



Spiritual Light Center

Newsletter—July 2015

Friendship

Our theme this month is Friendship. Serendipitously, our Book Study is now reading *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran, and recently read his chapter on Friendship. For those not in the Book Study, I would like to quote it to you. It makes some eloquent points about Friendship.

“Your friend is your needs answered. He/she is your field which you sow with love and reap with thanksgiving. And he/she is your board [sustenance] and your fireside [comfort]. For you come to him/her with your hunger, and you seek him/her for peace.

“When your friend speaks his/her mind, you fear not the “nay” in your mind, nor do you withhold the “ay.” [You are open and honest with your friend.] And when he/she is silent, your heart does not cease to listen to his/her heart. For without words, in friendship, all thoughts, all desires, all expectations are born and shared, with joy that is unacclaimed.

“When you part from your friend, you don't grieve. For that which you love most in him/her may be clearer in his/her absence, as the mountain to the mountain climber is clearer from the plain.

“And let there be no purpose in Friendship except the deepening of the Spirit. For love that seeks anything but the disclosure of its

own mystery is not love but a net cast forth; and only the unprofitable is caught.

“And let your best be for your friend. If he/she must know the ebb of your tide, let him/her know its flood also. For what is your friend that you should seek him/her with hours to kill? Seek him/her always with hours to live. For it is his/hers to fill your need, but not your emptiness.

“And in the sweetness of Friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures. For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.”

When I think of Friendship, I think of Spiritual Light Center, for the relationships forged by the sharing of spiritual growth and unfoldment have been priceless for me.

Arthur Cataldo, President

OUR VISION STATEMENT

The Spiritual Light Center is a peaceful and joyful fellowship of individuals, centered in love, dedicated to the God within, and honoring the many paths to truth.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We seek to develop our highest selves by continuous sharing of spiritual ideas, in an environment of unconditional love and respect for others.



ONGOING EVENTS AT SLC

Every Tuesday at 5:15 p.m. - Join our group in the Hall for **Movie Night!** We enjoy a good spiritual movie or documentary and afterward we pick a place to go eat!

Wednesday, July 8 & 22, 5 to 7 p.m. **Come to the Sacred Circle/TEA**, an open group dedicated to spiritual sharing and growth, facilitated by Tina Wardell. Contact Tina at 828-276-6557.

Every other Thursday, July 9 & 23, at 5:00 p.m. - Please join us for our **meditation group** in the Chapel led by Dr. Richard Kimball. We have an informative discussion followed by walking and sitting meditation. Call Richard at 371-3425 for further details.

Every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. - Come join us for our **book study**. We're reading The Life and Teaching of the Masters of the Far East by Baird Spalding. This is a fascinating book sure to spur great conversation.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

July 5, 11 a.m.

Rev. Eileen Douglas, a former Unity ministers who now leads PATH Ministries in and around Hendersonville, is a wonderful singer with one CD out. She will be speaking on "Finding and Following Your Path".

July 12, 11 a.m.

Dale Allen Hoffman, an internationally known scholar of Aramaic and ancient languages, and a *favorite* speaker at SLC, will share on "The Sound of Light." Wow!

July 19, 11 a.m.

Jadwiga Cataldo is a teacher of Body-Mind Centering, Holistic Health and nutrition. She designed a new physical education curriculum for all Polish schools. Jadwiga will speak on "Body & Soul".

July 26, 11 a.m.

Deborah Burris, an ordained minister and Touch for Health and Kinesiology Instructor, will bless us with Singing Bowls while sharing "Sound Vibration, Deep Meditation."

July Friday Groups in the Fellowship Hall

July 10, 6. p.m.

Arthur Cataldo will be conducting a workshop on **Past Life Regression**. In this brief workshop, you will have the opportunity to experience a group Past Life Regression. You will also have time to ask questions about the process, Past Lives Theory and karma. Arthur has been doing Regression Therapy for thirty-five years.

July 24, 6 p.m.

Judy Stepp, a DreamBuilder Life Coach who helps people transform dreams into reality, will conduct a workshop entitled "**It's Never Too Late to be Who You Might Have Been**".

SLC Store News

We had a great Yard Sale last month! Thank you so much Randy, Donna, and all those who worked to make it so profitable. **Store Hours continue to be Friday and Saturday from 10 – 3**, and surrounding all scheduled events. In late July we'll announce a special **BOOK SALE**. Any books you can donate before then would be very much appreciated!

