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Relationship First Aid - How to relate to life's lessons through nature

By Ma'at Seba
SUN COLUMNIST



Relationship First Aid articles highlight how you relate to things or not.

The Divine in all it's infinite wisdom has placed answers to our lessons in life all around us. Almost everywhere you look, if you stop to analyze it, there is a lesson to be learned. We are so caught up in our daily

drama that we do not stop and take the time to smell the roses, absorb a little sun, or listen to the birds sing. I have always been one who was very observant. I love to people watch and study nature, and in doing so Spirit has shown me many valuable lessons. I will share some of them:

- **Ants** - These little powerhouses exhibit endurance, exceptional strength, focus, community, sacrifice, cooperation and order. They can carry 10-50 times their body weight (*representing life's challenges*) and seem to never stop until they complete their tasks.
- **Birds** - I usually feed the birds the first thing in the morning and as I watched them I noticed that the first bird to arrive, regardless of its species would first investigate the food, evaluate the area for safety, then call out to all the other birds that it has found food. Birds are examples of unselfishness, community and sharing.
- **Wind and Water** - Have you ever noticed how the wind no matter how strong or gentle it blows, just blows right on around a building, or right through the branches of a tree? Not trying to force its way, but going around. Or how the water in a stream flows right over the rocks? That teaches me to "bend with the wind" and "go with the flow". When faced with obstacles in life, instead of getting all upset and bent out of shape, acknowledge that the challenges will come and they go, just like the seasons in nature. In the midst of it all, when you have done all that you know how to do, stand in the space of surrender and faith, turn it over to the Divine and always remember the sayings, "And this too shall pass", "Everything must change, nothing stays the same" and "Everything has a season".
- **Brick Buildings** - Healthy relationship should be patterned after a brick building. They

must have a base or a solid foundation (*love, respect, trust, honesty, communication, common goals*). There will be trials and challenges along the way during the construction of it, but as long as there is balance it will constantly continue to grow (*layers of level bricks*). There must be cement to bind and keep the bricks together (*love, trust, honesty, respect, order*). Then there are the windows, which let in light and fresh air (*representing allowing love to enter and new ideas, approaches, opportunities*). Or close the windows to bad weather and loud noises (chaos, negativity and troublemakers).

Dogs - Perfect examples of the unconditional love that the Divine has for us. No matter what you do, your dog will always seek your love and attention. They crave it and look for every opportunity to return it back to you. If people could love unconditionally this world would be a place of acceptance, non-judgment and peace, because a loving person could not allow the suffering of others without doing something to assist or elicit change.

• **Trees** - Trees take in the carbon dioxide that we exhale and they give out the oxygen that we need to breathe in and exist. There also are several species of trees that grow within any area and they cohabitate mutually by sharing water and necessary minerals and nutrients through a fungal network called the "mycorrhizal network". Because a tree cannot uproot and change its location it uses this network to detect danger from insects, weather conditions, nutrient deficiencies etc. and they communicate exchange nutrients or toxins to defend against those dangers or support the growth of other trees and plants. This network is like our internet. They teach us to give and to receive, and they represent strength, endurance and longevity, acceptance of others (*representing races, cultures*), communication.

Goddess Ma'at Seba is the founder and facilitator of RELATIONSHIP FIRST AID, a program which uses spiritual principles as the tools to identify and resolve the causes of unhealthy, toxic or stressful relationships, whether it is with your mate, children, friends, co-workers as well as yourself. Ma'at can be reached for speaking engagements, classes or lectures at: Relationshipfirstaid@yahoo.com or Maatseba@gmail.com

Embracing the Goddess Within: Real Beauty

By Addonna AKA Goddess Godis
SUN COLUMNIST



When most people think about a beautiful woman, they think about the physical part of her - how her hair and makeup looks, how she dresses, her weight and shape of her body. These things are superficial

or surface.

Real beauty shines from within the heart, soul and spirit of a woman. There is nothing more beautiful than a woman who exemplifies the peace, love and wisdom of God. As a Goddess, it is what we aspire to become a feminine expression of God's love.

What people say to a Goddess:

- You have a glow about you.
- You walk as if you are floating.
- You have a peace about you.
- I feel loved in your presence.
- Your presence lights up a room.
- I love the way your energy feels.



- There is something special about you.
- You make me want to know God.
- You make me want to be a better person.
- Are you an angel?
- Did you come from heaven?
- You have changed my life.
- You always know what to say.
- I feel this warm and comforting feeling, when I am around you.
- I feel happy when I see you.
- You are beautiful inside and out.

- You are so loving and nurturing.
- You have great wisdom.
- I feel like I can tell you anything.
- I can tell you have a personal relationship with God.

GODIS is a spiritual artist, who is dedicated to using her gifts as a photographer, garment designer, writer and speaker to celebrate, document and inspire the awakening of the GODDESS within women. A GODDESS is a woman who knows that she is a daughter of God. She is a

woman with great spiritual beauty, who has chosen to be a light in the world.

