

Nov. 17, 2006
Progressive Ponderings
Passion

No Newspaper. No Television. No Radio. No Internet. We were at a daughter's wedding in Zihuatanejo, Mexico. For one full week this news junkie went without. The first few days the withdrawal was painful, especially since we left just two days after the elections. I wanted to gloat. After three days I decided to stay away from the outside world for the whole period. A computer with internet was available should I weaken.

Zihuatanejo is located on a bay with most of the town rising into the surrounding hills. The wedding occurred on the beach with the Pacific as background. Our housing was over 100 steps up. A veranda overlooking the ocean was my early morning perch from which I could meditate and watch the sunrise alone. It's surprising what such a setting without the intrusion of the outside world can do for one's psyche. Much of the junk disappears and the thinking seems to become clearer.

I usually had an hour or two each morning before the sun and family and friends appeared. The setting presented an awareness of being. Instead of treading water my mind was able to sink into the depths that are inaccessible in our busyness. We seem to be trained to fear solitude. Solitude, the passivity that is empowerment, enhances the quality of the moment. Solitude, on the soul level, brings about a state in which we feel connected to the deepest part of oneself.

In such a setting, in such a state of being, the richness of my life seemed to surge forward with the power of the ocean waves. Retirement has been an enjoyable experience. But I never took the time to analyze. For the most part we had discovered a whole new set of friends. As what usually occurs, this new group of people had similar interests, participated in the same activities, talked the same language.

But still something about them seemed a little different. Something set them apart. Then, in the dawn of solitude, in listening to the whispers of creation the concept of *passion* exploded. King, Gandhi, Jesus, Wellstone, Dorothy Day, Mandela, etc., besides their other fine qualities, had a *passion* for life and people beyond what we normally experience.

As I contemplated this new idea I mentally sorted through many of these later-in-life friends. One had a *passion* for the environment, another for renewable energy, some antiwar, others for the poor, for restoring healthy relationships, for the vulnerable, for peace. Some were relatively new to this passionately active life. Others had spent a lifetime. We all seemed to reenergize each other.

I applied the concept of passion to the candidates that we supported. Their authenticity kept them from playing words games in their campaigns. With real *passion* one can feel the energy flow from the spirit, from the deep inner yearnings.

Passion for others is our way of healing our world – and in the process we often heal ourselves.

Yesterday is past. The future is currently inaccessible. For the now we need the solitude to listen to the whispers of our *passion*.

jmayer