SPIRITUAL LIGHT CENTER INFORMATION

80 Heritage Hollow Drive, Franklin, NC 28734
Right behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow
828-369-3065
slcfranklin@frontier.com www.spirituallightcenter.com

OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PRESIDENT.....Arthur Cataldo
VICE PRESIDENT.....Kay Smith
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Spirituality & Friendship

The Gift of Friendship by Bill Groves

When I first moved to the western N.C. Mountains 3 1/2 years ago I had never even heard of Franklin. I experienced an inexplicable obsession to leave my home, family, friends, and job to come here. Like pretty much everyone else at SLC, I was called here by Spirit, and thankfully surrendered to that summons. I didn't know a soul east of the Ozarks. Of course, at the top of my list of things I was praying for was to meet a group of people who would be my friends. I also was praying for a spiritual guide or teacher. As the love of God would have it, I "stumbled" upon the Spiritual Light Center and both of those essential needs were fulfilled by being taken into this wonderful spiritual family. A miracle made manifest.

Just like marriage or any other close relationship, friendship is a process, and truly opening to that process is not really easy for me. I'm sure this is rooted in hurts I experienced when much younger. I know I tend to hold back from the vulnerability that is an integral part of all true friendship. My general extraverted appearance tends to cover for a more deeply rooted fear of being hurt or rejected. I suspect that "caution" is common amongst us who are human works in progress.

It seems that friendship is our default spiritual state, as is blissful union with all that is. Once we let down our defenses, surrender our ego, and release our resentments the

walls of separation between us dissolve and true Oneness is our natural way of existence. I sincerely wish it were as easy to make happen as it was to type that sentence. The wounds we bear that keep us apart run deeply in us, as individuals and as a culture. We have a lifetime of behavior patterns that were built to avoid the pain we fear if we open to something as wonderful and vulnerable as friendship. Tearing down those defenses is a tremendous spiritual effort. It's an inside job, but it can't be done alone.



Bottom line, there is no spirituality without community. Spirit *is* Oneness. Once we open our soul to Spirit we are swept into a universal family of love that bonds *all* being. Spirit seeks a unification of consciousness that would make everyone a friend. Complications arise because we resist being lifted to that higher resonance, clinging to fear of surrender. Perhaps the transition into this universal friendship must occur in baby steps.

I am aware that I must be coaxed into friendship with certain steps or I shy away. I suspect that's true for many. Here are some things that I see as essential if we want the defensive walls to be lowered.

Friendship is NOT a competition sport. To be a friend it is critical that we must learn to *listen*. Listening is itself the redemptive act. A primal human need is to be seen, heard, recognized, and accepted. Once a person learns to trust that you will meet that primal need by attentively listening with an ear of compassion, friendship becomes possible. Friendship isn't going to happen when a person senses they are going to be walked over or disregarded. Simple acts of courtesy, like allowing another person to speak without interrupting or jumping in to turn the conversation around to you, are the basics of building trust and friendship. I have observed people "testing the waters" by sharing a little bit of a vulnerability to see if they will be heard and accepted. It's as if they are asking "are you really the friend(s) I hope you will be". If they are really heard, accepted, and validated then the door to friendship cracks open. If, on the other hand, they are criticized, disregarded, or the hearer is not listening and turns the topic around to themselves, then the shades of the eyes are pulled down, defenses go up, and the doors to friendship are closed.

Another critical, essential aspect of friendship is to fully honor the individuality and autonomy of the other. If you really want to throw a monkey wrench into a growing friendship ask them to join you in some activity (like lunch or a gathering at your house) and then get all cranky if the person declines the invitation. Bad move! Friendship does not ever have a personal agenda. A request is not a disguised command. Friends cannot

be objects of control. If anyone is truly my friend then my *only* desire for that person is that they move toward their *own* highest potential, emotionally, spiritually, personally. I may be helpful in assisting my friend to visualize and strive toward that potential, and I must be ready for the possibility that their progress may lead them away from me or in a direction I might disapprove. This can be painful, but if the friendship is true, distance or different viewpoints have no bearing on it.

As I write this I am called to personally practice what I preach. My best friend for the past eleven years is sitting on my lap and, short of a possible miracle, is dying of cancer. My Italian Greyhound, Chesco, has hiked hundreds of miles of trails with me from Canada to Mexico. He came into this world and into my heart for a reason; our mutual love is unconditional. But he does not belong to me. As he hops off my lap to go be alone under my bed I can see in his unsteady gait that he is preparing for a journey on a trail where, finally, I cannot accompany him. I can't let the tears in my eyes cloud my resolution to honor that path he is taking. Such is the vulnerability of opening ourselves to friendship. It cannot be any other way, and selfishly demanding it be otherwise will only increase the pain and tarnish the messages, gifts, and truths that will continue to be part of our friendship. My other Italian Greyhound divides his time between comforting Chesco and me. They have taught me so much about what it means to be an unconditional friend.

