



Harder I Work, The More I Love, by Lynne Twist

Burnout is being disconnected from Source. I don't think it's as related as we'd like to think, to working too long or too hard or eating pizza and Coke instead of veggies and water. All those things play into it -- I don't recommend working yourself to death or anything. But true burnout is being disconnected from Source. That's really where it happens.

We all know times when we were soaring: we were working 24/7 and we wanted to work 24/7, and what we were producing was so exciting that we couldn't stop. That's an example of being connected to Source in a way that your body will go with you.

At the same time, I do think it's important to take care of one's capacity to serve. That's the other thing I feel responsible to take care of: to nourish my own capacity to serve, and that comes from Source. That comes from meditation. That comes from being in nature. That comes from being in touch with the love I have for my husband and my children and my family. My love for God. My love for the spirit world. My love for the shamans. When I'm in touch with that, I can do anything. And then that's a source of enormous joy.

We once had a conference in Ireland with the Nobel laureates. We sponsored women to come from war zones all over the world. This conference was very confronting.

At one point on the second day, I was having lunch with colleagues from Iran, four lawyers who worked with Shirin Ebadi. A group of six women arrived in a van. My colleagues saw the van pulling up and they ran across this green lawn crying with joy. They were all lawyers who had worked together for years before they got arrested. As the women got out of the van, women who had been in prison for years and tortured, they all ran towards each other and they hugged and they rolled around on the grass and they cried and they danced. It's making me cry thinking about it.

Then that night we had a party, the most joyous, raucous, wild, wonderful party of all women dancing with each other that I'd ever seen in my life; women from the Congo, women from Ethiopia, women from Honduras, all of whom had been through hell -- the kind of things they've been through, you can't even talk about.

My assertion from that enormous experience, and I've had many

experiences like that, is that the pain and the joy are one. It's all connected. And often the deeper people have allowed themselves to go into the pain, the greater capacity they have for joy.

I've seen that particularly with African women, with their incredible burdens in many cases. But when they celebrate " which they find a way to do every day, through singing, through dancing, through feeding each other " the joy is just breathtaking. I've been in Rwanda after the genocide and found the joy there in those people. I've been in Ethiopia after the famine. The capacity for human joy is probably unlimited.

I find it in myself. I find that my capacity for joy is enhanced by my capacity to face the suffering world and engage with it. My capacity for joy and lightheartedness and fun and release is strengthened by my capacity to face the darkness. And my capacity to face the darkness is strengthened by my capacity to celebrate joy. The harder I work, the more I love.

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