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This morning I had a fascinating dream. I was in a room full, and overflowing, with all sorts of people. Every size, shape and color. Some, I knew by name. Others I knew by “energy“, if you will. I recognized them as the types of people that are attractive/attracted to me. This wasn’t an organized ‘service’ at which I was the speaker/teacher. This was a disorganized (my M.O.) group of my friends in a small gymnasium of some sort. It was rowdy and loud. No one was particularly dressed, people were seated everywhere/anywhere and meandering about. None of them were wealthy. I gathered this from the overall look of the assembly. The general impression I received from the group was that of a bunch of un-conformists. I know that’s not a word, but it is a real thing that can be seen everywhere. Non-conformists resist fitting into systems that they deem unfit, unjust, etc. It’s a conscious choice or it is recognized as such by the actor. Un-conformists CAN’T fit in no matter how hard they try. Certain people seem to have something RIGHT about them that disallows quiet conformity to anything or anyone.

The room was full of 5th wheels and you could feel it in the air. I don’t think that I ever felt so comfortable in all of my life. I felt brave, strong, righteous, comfortable, intelligent, completely relaxed. All of those noble qualities spontaneously occurred as I became more and more cognizant that I was in the midst of people that understood me. I was surrounded by the love of the other outcasts. Not pity, not mercy, it was

nothing that had to be self-willed or taught. I was in a room full of people like me. Palpable anarchy. No one was in control and it made me and the others alive in a way that I never experienced before. I knew these people that I never saw before. For some reason, they had come to see me. It was some sort of visit or party. There were no decorations, it wasn’t my birthday, no one congratulated me for anything. They were all just there, in this one space, at this one time.

The place was packed with people, but, as soon as I began to speak everyone started to arrange themselves in some sort of order on bleachers that surrounded the auditorium/gymnasium. The strange thing is that the people that were the closest to me, people that I had grown up with and around, my immediate family and relatives, had to sit in a separate room due to a limited seating capacity. When I began speaking, I could see all of my family members moving through a door to an adjoining room. They weren’t told to leave by anyone. It seemed more so that they were unable/unwilling to find a seat amidst these types of people. They were unable to find their places in this environment.

Prior to this, in the same dream, I had a disagreement with a member of my family. There was a heated debate about certain choices that I had made for my life/lifestyle. During this particular exchange I was ‘outnumbered’ by family members. I remember feeling so frustrated and inhibited as I attempted to make some point about some thing. The conversation ended with me saying something to the effect of, “There is an evident disconnect between what you say and what you do. Until you fix that, you can’t tell me anything! How can I believe anything that you say?” Saying that made me feel very sad. I felt ashamed of not having a car and riding a bike everywhere. I felt ashamed of not eating meat and animal products. I felt ashamed for not having a retirement plan. I felt ashamed for having casual conversations with homeless people (I wave and talk to a lady that collects change from motorists at Kolb and Valencia on my way home from work.) I felt ashamed for enjoying conversations with people who, evidently, had problems. Everything that I said and did seemed so wrong and unjustifiable. I was in despair, depressed. Imagine the shock of leaving this discussion and entering a room full of like-spirited individuals.

When I stood in that room, amongst friends, I was overcome with emotion. They all seemed to be dysfunctional in some way, however, the perceptible strength of the collective was overwhelming. I could physically see that these people were not among the 'accepted' in society, but the pure strength of numbers managed to transform them into something beautiful. It was an amplification of their distortions that made them something new, something pretty, something strong. It was all very 'punk rock.' The sheer volume of us all made its own style/form of musical existence. It was an 'upper room' of rejects, alive with the spirit. We had waited alone, tarried, and now the power had descended as promised. I wanted to tell them something and the following address is a paraphrase of what I remember saying. Again, this wasn't a speech. This was a discussion among a group of un-conformists. It was punctuated with all sorts of group participation and chatter, "Oohs" and "Ahhs," laughter at appropriately inappropriate places and so forth. All of this will make sense to the misfit.

"Brothers and Sisters: Thank you so much for coming. I feel blessed and fortunate to be in your presence today. I've just had a conversation with certain members of my family and I think that I disappoint them. I don't think that I'm the person that they hoped I would be." At this point I begin listing a series of grievances that I've heard expressed to me. Everyone that I state is met with absolute laughter. A knowing laughter from people who have been through the same process. This really loosens me up and I begin to imitate voice intonation and whole conversations that I remember having with my "disappointees". The situation turns into one of high comedy as I re-enact a million and one heartbreaks that all of us have felt, but now have been exposed for the lies and misinformation that they truly are. The power of the room has become our truth-meter and refiners fire. It's an alchemical chamber that turns the lead of social rejection into the gold of true existence. Here amidst these people, I can see all of the lies. We have a collective 3rd eye that has given us hyper-sight, visions, and higher reasoning faculties.

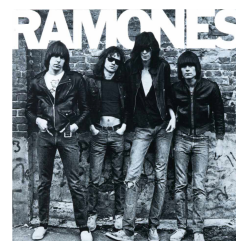
I become so comfortable with the situation that I have a seat on one of the bleachers with everyone else and continue talking. There is no podium, there is no speaker, there is no me, there is no them. It is an US

having a common experience. I stop looking at the people around me when I speak and simply talk towards the front of where I'm sitting. I'm not a speaker delivering a message. I'm simply the voice of the group. For these few moments, I'm voicing the common experience of the whole body.

As I go through my list of disappointments and failures, ways that I've disappointed and failed everyone around me in the outside world, I experience those disappointments and failures all over again on an emotional level. Not as a crushing weight that pushes me down, a burden to carry, but as a weight coming out and off of me. I'm becoming lighter and carrying less. Everything that I confess seems to release me to confess something even deeper. This is the culmination of my confession.

"These are all of the ways in which I have disappointed my family and those around me. All of this is the result of 2 simple questions: Who Am I? Who And What Is God? Brothers and sisters, all of these troubles have come about from wanting to know who I am and who/what God really is. Since I asked these questions, I've learned some things about myself and God. These 2 questions have made me freer..."

This is the point in my discussion at which I awoke. Sunday, April 26th, 5:47am.



*I am an outsider, Outside of everything
I am an outsider, Outside of everything
I am an outsider, Outside of everything
Everything you know, Everything you know
It disturbs me so*

*Everybody tried to push me, Push me around
Everybody tried to put me, Try to put me down
All messed up, hey everyone, I've already had all my fun
More troubles are gonna come. I've already had all my fun*

*Everybody tried to push me, Push me around
Everybody tried to put me, Try to put me down*