I am immensely grateful that I was led to the community of the Spiritual Light Center. As I said before, bottom line, there is no spirituality without community. Even though Spirit may enter my soul and send me soaring while I am alone in the woods, that flight will connect me with the hearts and consciousness of all. I am joined with Spirit through the eyes of my friends. They guide me toward seeing my own truths more clearly. Their support enables me to undo my walls of defense little by little, coaxing me out of hiding, fear, shame. I hope that "Thank You" can be enough.



☞ A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words. ~Author Unknown

☞ A friend is one to whom one may pour out all the contents of one's heart, chaff and grain together, knowing that the gentlest of hands will take and sift it, keep what is worth keeping and with a breath of kindness blow the rest away. ~Arabian Proverb

☞ The only way to have a friend is to be one. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Kindred Friends and Spiritual Alliances by Ariadne Green

We all cherish our true friendships. Friends that stick with us through thick and thin, enjoy our company, and with whom we can confide and trust beyond a shadow of a doubt are few and far between. And if you are lucky enough to have found someone who you can truly call your friend, your life is enriched by the constant companionship and connection you share. Soul brother, soul sister, "true blue" and alike, they are the one person in the world you know is there for you.

What makes you good friends is sometimes hard to pinpoint. Yes, you agree on most subjects, enjoy the same activities, identify with each other's pain and admire each other's qualities, ones that complement your own. And, no, you can't imagine life without them. But there is an invisible dimension to your friendship that can be difficult to explain – a soul bond. It is the soul bond that brought you together in the first place and ties your hearts together in a lasting friendship.

The individuals who enter your life are there because they are connected to your soul. They are kindred friends, who as members of your soul group, share a commonality of purpose to further the consciousness of each other and add something special to this world. This kinship grew out of lifetimes of experiences shared and you evolved growing more and more in tune with each other and hopefully more and more bonded through love. As "kin" (family), there is an ease to your relationship and a familiarity that punctuates the fact that you are merely reuniting after a period of separation.



Kindred friends enter your life according to plan at a pivotal time. Some may take center stage for only a brief period, just long enough to complete a promise they made to influence your life positively, turning you towards your higher purpose, helping you to learn an invaluable lesson or perhaps even introducing you to your mate. They touch your heart and life in a way that you deem "meant-to-be", opening a door to new experiences and nudging you to grow more into who you authentically are.

Often times, kindred friends are like mirrors, offering you reflections of hidden parts of your own personality. The pieces they possess may be less actualized in your personality and even deemed opposite. You may only wish you could possess the same qualities or hold a virtue they

have mastered. In this way, they coax you to embrace another style of approaching life. If so, your friend is a great teacher, helping you to integrate a bit of her energy into your personality. She is your healer, pulling you out of your shell and helping you realize who you are, if only you could step out more and shine. The relationship is, of course, mutually valuable because your friend gains experiences in positively impacting someone's life and discovers more about herself through your reflection.

Anaïs Nin, the bohemian French author said, "Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born."

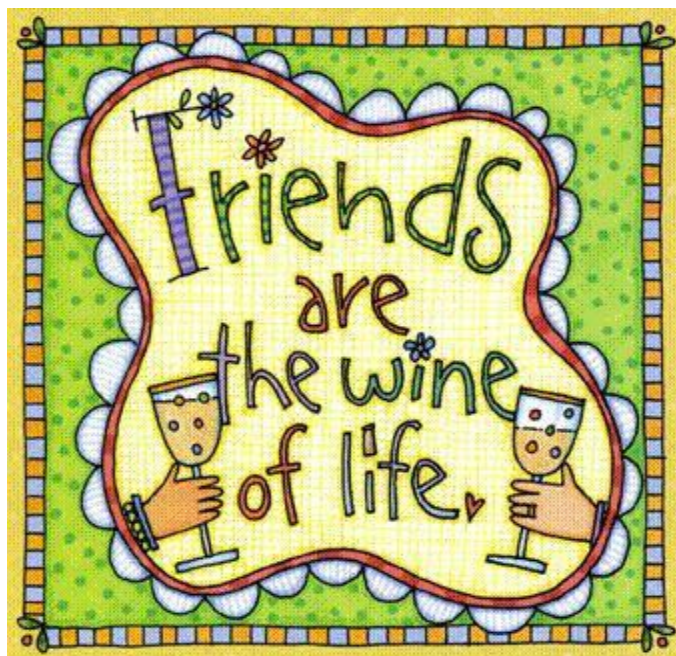
Some kindred friends open us to a whole new world and to destiny they share with us. You form an important spiritual alliance to fulfill a plan that brings meaning and rewards beyond just the emotional bond you share as friends. You and your friend each hold a piece of the destiny puzzle and it's not until you meet that you gain a grand view of the work ahead. Such is the case when two creative people collaborate to create a film, publish a book, or create a software company. They team up not only because their talents complement each other or it seems like a good idea because they enjoy working together, but because their destiny depends on each fulfilling their part. The collaborative work was based on a karmic agreement and they co-created the opportunities to fulfill their destiny.

