people will sourly agree that Mr. Obama is imperfect. This immediate level is obvious, and I have no interest in it at all. I think that husband Obama has more to say to me today than president Obama. What Barack has in his life is the same jewel I have in mine: someone who will help me to steer myself to where I want to be. Not where I always, in the moment, want to be, but where, in the long term, the better part of myself wants to be. The place of self-respect. The path of short-term gain is oh, so attractive, especially in times of stress and hopelessness. Someone who can remind me that I have been or are getting ready to make a choice that will not only not stand me in good stead, long-term, but will also not leave me able to view myself with respect and approbation, long term. I think that's a long-winded and college-educated way of saying I'm not going to be proud of myself a week later and for the rest of my life. We make these kinds of decisions twenty times/day, particularly now when we are worn down by economic stress. Every one of us needs someone who loves us, loves us enough to ask us if we're sure that we made the right decision.

We are imperfect. A good friend or spouse, someone who can illuminate our choices and make us look at them, without shaming us or imposing their choices on us, is the most precious blessing on earth. The one person who will speak the truth and not care about our anger, because they love us too much to be afraid of us, and they trust us too much to believe that we will abandon them if they hear something they don't want to hear. I recently married a man who loves me that much.

And it's hard. I thought that my beloved god-daughter was one of those shining ones. She wasn't. I called her, in a loving way, on a choice she made that I thought seriously disrespected me, and she hasn't

spoken to me since, although I continued to send her loving messages for a year. I have let her go on her way, and her path, with my blessings. All of us know that this outcome is a possibility - even a probability in most cases - and the knowledge terrifies us so much that we stay silent. We are not of service to our loved ones; we surrender to our fear for our own well-being. We want the person in our lives so we won't be lonely or without needed services, and we stay silent. Yet silence keeps us all imperfect, in ways that we could improve. Silence serves my short-term ego needs - you don't tell me what I don't want to hear - but it does not serve the greater Me.

Yes, this President has enormous burdens and a loving partner may want to stay silent and not add to them; sometimes that really is necessary. But not always. Even in the most stressed lives, there needs to be honesty and clarity. Knowing that I have someone who won't let me kill my soul with short-sighted, fear-based choices, is the greatest blessing in my life and the sharpest sword in my personal arsenal. He makes me more powerful than I ever thought I could be, by not running away from what needs to be said. Barack and I are the luckiest imperfect souls on the planet. I hope you are, too.

My new Anatomy & Physiology for Energy & Spirit Healers class goes live on April 11th. Share the news with anyone who does healing work and does not have a medical background. The more we know, the more we can help people!

Next WebCircle in April/May will be the special Trauma Issue, where we will talk about how you as a Reiki practitioner can help those dealing with trauma. If you work with military vets or their families, women who have been hurt by sexual predators, those with traumatic childhoods, and others...you won't want to miss this.

*Another WebCircle e-zine will be coming your way next month... until then,
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