

Trust Overcomes Fear

This first series of stories is about trust overcomes fear. And as I was transitioning from my quest and my chosen discipline, from trying to learn, trying to expand my consciousness, become more aware, I started to wonder how I had come to a point where I had overcome my fears. I think part of it was overcoming my fears of being different. I mean, you know, that's the thing about when you're coming up in the world, you want to belong and, you know, you don't want to be the oddball, the odd man out. And at some point, I started to care less about that. And I started to wonder where that came from, how I came to that. And a few stories, a few occasions kind of drifted in. And I think some of these stories, and most especially the combination of what I'd learned about the world and especially about myself and trust, I think it was the foundation of how I'd come to that. And that helped me to have the courage to explore and not be afraid. Or at least if I was faced with something, the unknown or judgment from others, that would cause me to have fear. So I think that's kind of the path that I was on. I overcame that fear. And I think that's really what courage is. It's not that you're never afraid, it's that you keep moving forward. You don't let that fear freeze you in place, because that's when growth stops. So this particular day, I was probably around five years old. And my grandfather was, His task for that morning was to sharpen the lawnmower blade on the little push mower he had. And I remember we went down, we got the blade, and we walked back up to the house. And in the basement, under the basement steps that came down from upstairs, he had a little workshop. And in the workshop, overhead, there was this little light bulb that hung down, and it had a chain or a rope that you would pull and it would turn on the light bulb. So we went in, and I was behind him. He went up, he reached up, he turned on the

light. And I remember the light, I'm guessing it was maybe a 40 or 60 watt light. It was really inadequate. For the space that it was lighting, it was really dim. But I guess it was enough for him to work by for what he needed to do. So he turned on his grinder, and he took the lawnmower blade, and he struck it against the grinding wheel. And when he did, it spit out a spark path. And I mean, it was a pretty long spark path. And I can still remember. The meter of his voice, he said, Denny, come put your hand in the fire. And I was like, I mean, I was like, what? But the thing is, is I knew my grandfather loved me, and I knew he wouldn't do anything on purpose to harm me. So I trusted him. So I went over beside him. And I put my hand up in the spark path. And it was so odd. My eyes probably got that big because the sparks were hitting my hand. And I could kind of feel them a little bit, but it didn't hurt. And my hand was deflecting the spark path so that the sparks were flying off to the side. So. Anyway, that's kind of my first story of trust overcoming fear. I didn't really understand what that was, the little embers coming off the grinding wheel. And I don't know if you've ever seen that, but sometimes that orange arc actually starts to go around the grinding wheel. It was pretty kind of scary. But anyway, so. That was the first time. And that had to do with love. You know, I knew my grandfather loved me. And, I mean, I can think about so many times in my life, you know, when that love, you know, that is what overcame the fear. But, of course, that allowed trust. And that was really what it was. I trusted my grandfather. So, the second story I want to share, it was a couple few years later. Not much, though, because I think I was in first grade. And this particular day, my elementary school teacher and a couple of the other teachers in the school took us on a field trip inside the school. It was an old school house. I don't know. Probably from the 40s or 50s would be my guess. And they took us to the basement of the old school house. And I remember walking down the first set of steps that led

down to the landing. And, again, it's funny how this is. But as we moved down the steps to the landing, you could tell it was getting darker. I don't know what it is about basements. But they always smell kind of... dank. And, I don't know. They just have a smell. I remember the smell. But I remember as I was approaching that first landing, I could see it was darker. But I could see on the wall at the landing, there was, like, the light from, like, a flame flickering. And I was, like, you know, wasn't quite sure what this was. So, we stepped off the landing down the last steps to the basement floor. And when we got down there, there was this big black thing. And it was making weird noises, like a tune. And you could see the flame in, I think, what they call the firebox underneath this big vessel, underneath this big tank. Well, what it was, it was a boiler. And I remember, as we got a little closer, I could feel the heat off of it. And I could make out these gauges. And I remember, you know, the gauge had a needle. And the needle had deflection along its scale. But then there was this part of the scale that turned red. And, I mean, the hairs just... The noise it was making and the fire in the belly. And it was, you know, I guess the best way I could relate it to others is it kind of felt like, it kind of looked like it was like a monster with fire in its belly. That's, you know, I don't know if you've ever been around a boiler. But if you have, you know it makes them... It makes them really... It makes them really strange noises. And I was scared. But I remembered at some point, I looked for my teacher. And my teacher was standing with one or two of the other teachers by this man, a black man. And I recognized him. He was the janitor. I remember seeing him upstairs, emptying garbage cans and sweeping the floor with this green stuff. It's the things you remember. But what I recognized was they were relaxed. They were just chatting with him. And it was... There was trust. I recognized the trust. I trusted my teacher, and she trusted the janitor. And he had mastery over this monster. That's what I remember, I

felt. I was just like, he's got this. And so, what I came to understand later was this was an engineered system. system. And he had mastery over that system. And so we were safe, as safe as you can be in this world, at least. So that was the second time that I can clearly remember where trust overcame fear. And I never really saw him the same anymore. You know, I never, as a kid, you don't really think about, you know, someone's job. They're, you know, pushing brooms and emptying garbage cans. But he was a master. And again, I never saw him the same again. And I remember years later, when we moved and I was around fourth or fifth grade, I had befriended another friend. And I remember I had befriended another friend. And I remember I had befriended another black gentleman that was the janitor at Florida Avenue Elementary School. And I think that was part of the reason why I befriended him was because of that experience. I learned to appreciate everyone for how they contribute and the trust, what's entrusted to them. So I guess that leads to the third and final story. As I was walking upon my path in my quest, I started to realize that this is all an engineered system by that higher power some people call God. And that I had no idea what I was doing. And I thought, I could choose to have trust in the Creator, and in that which is created. And that was, there was a rest at rest. There was a peace. I don't know how to really say that, that you can tap into. So, what part of what I have come to understand, or suspect, is that each of these individuals, most especially the story about the janitor in first grade, we all have gifts. These are talents and abilities. And I think that's what I've come to understand. And I view these gifts as a kind of divine trust. And part of what I came to understand was part of this, it's not just what we're entrusted with, but I came to embrace, I guess is the best way I could say it, a divine guidance and an acceptance. Because part of what you become aware of in this life, in the human condition, is this is a temporal condition. It's temporal. And

I came to see that as part of the divine design. It is mind that our life be temporal. So, it left me with a phrase, divine trust overcomes temporal fear. There is a master who has mastery over this system of things. And I guess it's just a matter of trusting that this master knows what he's doing, or she. So, I don't really, I can't really extend that presence. I can't really extend that being at rest to others, but I can point to it. And let them know it's there. It's along that path of love and trust. So, I guess that's about all I really wanted to share about these particular occasions where they led to an awakening awareness and what I call an expanded consciousness. It's, I get troubled, just like everybody else does. But it's this safe haven, like the old saying goes, any port in the storm. And I ran across a phrase, well, a couple of phrases years ago, I was researching. One was, we fear what we don't understand. And I can relate to that. I think that's why knowledge and understanding and wisdom are so valuable, because it reduces that fear. But the second thing was a phrase I ran across. It was roughly, let nothing human be alien to me. And I think that was a big clue, a big sign along that path, because I think there's a lot about ourselves. I suspect that we're of infinite potential. And so, there's parts of us that are unknown to us. And I think it would be easy for us to fear that. And I don't want to fear that. I want to embrace it. I want to keep traveling upon this path of discovery. Self-discovery and self-actualization. And be what the Master, God, intended us to become, not to fear it, to embrace it. Well, I guess that's all for now. Thanks for your time and attention.