



EP20 Woo²

Healing Spiritual Distress

Colette Baron-Reid & Connie Diletti

Colette:

Hello and welcome to INSDIE THE WOONIVERSE, Woo². That's a little bit of woo x2. In these shorter episodes, you're going to hear more of me. Like an audio journal on wooniversal topics like abundance, resilience, working with the moon, manifestation, meditation, and much, much more. Hey everybody, I'm here with my executive producer, Connie Diletti. Okay, Connie, what is in the Wooniversal consciousness for today? What are we going to dig into?

Connie:

Over the weekend I came across an article and it intrigued me, so I thought I'd bring it to you. It was on CNN, in the health section, and the title said this, is the world facing a crisis, a spiritual distress? Here's one of the quotes from the article that I thought would be a great starting off point. It said, "All of a sudden people were dealing with really intense existential and spiritual distress as a result of the beginning of the COVID pandemic." This, of course, is speaking about the collective grief and the loneliness and everything that the pandemic has caused and how we've all been affected in some way. I just want to start maybe by posing this question to you, Colette, in what way do you feel spirituality plays a part in us all moving forward?

Colette:

It plays a huge part. Here's the thing. People's certainty was thrown off. We had taken for granted that we leave our house, we see people, we communicate, we congregate. A society needs to be social, otherwise it's not a society. We have to be in connection to each other. We have no morality either if we are not able to be connected to each other. The spiritual distress is that there's a reckoning to ask ourselves how much of our certainty has been determined by the outer world. I think that's really been the existential concept of, an existential meaning, of course, what is the meaning of life? Why am I here?



Then, also, the threat of dying was so huge and it was global. It wasn't like just one place. A lot of fear took hold. When we have fear, we can't hold fear and faith equally in the same. There's a sense of, how do I survive? Our instinct for survival got triggered, and that's what got traumatized. We now have this narrow potential because our brains shut down. We're only looking for perceived threats. If we're only looking for perceived threats or we're in that constant fight, flight, freeze, fawn, attached, if you want to look at it.

Complexity of the trauma response or the inability to trust and have faith because you are thinking, what do I need to do to stay safe? As opposed to, I trust and have faith in this invisible power that can give me a sense of certainty, but not necessarily certainty around materialism. Do you know what I mean? It's like spiritual certainty has nothing to do with what is or what isn't.

Connie:

Would you say it's like the difference between a definitive outcome receiving that versus a definitive feeling of being safe and connected?

Colette:

Yes, a hundred percent. This is a really good example. There was a story around the Vietnam War. You know what? I'm going to read something for you, because it is so profoundly pertinent to the question that you asked, which is, what is the Stockdale paradox? During the Vietnam War, there was an Admiral named Jim Stockdale, who was the highest ranking US military officer in a prisoner of war camp for eight years. He was there for eight years during the height of Vietnam War. Think about that, eight years in a prisoner of war camp.

The concept that came out of his experience was called the Stockdale paradox, is that you must maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties. Then, at the same time, have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they may be. This was all about hope. To answer your question, this is perfect, this is a perfect analogy to the answer, that when somebody hopes specifically to get a certain thing, when will the pandemic be over? when are we going back to normal? where there's this attachment to the hope that this one thing will happen when I want it to.



There's a bit of a denial of the brutality of the fact that this pandemic was the way it was. There was people who were like, "No, I'm in denial, but I'm going to hope for this exact thing." Then, it doesn't come. The story of Admiral Stockdale was that in the POW camp, the soldiers who were holding onto hope that they would be released on Christmas were so depressed after that didn't happen, they just withered. Whereas, his leadership was all about prevailing, dealing with the worst brutality that they'd ever experienced, but trusted in the divine and trusted in hope that there would be hope.

That they would prevail at some point, so that they held onto the concept of hope and faith beyond the date, the date stamp on, when will we get out, and they were in there for five years.

Connie:

Yeah. Like you say, this is like releasing that attachment to the outcome, specific outcome.

Colette:

Yes, releasing attachment to the specific outcome. This is really about genuine hope. I think the spiritual crisis was about our attachments, attachments to our way of life, attachments to how we took certain things for granted in our society, especially the idea of isolation. How many people were isolated in the pandemic, and what it did to their mental health, and still doing? You know that you cannot isolate human beings. We are pack animals. We are meant to be in a society. A society can have morality and value and ethics, etc., when it is social, when there is community.

But when community goes, that's why you're seeing so much a turmoil now, a road rage and you see more crime and you see all the upticks of the things that we wish were not there, is because of the amount of isolation that people have gone through. The spiritual crisis that you brought up is about coming back to that sense of community and focus around our spirituality. Our spirituality is not divested from our humanity. It is being spiritual through our humanity. Part of that is to acknowledge the other as the same as you, to have compassion. Compassion is that step that we need that I think has been so lacking.



The amount of divisiveness, that's why I rarely go on in the internet. I don't even know what's going on half the time. I don't scroll on, I don't doomscroll, I don't do any of that anymore. No. I paint instead, just because it can be so damaging to your psyche. That's the issue too, that you're seeing all of this, that fallout. What is spiritual here? When you've asked that question, where's my spirituality here in the division, and it isn't, it doesn't exist there. How do we bring it back? The distress, the spiritual distress is about finding new ways of having that direct dialogue with the divine and living it. What does that look like now?

Connie:
Should we pull a card on that?

Colette:
Let's pull a card on that.

Connie:
Let's pull a card.

Colette:
Yes, let's do that. Let's pull a card on what do we need to know about the spiritual distress, is that a broad of all-

Connie:
How do we heal it?

Colette:
How do we heal?

Connie:
How do we heal it?



Colette:

Perfect. How do we heal this spiritual distress? Let's pull this card. Exchanging gifts. Yeah, exchanging gifts. We heal it by being part of community, for however we can. Exchanging gifts is I bring me, you bring you, and we exchange that. This is about a sense of, again, no longer othering the other, having that connection, there's nuance. I think that's the other thing, that I really believe that part of the way that our society needs to heal is to retrieve the beauty of nuance and recognize that human beings are complicated. We're complex. Nothing is black or white. Nothing is us against you.

We have to start seeing the other as myself. I think that's what the exchanging gifts is all about, and bringing of service, like, however it is, but we aren't in service just to ourselves. We are in service to our community. It's really bringing back the community and participating in it, however small. It doesn't have to be big. It just has to be. That's what the card says.

Connie:

I love it. I love that.