Friends ultimately teach us about the human bonds of love: how to move through the tests of friendship and grow closer rather than apart. Friendships are not without their challenges, especially when conflicting personalities make it difficult at times to see eye to eye. Also, defeating patterns from previous lifetimes are often repeated in this life so that both learn the valuable lesson they had intended to learn. To choose love over betrayal, anger, judgment, or detachment is what your souls yearn to accomplish most. And each life you chose was perfectly designed to learn about the choice of love. It is through the bonds of friendship that we have the greatest opportunity to open our hearts to the power of love.

☪ Our deepest human need is not material at all: our deepest need is to be seen. We need meaning, identity, to love someone who has seen us through the most difficult times and yet still loves us. It does more than help us survive a soul-less world-it helps us to transform it. ~*naturally-holistic.net*

☪ A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure. ~ *Sirach 6:14*

☪ We are not meant to be solitary figures walking a lonely path toward heaven. We are meant for God and for each other. We are one body with many parts, sharing our gifts and growing in faith. We pray for the grace to recognize the friends in our midst, to open our eyes, our hearts, our minds to the possibility of what God has planned. We long for a community of friends to journey with us, and we know that through trust and abandonment, we will be given exactly what we need. ~ *Mary DeTurris Poust*



☪ "The greatest gift my friendship can give to you is the gift of your own belovedness." ~ *Fr. Henri Nowen*

🌀 *What is Friendship?* by Jack Clarke

Knowing there is another human being you can trust completely. Realizing that someone else wants the best for you, too. Providing a gentle haven where the other can be relaxed and feel safe. Helping solve problems without taking over your friend's life. Sharing the grief times along with the great times. Being together without needing to pretend. Forgiving pretenses when they do occur.

Cherishing together the joys and traumas of change and growth. Nourishing one another's dreams, hopes, and decisions along the path. Encouraging your friend to stretch as far as possible. Receiving feedback without questioning motive. Easing pain that fuels the fire of hurt. Loving another person in spite of differences and imperfections.

Extolling virtues rather than expanding on flaws. Accepting a friend's anger toward you, as yours is also sanctioned. Sending love even when you're not together or in agreement. Coming to your friend's aid and expecting nothing in return. Freeing each other from the manipulations that undo many relationships. Dancing through life together, not trudging along toward death. Soaring to new heights rather than plunging into murk and mire.

Finding time to be together despite the obstacles of everyday living. Wanting no more than to be with your friend at that moment. Understanding the occasional need for distance. Taking up right where you left off, even after several years. Knowing that your commitment to each other is always by choice. Giving freely when appropriate, and taking graciously when needed.

Divining each other's thoughts and feelings easily and often. Saying "no" without having to explain why. Winning and losing do not matter to real friends. Friendships are not instantaneous, they are earned. Friendships withstand the storms and upheavals of time. Friendships surpass the trite boundaries of acquaintanceship. Friendships often develop with improbable people at unlikely times. Friends bask in the glow of the other's triumphs. Friends are there when you need them. Friends are one of God's greatest gifts.



🌀 Being honest may not get you a lot of friends, but it'll always get you the right ones. ~John Lennon

🌀 If the bond of your mutual liking be charity, devotion, and faithful perfection, God knows how very precious a friendship it is! Precious because it comes from God, because it tends to God, because God is the link that binds you, because it will last forever in God. ~St. Francis de Sales

~ July 2015 ~							
◀ June							August ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1	2 6:30 Book Study	3	4	
5 11:00 Sunday Service Rev. Eileen Douglas	6	7 5:15 Movie Night	8 5pm TEA	9 5:00 Meditation 6:30 Book Study	10 6pm in the Hall Arthur Cataldo on Past Life Regression	11	
12 11:00 Sunday Service Dale Allen Hoffman	13	14 5:15 Movie Night	15	16 6:30 Book Study	17	18	
19 11:00 Sunday Service Jadwiga Cataldo	20	21 5:15 Movie Night	22 5pm TEA	23 5:00 Meditation 6:30 Book Study	24 6pm in the Hall Judy Stepp on It's Never Too Late to be Who You Might Have Been	25	
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