Spirituality
Columns
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I used to be a planner. I planned each day, each week, each month, each year; in fact, I literally planned unto death and where I would be buried. I am not sure when I stopped being a planner because even the failure of plans demanded new plans be enacted immediately. I suppose behind my compulsive planning disorder, I had a tremendous fear of failure, as if living without plans might cause existential collapse. Two major events in the last decade, however, caused my planning obsession to halt.

One was a bike accident that led to a major concussion and the other was my spiritual companion's diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. These disruptions cracked open something in me — a rigid shell I had built around the tender uncertainty of being alive. The concussion stripped away my ability to construct elaborate futures, while my companion's diagnosis revealed the futility of trying to secure ourselves against life's fundamental unpredictability. The intricate scaffolding of plans I had built to maintain control crumbled, leaving me vulnerable to each moment as it arrived. My companion's Parkinson's diagnosis further dissolved any illusion that we could orchestrate our way through life's fundamental mysteries. Together, we found ourselves learning a new language — the language of presence.

This language is not rational or persuasive; it is more like a whisper. One must lean in and listen closely to the tremor of a hand, the fear of motion or simply the patience required to button a shirt. It whispers in the spaces between our old expectations and the reality we face each morning. What initially seemed like loss, with the inability to rely on our carefully constructed futures, has gradually become an opening into a deeper way of being.

Life, I have to realize, moves like waves on the shore, each moment carrying its own intelligence, its own invitation. We stand perpetually on the cusp of becoming, where tiny wisps of future burst forth in the now, not according to our careful designs but in response to a deeper rhythm. When we truly inhabit this edge between what is and what is emerging, we discover that it holds everything — our fears and our courage, our losses and our awakening, our resistance and our surrender to love's continuous unfolding. This territory beyond planning doesn't mean abandoning responsibility or drifting aimlessly. Instead, it asks us to develop a more intimate relationship with uncertainty, to learn the art of responding to life's moments with presence rather than prescription. It invites us to trust that divine love itself is the ultimate planner, continuously shaping our lives in ways our limited minds could never anticipate or engineer.

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When we truly inhabit this moment, we discover that it holds everything: birth and death, joy and sorrow, the finite and infinite dance of existence. To live in the unfolding of life means to attune ourselves to the spontaneity of life, to feel the pulse of becoming in our very cells where new life constantly pushes through the crust of our familiar patterns. From this intimate connection with emergence flows a natural responsiveness, an ability to move with life's continuous creation rather than grasping at what was.

We are always poised on thresholds; between what has been and what is yearning to be, between the known and the mystery that beckons. Rather than seeing these tensions as problems to be solved, we can recognize them as the creative friction that sparks new life. The edge between stability and transformation is not a line to be crossed once, but the dynamic space we inhabit with each breath. Love doesn't operate according to schedules or five-year plans. It moves like water, finding its way through whatever openings present themselves. Sometimes it appears as fierce protection, other times as gentle surrender. It teaches us to dance between action and acceptance, between doing what needs to be done and allowing life to move through us in its own mysterious way.

Living in the presence of love has become my daily meditation. When anxiety about the future rises like a tide, presence reminds us that we only ever have this moment to live from and to love anew. Each challenge becomes an invitation to deepen our trust in love's guidance. To live this way requires tremendous courage; to remain open when everything in us wants to grasp at certainty, to stay present when we long for solid ground, to love what is emerging even when it reshapes our world. And yet this is our deepest calling: to show up fully for this precious human life, to let ourselves be instruments of love's endless creativity, its ceaseless invitation to greater wholeness.

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There is a fundamental fertility of life woven into the fabric of reality by the energy of love; not a guarantee of ease, but an inherent capacity for life to reinvent itself through us. We glimpse this eruptive newness when we stop demanding certainty and allow ourselves to be shaped by the unknown that always lives at the edge of now. As we rest in the creative presence of love, something mysterious begins to stir, a sense of being held in a vast field of divine becoming, where love itself is eternally coming into form.

This generative presence is not something we create or achieve. Rather, it reveals itself as we release our attempts to control the future and instead participate in its birthing. What emerges is a different kind of knowing — not the false security of plans, but an intimate familiarity with uncertainty itself. We learn to feel our way forward. We develop a new way of seeing: every unexpected turn becomes part of the path. Even fear, when held in presence, reveals itself as a facet of love's endless desire to protect and preserve what matters most.

When we stop trying to control life's unfolding, we discover we are already held in its embrace. Our task is simply to recognize what is already here: this miracle of love, constantly renewing itself in us, this capacity for love taking on ever new forms, this holy ordinary moment that contains all of existence in its infinite potential for transformation. In surrendering to the presence of love, we find a security our plans could never provide: the security of being fully alive, fully present to the embrace of absolute love, the captivating presence of God.