



Love is the Source of Fearlessness, by Margaret Wheatley

Some of the prison bars that we have constructed for ourselves are our fear of losing our jobs. Our fear of not being liked. Our need for approval. Our desire to make important changes but not have to risk anything at all. So, we still want the comfort of this life and it feels like a bigger risk to step out and say, "No," or to say, "You can't do that to me." It feels like a larger risk, because I think the real prison we're in is our affluence, and our focus on our affluence or our hypnosis around material goods. I offer you this to think about: what is it that keeps you from acting fearlessly? [...]

Bernice Johnson Reagon, who was very active in the civil rights movements and also a wonderful singer, co-founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock, tells the story of looking back at those days of the civil rights movement, now from the safety and comfort of a successful life and career. She said, "In those days, we used to go out onto the streets, we used to protest. They would shoot at us, and someone would get killed. And then we'd go to their funeral and then we'd mourn and we'd grieve. And then the next day, we'd go back on the streets and protest some more." And she said, "When I look back, now, I think we were crazy to do that." But, then she said this. "But, when you're doing what you're supposed to do be doing, it's somebody else's job to kill you." [...]

Can we work beyond hope and fear? Can we find a way to be motivated, to be energetic, to be happy; to take delight in the work that we're doing that isn't based on outcomes, that isn't based on needing to see a particular result? Is that even available?

What if we could offer our work as a gift so lightly, and with so much love, that that's really the source of fearlessness? We don't need it to be accepted in any one way. We don't need it to create any certain outcome. We don't need it to be any one thing. It is in the way we offer it, that the work transforms us. It is in the way we offer our work as a gift to those we love, to those we care about, to the issues we care about. It is in the way we offer the work that we find fearlessness. Beyond hope and fear, I think, is the possibility of love.