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DATE

October 27, 2020

DURATION

14m 10s

START OF TRANSCRIPT**[00:00:00]**

Good morning, Wellspring's, it's it's good to be with you again, one of the many almost seemingly limitless challenges of this time of being alive, living through the pandemic, is that it's kind of really upset our normal experiences of space time. I'm not talking like science fiction. I'm not talking like time travel. I'm saying that our lives have been so physically disrupted, the spaces that we inhabit made so unusual, this being kind of example a and also the normal rhythms and rituals of our lives, the way that we structure our lives as we move through time, the rhythms and the rituals of our days and weeks and months and years, they've been kind of thrown up in the air and feel a little scattered. Got an example of this not too long ago. We all did, especially if you're a sports fan, that the baseball postseason and the NHL postseason and the NBA postseason were all happening simultaneous with the with the start of the football season. Like, I can't ever remember all those four things happening at once.

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Many of the things that we've grown accustomed to have had to change and adapt.

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Not too long ago, the the tennis French Open happened, the French Open. That's one of the four major grand slam titles that kind of structure the professional tennis year. The French Open normally happens in Paris in the springtime. It was postponed because of the coronavirus and was rescheduled just for, I think, a few weeks ago. And what happened, like with a lot of sporting events these days, there were no spectators there. And one of the tennis premiere stars, Rafael Nadal, was interviewed before the tournament started. He actually went on to win the tournament this year to win the French Open. And he was in this interview talking about some of his emotions and feelings that the French Open was not able to happen in spring and it had to be shifted to the fall and that there were not going to be any spectators there. And he said it's just it's just a very sad thing. But he didn't say sad, like pathetic or angry or we should have fans there. He said it in a very normalising kind of way. He said it's a sad thing and maybe it should be a sad thing this year because of all the the suffering, all the struggles that the coronavirus that the pandemic has caused. I'm going to say I just love this interview that way in which he just so naturally made space for sadness as an emotion that belongs. How often we can receive these messages in our culture, that sadness doesn't belong or it is something to be feared or kind of pushed out of the way so we can move on to another form of life? I think that's one of the reasons that we're about to show you in just a moment. Registered with me so deeply. It's a little comic that I saw in some of you or my Facebook friends may have seen that I posted it. It's a four panel comic of two dinosaurs, one pink, one blue.

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And the first panel, one dinosaur says I'm sad. Another dinosaur responds in the second panel, I'm sorry. And I'm here for you. And the third panel, the sad dinosaur responds, Aren't you going to tell me to cheer up? People always tell me to cheer up. And in the concluding panel, the fourth one, the dinosaur, says, no, I still like you when you're sad.

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It's just reading it.

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I get a little choked up and I've seen it a lot of times. I've shared it with people.

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I just adore that sentiment.

[00:04:36]

And there is something so true about that third panel response. Aren't you going to tell me to cheer up? It rings so true because so often that's the message we get when we are sad or others are sad. And sometimes that response

to encourage people, if not tell them, encourage them to try to make them happier, to get them to cheer up or perk up, sometimes it's because we love people. Sometimes it's because we want to be helpful. But so often it has the counter effect of making the person who is sad feel even more isolated, alone in their sadness. And sometimes it is for less noble reasons. Sometimes there is something about sadness that can make some of us afraid. As if sadness is a kind of virus that is catching and somehow abnormal or wrong or sadness is broken, and if we're sad, we don't belong. And so I tell other people to cheer up because I am afraid of my own hidden sadness that I may not allow myself to feel. I think we get these cultural messages all the time because I think there's something actually really powerful in sadness. If we are simply sad, then maybe we're not so easy to manipulate, maybe it's not so easy to push our buttons if we are simply sad over who or what we have lost and we allow ourselves to be with that feeling. I think that one of the reasons that sadness can sometimes cause a kind of cultural panic is that we don't know what to do with sadness because I'm not sure there is anything in most cases to do with sadness.

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And a different invitation opens up. Instead of doing something with sadness, can we simply be with sadness?