Mom on the Rebound

By D. L. Gibson
SUN LIFESTYLE COLUMNIST



Lord....please help us!

I didn't want to look up to see who was knocking on my car window. Sister girl didn't want to look as well. She sat bent over with her head tightly clutching her knees, as if she was taking shelter from a bad storm.

It wasn't raining, but we could hear insults from the crazy deacon pouring down.

I finally managed to get my keys into the ignition, but the knocking got harder.

Then, I heard a welcoming voice say, "Sister Dee...roll down your window."

It was the Bishop, but I could hear the crazy deacon's voice in the background. I only hoped that he wouldn't walk up to my car and try to climb into my back window. His crazy sister-in-law had already busted it out with her bare hands. Glass was splattered on my back seat with traces of blood.

Underneath the glass was a large envelope containing the pictures that caused Marsha and the crazy deacon to get riled up.

I cracked my driver's side window and told Bishop that Sister Girl and I had to leave. This was too much excitement for us.

The DeMarco Project Speaks - A lesson in Compassion

By Kim J. Clark
Aka Expanding Love



Like many women, "daddy issues" are, or more accurately put, were in my bag of "excess weight" I've been carrying around. I used to think my father was mean and did love or even like his family.

However, in working with veterans, this writer is beginning to understand that he was dealing with post war mental and emotional trauma. Presently, the mental health community refers to these types of issues as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This revelation about my father has come about as a result of my efforts to help my younger brother understand who he was. Our father made his transition before my baby brother was born.

David C. Eley, was an honorably discharged soldier who served in Vietnam. He had a great sense of humor, loved John Coltrane and was a humanitarian at heart. Prior to working with veterans, my perception was that he was would trick you into letting your guard down (joking, playing games, dancing together...) then would be on a mission to destroy his so called "loved ones." I am happy to say, I was wrong.

In the past, thoughts of him would cause anger and rage to well up in me. Being a person who has the desire to hold no place of unforgiveness within myself, it has been a struggle to be free of the emotional and physical pain experienced at his hand. I tried working through my "daddy issues" in therapy, prayer, meditation, writing and more writing. For years it seemed like the healing work was successful until his name would come up or a back spasm would hit... then back to the drawing board, I would go.

The more this writer works with veterans, the easier it has become to rec-

"Did Marsha break out your back window," Bishop asked. "She's going crazy in the hospital and threw a chair at one of the officers, heading him in the head. They had to take her to get her to calm down. Then, I believe that she had a heart attack. Now, we've got two sisters lying in the hospital recovering from a heart attack. The deacon is out for revenge, so be careful!"

He didn't have to tell me twice. I already knew that the crazy deacon was living up to his reputation. I just wondered how he was able to get out of jail so fast. Who posted his bond? And, where's Pastor Thug Life, when I needed him most?

Then, I saw Bishop turn and yell out, "Stay back! Don't come up to this car!"

He was yelling at the crazy deacon, who ignored his command.

His voice got louder, as the crazy deacon got closer. He was yelling, "Let me into that car! Give me those pictures!"

I wanted to pull off, but Bishop was leaning against my car. I didn't want to run Bishop over and have him in the hospital too.

Bishop and the crazy deacon were arguing. Bishop walked away toward the deacon. Then, the crazy deacon took it too far and pushed Bishop out the way.

Oh no this fool isn't running toward my car and is going to act like Superman, leaping into my back window!

Mom on the Rebound is based on actual events.

ognize verbal and non-verbal queues that are indicators to "back off" of a particular topic. Moving or talking too fast can cause a traumatized veteran to become agitated. Trying to help where help is not wanted can be perceived as aggressive behavior. Unwanted physical contact can be perceived as disregarding personal boundaries. Any of these behaviors, just to name a few, have the potential to trigger a PTSD episode.

With this new understanding of veteran issues, this writer understands Army veteran David C. Eley suffered in silence. As a family we suffered. But that is not the end of our story. This writer thinks of him now and smiles about the good times. My dad taught me how to Waltz and do the Camel Walk, a dance from "back in the day." Now, I fondly remember him focused on writing while listening to John Coltrane. There were many positive lessons. The painful ones are finally not "center stage" when I think of my dad. He was a man who loved his daughter and tried to teach lessons that would help me in life. He was also a man who lived with emotion issues and no help was available. For this I have compassion.

If you, or a loved one is dealing with service related emotional/mental health issues, please seek help. There are many resources available. Reach out to the Veteran's Administration, or a veteran service organization such as The DeMarco Project. We are here to help you. We are committed to saving veteran lives and improving the quality of life for traumatized veterans.

Kim is the mother of a veteran who loved his country and was willing to lay his life down for the freedoms he believed in. She is the Founder and CEO of The DeMarco Project, Non-profit organization. Her life's mission it to save veteran lives and improve the quality of life for traumatized military service persons. If you would like to support her in the work, donations are welcome. Visit the website:

www.TheDeMarcoProject.org.