

Daily Meditation 12/10/2021

Barbara Holmes on Survival, Resilience, Inner Strength & Joy

Good morning.

This morning, we continue our journey along the way of the *via positiva*, the oasis we're stopping at, and the *via negativa*, where we're facing some of the struggles in our world today, including that of the unholy masculine authoritarianism, rising everywhere.

And I call upon the wisdom of Barbara Holmes in her wonderful book, *Crisis Contemplation: Healing the Wounded Village*. And we end this essay with her teaching that really good healing focuses on memory, story, revival of culture and ritual, and the performance of joy.

And I ran across an article today on the internet, which I think, skews the performance of joy in kind of a special way for us, especially because I've offered the metaphor of becoming a camel along this path.

So it seems that there's a real important story going on in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. And what has happened is that there's been a big crackdown on camel beauty contestants. Yes, you heard that right. They have been receiving Botox injections and other other artificial touchups. Over 40 camels have been disqualified from this annual pageant of beauty contestants; that is a really big deal in these lands.

It's called the King Abdul Aziz Camel Festival, kicked off earlier this month. And they're competing for \$66 million in prize money. So there have been Botox injections, facelifts, and other cosmetic alterations to make the camels more attractive, but this is forbidden. And the jurors decide the winner based on the shape of the camel's heads, necks, humps, dress, and postures.

So apparently this is a really big scandal. And these artificially enhanced camels are using specialized and advanced technology so as not to detect the tampering.

And so it says that this year, authorities discovered dozens of riders have stretched out the lips and noses of camels, used hormones to boost the beasts' muscles, injected camels' heads and lips with Botox to make them bigger, inflated body parts with rubber bands and used fillers to relax their faces.

The club is keen to halt all acts of tampering and deception in the beautification of camels, the SBA report said, adding organizers would impose strict penalties on manipulators.

It tells us the camel beauty contest is at the heart of the massive carnival, which features camel races, sales and other festivities. And it draws a lot of people from these oil-rich countries who put a lot of money into this competition. Camel breeding is a multi-million dollar industry and similar events take place across the region.

So I did some application here to my invitation to you becoming camel-like in storing up the waters and the refreshment of via positiva and joy and awe and wonder and gratitude as we crossed the desert of of authoritarianism, and other shadows in our time. So I just felt that this is an appropriate relief, this humor, to keep alive that joy growing in your big hump, like the camel these days, and prepare yourself for what's coming next.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.