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To me, that's the beauty of blue dinosaurs response to pink dinosaur, and I'd say for all of us, maybe the invitation is always here, especially if we ourselves are sad with compassion, treating ourselves, if we know other people are sad and with compassion, treating them just like blue dinosaur opens to pink dinosaur.

[00:07:04]

Maybe we can be like Blue Dino, this series, which is starting to come to its conclusion not today, but next week, the series *The Cloud Over Everything*, is about the place of loss at this time of being alive and how inescapable those losses are. And as we've talked about throughout this series, many different feelings come up with sadness, with loss, with grief, with mourning, sometimes anger or fear or frustration, or sometimes we're able to dig into that sadness and recognize it with some of these challenging feelings are some really profound invitations to to grow and to heal. Where this Sunday falls in our normal rhythms and rituals of the year at Wellspring's, this is our Souls Day service, our memorial altar service, where when we are in person, we gather our keepsakes, mementos and photographs of those we have loved who have died. And we create this this this beautiful altar. So many of you have have seen it, have witnessed it, have helped to create it, to create it together. And of course, this year we've had to adapt it to a new form to hear and to now to this way of being together and not to get too meta. But maybe on this Sunday, one of the things we notice that we are sad about is that the way that we remember together has itself had to change or feels like it has been lost.

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And if that kind of sadness is showing up for you, I invite you to let it be here.

[00:09:00]

You will see in just a few minutes a virtual altar that so many of us have this year chosen to create, to create together the faces, images that you'll see here, I imagine, for you. I know they do for me, represent all kinds of feelings. Lives lived fully and completely and lives cut terribly tragically, unfairly short lives that when we remember them, we feel still that ache, that pain of maybe some regret, maybe some anger, or maybe we look at these live as these faces, these images. And just the love is so accessible to us, maybe all those things and more.

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And yes, I imagine for so many of us today, it is simply sadness that shows up as well, individually and collectively.

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We have an invitation today, right now to provide space for that sadness, which is to say for ourselves.

[00:10:20]

Not too long ago, just this past week, I was at a recovery meeting and like many, although not all, but this particular recovery meeting ended with the Serenity Prayer, God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. Now, far be it for me to suggest any changes to the Serenity Prayer, although if you know anything about the Serenity Prayer, the popularized version of the Serenity Prayer is not the entire Serenity Prayer. It goes on much longer and actually is kind of more formally religious in some ways. And I love the long form of it, even if it's not totally my theology and I love the short form of it. But I do want to say that I think there's a relationship in the wisdom to know the difference. They're not just separate things, excepting what we can change and having courage to change the things we can. These faces, these names that we're going to see here. We cannot change that they have died.

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This is the work of acceptance in which sadness shows up so regularly, perhaps even after many years. I know it does for me. And I have also come to believe that allowing ourselves to ask for that serenity to accept the things that we cannot change also opens up our relationship to have the courage to change the things we can, that it's not just the wisdom to know the difference, but that by giving ourselves permission to grieve and to be sad and to work with all the other emotions that show up in these clouds over our lives, that then we can partake and create the kind of courage that allows us to address what also arises with sadness, the kinds of interactions between Blue Dino

and Pink Dino that if we don't reject the emotions, including sadness that shows up here, we can also have courage to change the things that we can, including overcoming the isolation, including overcoming the loneliness, overcoming the stigmatization of grief and of loss. And to recognize that so often when we scratch the surface of our sadness, of our grief, of our loss, what we find there is a very powerful love is the great teacher Pema Shadowrun said the healing water of love that does not die.

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I invite you today to open to the feelings that arise right now and in the video alter that you'll see in just a moment. And so because of that, I invite you to bring those same qualities in this online situation that we all find ourselves in to bring the same qualities of full attention, bringing your full, undisturbed, undivided attention to all these names and these faces, the ones that may be familiar to and the ones that are not familiar to. And also, I invite you that if you did not have a chance to get a picture or a story or an image in, please drop the name of that person or those people that you are remembering this morning into the chat and our YouTube channel so that we may join with you and we may join together in this invitation to grieve in spiritual community and to be together.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



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