

Transcribed from a sitting with Emily Carson
Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Released March 2007

Karma

No one cares why you are here. Temporarily they may, but ultimately it is their own legacies they will have to answer to and not yours. You are your own responsibility. You bear the consequences of your own actions; others bear the consequences of theirs, not yours. And your legacy will be bright or it will be difficult, depending on what you do this very day, depending on how you live this very evening. This is your karma, right in this moment, created anew and reaped simultaneously. This is your life, unfolding as you choose it, bearing out what you have sown. And other people do not eat from the feast you've set at your own table; you eat there alone. Your karma is yours. And so ultimately we do not care why others are here because it is of no consequence to us, it has no repercussions for us, it cannot help us and it cannot hurt us. This wheel that is your life runs in isolation. This system that you create from your own actions and understandings and misunderstandings—it is a system you live in alone. And when I say you must take responsibility, there is nothing punitive in that. And when I say you must answer to your own legacy, there is no sense there of being punished or being reprimanded. It is just that you have the chance to reap brightness, and where there is not brightness, it is because you did not sow it. There is no act of self-care greater than attending to your own karma, and noticing that the more gentle your actions, the more gentle their consequences, and the more fruitful your intention becomes, the more you will benefit. And so to love yourself well is to be good to yourself day in and day out, in the gentleness of your actions, and the purity of your intention, and the kindness you show towards all things wise and all things here. There is no self-sacrifice in this kind of kindness; there is self-fulfillment and tremendous self-satisfaction. Kindness begets light. It is worth it then for your own evolution, for your own growth towards nothingness, to be gentle and attend with all your tenderness and all your true intention to every moment of your day—even this one.

Questions and Answers

Q: ...Since the last time I saw you I feel like I've been opening a bit more to letting myself feel being hurt from the real little one. I've...felt even less aversion to opening...to the alone and not-helped place, and it feels really little and feels like there is no love at all. It feels really hopeless. And I feel that I live from this misunderstanding of what this place is and...project that onto the world. I feel like anger is harder for me to open to right now. I guess I'm just wandering what I need to hear about my process right now and my next step.

Do you try to get angry?

What I was speaking of is anger coming at me. I feel I vacate and don't feel that as much as I might be able to feel the alone and place of no help.

And have you gotten angry towards your transgressor?

I guess I'm feeling confused about that question, maybe because it hasn't been a part of my process. About a month ago I was running anger towards people from this very prideful, warrior place. I had a lot of intense anger and felt like I was running it then.

And you do find it in that child?

Well, I feel a little anger from the child in relationship to guidance. ...Because I'm not getting help, I feel like even guidance isn't helping me. But where I feel the little one with anger is that she just vacates and is not wanting or willing to feel anger coming at her.

You will have an easier time feeling the anger from the outside when you become more familiar with the anger that is in her, the anger that is also there in addition to the terror, in addition to the sadness. There is a general resistance in you regarding anger when it applies to this very innocent and tender part of you. But the experience of anger—both from within and without—is part of this experience. On some level she was mad. On some level, of course, she was also terrified. But before you vacate, there is a way that you want to get mad back, that you feel mad back. Consider that the power in your own anger, even though it arises in one so tender, is very similar to the force that comes at you from those who would abuse you. It is rage in both cases. I am giving you this to consider, not because it should change the way you approach your work, but because it's like a dark area in your understanding of this, and your view needs to be wider.

Your view of her, that little child, needs to be broader. You need to fight back with the part of you that wanted to fight back but couldn't or didn't. You need to feel that there is a part of you that powerful, that angry, and that that part of you was present even in this child, even in this circumstance. You will be less likely to vacate if you begin to allow that anger is in everyone. It is in you as much as it comes at you. You are not safe from it by numbing out; you cannot save yourself from something that is already inside you. And so I would have you consider this, just soberly, just quietly, and see if the next time you feel this experience, your sober contemplation can help inspire a little more willingness and some greater intention to allow anger anywhere it might be.

Q: I want to ask a question tonight about my memory. The older I get, the harder it is for me to remember things. It feels like the past two or three years it's gotten a lot more intense. I wonder if it's part of a transformative process. I'm sure it has to do with me getting older. Anyway, I wonder if you could talk to me about that.

What do you have trouble remembering?

Details at work. I used to be able to remember everything. Sometimes I can't remember what happened at a meeting or what the next thing is that I'm supposed to be working on. And sometimes I just blank out on words or names—just in general in my life.

Do you remember significant events and people well?

I would say that I do.

There is nothing really wrong with your mind. It does have a certain faculty that is waning a bit, but it's not one you particularly need. To be unable to remember unimportant things is somewhat of a blessing. There are many things that you don't need to think about and now, fortunately, some of them you can't think about. And they will not grow to difficult proportions. It is something of a reflection of the things that you actually care about. But to hold onto things you don't care about is not really good for you anyway. To forget them is really better; it will leave space in your mind. Maybe you will be lucky enough to have space there that can't be filled by anything. And so where this creates inconvenience you may need to rely on more notes or other tools. But it is mostly just a slight inconvenience and perhaps the possibility of a little

embarrassment. But that is as far as it goes. If you really want to change this, you can. But I would not encourage it. And I would hope for you actually that you use it to your advantage to help you forget all that is nonsense and leave a little space in your mind, a space for nothing at all.

