SUICIDE? WHY?

We are all born excited about life! Most of us are able to breathe and move, able to see, touch, smell, and hear. We arrive ready to learn and we are appreciative of our body. If our environment is safe and our needs are met, we can innocently continue developing our life skills, with appreciation for each new experience and new understanding. We appreciate ourselves and seek interactions with everyone and everything we encounter, evaluating what and who is dangerous and may cause us harm, and what and who is safe and will meet our needs.

When does all that change?

When do we start too compare our self to others?

When do we stop loving and appreciating our body; our self; our life?

Physiological anomalies can cause our experience here too be strange or painful.

I think, though, it is our interactions with others which influence our perception of our self.

Our culture is very competitive and comparative. From infancy we are evaluated by family, friends, and strangers, who are taught in our culture to place everyone on a comparative scale of beauty, strength, intelligence and accomplishment.

No matter where we are placed on that scale, we feel we are not where, what or who we should be.

We emphasize with children that they are “getting:” “big,” “so tall,” “so smart”…, as though there is some ideal age, shape, knowledge or such that we must obtain to be what we are “supposed” to be, know or become.

I met an elderly woman, who was revered by her neighbors for her incredible health and ability while over 90 years old. One day I heard her complain to a neighbor that she felt old and wrinkled, as though she had no beauty and very little worth. I was saddened by her statement and I tried to encourage her that she was still beautiful and of great value.

I've come to realize that we spend the first half of our lives desperately trying to arrive at being the "ideal" person we are supposed to become. Then, at some point, we decide we must have missed becoming that person and we spend the rest of our life looking back, wondering when we missed it.

So, I emphasize with children, elderly persons, and everyone in between, that, whatever age we are now, is the right age to be while we are there! That, every age has difficulties, and every age has wonderful things to learn, experience and be!

I always emphasize to children, and to everyone, their kindness.

From infancy onward our culture emphasizes boys strength and girls physical characteristics, and how closely those features align with whatever the current fallacy is about what an ideal body should be. I tell them that kindness is the most important thing to be and that kindness is a great gift to have and to give. I then emphasize to everyone that they are intelligent. And I tell them that being intelligent is an important thing to be as well; and that being kind and smart is a great combination that allows them to accomplish great things, if they choose to do so.

I sometimes also then emphasize that wisdom is a choice, not just a consequence of experience or age. Some people arrive wise at birth, some people live a long life, and somehow avoid becoming wise.

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I recently heard how frequent the tragic occurrence is of children in Utah killing their selves. If any children in our lives are prone to do so, they must know we care, that at least one person in their life cares about them, and values their uniqueness!

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It is my observation, especially last year, as I assisted kindergarten students, that everyone arrives kind at birth. It is our inherent physical and spiritual nature. I concluded similarly as I observed infant children, while I comforted them in the Neo Intensive Care Unit at Primary Children's Hospital, singing my song-rhymes to them as I held and gently rocked them. When one infant child cries, others cry in empathy and fear. When one infant smiles or laughs, other infant children smile and laugh.

When a child in kindergarten needs anything, other children in the kindergarten immediately respond to assist or provide what is needed. If a child needs a pencil, crayon or eraser, children immediately offer theirs. If a child doesn't know an answer, others immediately provide them the answer. I also sadly observed that this kindness is stifled in our schools. When a child needs a pencil or such, teachers sometimes stop other children from helping, because they blame the child for the loss or destruction thereof. When a child doesn't know an answer, and they are suffering tremendous, destructive anxiety, the children who try to assist are reprimanded for doing so. Yet, their compassion is so great, that I have happily seen them still persist in quietly trying to rescue the desperate child with the needed answer.

This year, as I got one very brief moment to assist kindergartners, I showed them the word "kindergarten" and explained that it was originally a German word meaning "child's garden." I then noticed, as I showed the two parts to

this compound word, that the first word contains within it the English word “kind,” so I showed them this, and I told them each that they are kind.

Years ago, as I was given the opportunity to teach young children in a church, I was delighted and excited to teach them all I have learned in life. As I did, I soon realized that they were teaching me all I had forgotten in life! They still knew how to cry and laugh, to sing and dance, and so much more! All these joyful, inherent aspects of our natures have been ruled out of us by a culture that shames and blames, competes and compares, controls and contorts us away from freely expressing ourselves!

We are all suffering post-traumatic-stress-injury from a culture which relentlessly pushes us away from ourselves.

Surely, one of the most important things we can do to find hope for those in despair, is to help them return to the hope they once had! To remind us each, as the children did for me, to cry and laugh, to sing and to dance, to love life and learning again, to love others again and express it, and to again love our unique self.

I’m your neighbor, I’m your brother, I care about you!

Thank you for your kindness!

I hope happiness for you today and each day!

Laird

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