

On Mar 27, 2018, at 12:11 PM, Cornelia Parkes <cornelia.parkes@comcast.net> wrote:

Dear Friends,

I can tell that we had another deep and dynamic meeting of the New Story Group Monday night when my mailbox is full of replies Tuesday morning! Thank you Gwen for bringing the chapter on the Power of Transmutation from Brian Swimme's video "The Powers of the Universe" back to our attention. Some of us found it too much to absorb, but still gained valuable insights. We are grappling with difficult and important questions on how to frame the new story, how to become personally involved in transmutation, how to know truth.

Peter Stringham suggests that at a personal level we look at our involvement with consumerism recognizing that consumerism is driven by needs that are basically spiritual. He writes "The New Story promotes a spirituality that is in tune with protecting the environment but does not directly address the personal emptiness."

Mary Coelho replies that the New story "is so important to me is because it directly addresses personal spiritual identity, including emptiness. It particularly teaches we are not spiritually empty, the sacred is within us and around us in the context of the New Story in contrast to the reductive science story. There is certainly still the journey to "know" experientially who we are in our fullness but the New Story teaches an identity in a contemporary context informed by science, that we are spiritual beings (the numinous is within) in contrast to the Western reductive split that denies this intrinsic spiritual identity."

Jane Cutting was inspired by reading a piece on "The Great Indian Poet and Philosopher Tagore on Truth, Human Nature, and the Interdependence of Existence" (<https://www.brainpickings.org/2017/03/07/tagore-mans-universe/>) and noticing how similar Tagore's ideas are to Brian Swimme and the New Story. It contains this quote from Fyodor Dostoyevsky, "*Nature, the soul, love, and God, one recognizes through the heart, and not through the reason... Reason is a tool, a machine, which is driven by the spiritual fire.*"

Over breakfast I read an article in the Penn Gazette, the UPenn alumni magazine, on "Confronting Denial." The writers, both psychologists, echo the need for speaking to the heart: "*Substituting misinformation with new facts is not guaranteed to change minds....Stats don't cut it, but stories do.*"

Stories, stories, let's write a good story! Please continue to send me your meditations and insights.

At our meeting Jim Serdy shared a story about how his daughter at the March for Our Lives engaged a pro-gun protester in a respectful conversation about his beliefs and how at the end he reluctantly agreed to shake her hand. This is a good story!

Mary Coelho, Patty Huff, who distributed the handout on delusional thinking, Peter Stringham, who will participate by email, and I volunteered to pull together a program for our next meeting on the fourth Monday in April, the 23rd. I hope you can come.

Cornelia Parkes