Q: I continue to [play] it safe with the sense of shame I carry by keeping myself really, really busy. And so part of me loves it, the busyness, and part of me judges myself a lot for it. And my body's saying very clearly that I can't keep this up much longer. I'm getting some really clear signals. Anything you could tell me that will be useful?

How is your body communicating with you?

I have a really tight lower back with sharp, shooting pain sometimes. Exhaustion. Cold sores every few weeks.

Can you find the person inside you who really wants to slow down, this person expressed through your body?

I have some sense of it. I guess the part that is compelled and convinced that I can't stop is a lot stronger.

But you can feel something in you too exhausted to continue, even if it's small?

I can feel this part of me that's trying to slow down, to actually experience life.

You are very close to the end of your race, a race you set for yourself for no good reason except that you wanted to run it. And when you give out it will be clear, as it is almost clear to you now, that there is no finish line, no objective, no end you will ever reach in this way. There is just the experience of running, and whether or not you like that experience. You still prefer it for the time being, but your pace is slowing because nobody can run forever. And perhaps you will find a way, when you do finally stop, to keep yourself from your pain even without this marathon. But perhaps you will not find such a way, or perhaps you will take the opportunity that exhaustion affords you and let yourself be with yourself, if only temporarily. But for now, as you run through your life, at least look around sometimes and notice that you're not getting anywhere and you're not arriving at anything because there's nothing up ahead to arrive at. And

notice, too, the person inside you who wants to be free and wants to be still sometimes and wants to be alive, feeling alive, all the time. That person is urging you towards slowness. That person is the only one inside you with any loving impulse and any good sense. The mind that judges and the person who runs are the same beast; there is no love in either and no wisdom. But the person whose back aches, who feels tired all the time and weary all over—that is the person you can trust to be kind to you, to be gentle, and to know that your running doesn't serve you and it never can. That is the person you will inhabit if you slow down, the person who will lead you into your shame, but also back into your life.

Q: ...I was really touched by the opening talk because I feel like a lot of where I'm paralyzed and I grip and I feel just stuck and where I feel compromised is a way that has to do with karma, but in this lifetime, where all of a sudden I guess I've never felt this before, like I've made decisions...from a totally disconnected and lost place before, but they just feel horrible for me to look at. And I feel like that's all I can see lately, where I've been dishonest and petty and...feel like I've been a bad person. And I don't know, I guess I'm just struggling with that. ...I feel like the opening talk was so good because I haven't been that soft with myself about it, or compassionate. ...I kind of want help rectifying that, I guess.

Give me an example of something that bothers you deeply that you've done.

I don't really want to go into detail, but it usually comes out in my sexuality, and not having been with people that I really care about and feeling like I haven't honored that, what intimacy really feels like...now but wasn't before. And it's hard to say because I've heard you talk about sex and sexuality in such a different way, but it feels different for me now...

Do you feel like you're continuing in something which feels dishonest or wrong in present time?

I just feel ashamed of how I've been in the past.

It's really good that you hear what I say about karma. Your shame is the consequence that I'm talking about. Your feeling right now of the sadness and distastefulness of having been not true to yourself in the past—that is karma. The only way to stop this wheel on its current course and give it a new and brighter direction is to face what is now in the present, and that is your shame. A lie sticks around for a long time, but if we are true to ourselves completely it is possible to fully transcend the effects of that lie simply by facing those effects honestly and with great integrity. And that means right now just being brave enough to feel ashamed and brave enough

to say you're sorry for whatever you may have done. You are hurting right now as a consequence of your actions, but that is not a reason to judge or berate yourself. We are all living every moment as a consequence of our actions. But that does not make us any less innocent when those actions were committed in the past. You knew not what you did, and that is always true whenever we lie or hide, cheat or run. We do not know what we do. Now, with the clarity of your own wisdom and your current hindsight, you can see something about what you did that you couldn't see then. And so your shame is here, and also your great need to say you're sorry. That is all I would have you do. Say you're sorry without judging yourself, without berating or punishing yourself. And allow your shame, but only as long as it lasts naturally; you must also allow it to pass, and never use your shame as a way to punish yourself. And you will notice that I have spoken not once of any pain you may have caused someone else because there is none. You do not damage other people. You could not even if you tried. There is nothing done to anyone but you, and that, blessedly, can be resolved completely just through a simple "I'm sorry" and a completely broken heart.

Q: This feels like an odd question to be asking here, but lately I've been really feeling like I want to buy a place to live. There's been a situation where my landlord made a comment awhile back about how she'd like to sell the place she's been renting to me. And I'm not sure it's going to work out, or that she's still willing to do it. But it really has gone in that direction. I'm not really even sure I have enough resources to do it, but I'm just wondering if you could just talk about that a little bit.

Do you know why you'd like to own the place you live in?

I like it there. I like the place and I kind of want to live in a community. It's a nice place. And then I feel like I'm getting older and I want to have some security if I can. And there's part of me that feels like it would just be fun to own my own home and be able to do what I want.

It's a reasonable thing to want and a reasonable thing to have. And if you do decide you want it, you can find a way to afford it, it can work financially. I will not tell you that you need it or that it's even very important for you to have. But I will say that if you want it there is absolutely no reason to hold yourself back, and your desire should be your guide here more than anything else.

The Sound of Rain is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the work of Emily Carson and making the wisdom that comes through her available to an expanding audience. For more information, visit us on-line at www.soundofrain.org.