

## Love Makes the World Go Round

February 11, 2007

Love makes the world go round and round sang Carole King in the 70's; she was probably using the words of another who sang the same long before. In the 90's Madonna crooned these words.

Make love not war we say

It's easy to recite

But it don't mean a damn

Unless we're gonna fight

But not with guns and knives

We've got to save the lives

Of every boy and girl

That grows up in this world

[Love makes the world go round...

make love not war we say

It's easy to recite.

But it don't mean a damn

Unless we're gonna fight

There's hunger everywhere

We've got to take a stand

Reach out for someone's hand

Love makes the world go round

It's easy to forget

If you don't hear the sound

Of pain and prejudice

Love makes the world go round

They think that love's a lie

But we can teach them how to try

Love means to understand

Reach out for someone's hand  
'Cause everything you do  
Comes back in time to you  
We have to change our fate  
Before it gets too late  
Don't judge a man 'til you've been standin' in his shoes  
You know that we're all so quick to look away  
'Cause it's the easy thing to do  
You know that what I say is true  
Love makes the world go round...  
    Make love not war we say  
    It's easy to recite  
    But it don't mean a damn  
    Unless we're gonna fight lyrics by Madonna "Love  
    Makes The World Go Round"]

The impulse to love and be loved is not only universal it is irresistible. It transcends culture, gender, religion, place and personal relationships. Love - it crosses between sanity and insanity in a dizzying way as anyone in love will attest too. But on that sort of love the poets and Hallmark have the monopoly, and I will leave it to those romantic types to expand upon. As for me I am more inclined to speak of the love that makes the world go round. Like loving my children, my friends and the larger group called humanity.

Looking at my children's and grandchildren's faces for the first, tenth, or millionth time can still take my breathe away. Being with Scott my eldest who is 41 years old, for just a few days this past week was a reminder of the beautiful fullness of parental love. I marveled at his life and how rich, full and content it has become and what a good man he is. As well, before I left on the plane, I spoke with Eric age 38 my youngest

son. Hearing his voice over the direct connect or walkie-talkie as we chatted before I took off from Manchester airport also reminded me how precious a mother's love for her children is. I am blessed to have had this experience. Yet it expands, Eric has a wife Andrea and a child Kevin and he loves them with a warmth, tenderness and affection that I am privileged to observe and to receive. And Scott married Janet just a year ago and with her daughter Allison they have built a grace filled, serene and wonderful life. Love makes the world go round.

While in California I had the wonderful experience of getting together with Matthew who was our former student minister, his wife Stephanie and their three kids, Wes, Elliot and Grayson. Allison, Janet, and Scott, who Matthew performed the marriage ceremony for, and I got together one evening for a visit and a meal. I have not seen the two boys, Wes and Elliot for a year though when they were living here we spent a lot of time together and I had met Grayson only once. But when Wes and Elliot entered Scott and Janet's house they ran to me with open arms and warm heartedly hugged me. Grayson though only two got into the spirit of the group hug and embraced me as well. What a great amount of love we all felt. Love does make the world go around.

The reason I was in California was because I facilitated a workshop for 35 UU ministers and religious professionals who wanted to learn about effectively responding to trauma. Some of these ministers were friends, some are now. We shared stories, ideas and strategies and underlying the entire experience was the compelling desire to love the world even if it is broken. Broken by tragedy, broken by human evil, broken by natural disaster, broken by the unknown and the mysterious and they wanted to reaffirm that they could be healers and carriers of love even in the midst of tragedy.

And I was reminded about forming friendships - about forming alliance and about how love makes the world go round. How love is more than family, love is more than carnal, way more than sexual, more than attraction it is the deep, abiding, transformative, impulse to thrive, to give back, to know others.

Forming friendships outside of the family structure is something we desire to do, not something that comes unbidden nor without forethought and planning. Friendships can bind neighborhoods, clans, and groups together. The underlying and sustaining component of all relationships is love. The kind of love that Madonna was writing and singing about. Let me repeat:

“We've got to take a stand  
Reach out for someone's hand  
Love makes the world go round  
It's easy to forget  
If you don't hear the sound  
Of pain and prejudice.  
Love makes the world go round

They think that love's a lie  
But we can teach them how to try  
Love means to understand  
Reach out for someone's hand  
'Cause everything you do  
Comes back in time to you

We have to change our fate  
Before it gets too late

That which makes us reach out for another's hand is love, universal, unselfish, unending altruistic love. The love of human for

human simply because we are all human, all spiritual beings in human form, all able to see beyond the external into the soul of one another.

Friendships are the icing on the cake, and being and making friends is an experience of the soul. Thomas Moore, author of the *Care of the Soul*, and *Soul Mates* writes, "By definition, the soul is attached to life in all its particulars. It prefers relatedness to distancing. From the point of view of soul, meaningfulness and value rise directly out of experience, or from the images and memories that issue modestly and immediately out of ordinary life. ... Relatedness means staying in life, even when it becomes complicated and when meaning and clarity are elusive." p5 *Soul Mates*

Understanding the needs of the soul means we are concerned with the muck and mire of life, those earthly daily facts and feelings of life. Giving and knowing love can help us in the process of soul making, which leads to a greater understanding of ourselves, our humanity, our frailties, our potentials, our responsibilities and our very well being.

At the heart of the matter we know that we can be and become most ourselves when we are engaged with other people. Though there is an inherent tension in our psyche between this desire to be with and be known by others; and a desire to be isolated and unattached from others. However it is my opinion that a balance can be attained because we have the innate capacity to love.

Friendships are one of the vehicles for this inherent love to manifest because the most crucial ingredient of a friendship is that it is an equal relationship that demonstrates five components: acceptance, honesty, generosity, loyalty and trust.

Friendships like intimate partnering meets some basic core needs. These are the need to be able to depend on someone, to have a mutual

understanding with another, to value and be valued by another, to want the best for another and to feel happy in another's company.

So in order to know universal love, the kind that makes the world go around, we need to give love and here are my simple suggestions: practice the basics of courtesy, kindness, pleasantness and conversation with all to stay connected to the larger community, and do not treat other persons as strangers and intruders into our small and rigid world. Develop, foster, and nurture your friendships, but do not forget that they are a reflection of the larger community and a vehicle to develop your soul, to practice and refine your spiritual life and a special gift that occurs while living and being involved in all of creation.

Love does make the world go round and round. May you get and give love. So Be it.