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- *What being centered means*
- *Darkness and Light*

You are blessed in the Light. You are blessed by the Light. You are the Light. Every human being is the Light. Those who would do you harm are in the Light and are the Light. All that is inanimate belongs to the Light and is the Light. The Light that is the Spirit Center, that is God, is the Light of all that exists. So each of you has a part to play in the Light that surrounds, encompasses, embraces who you are.

We would like to say something about what it means to be centered, for in your discussion you have related issues that are directly concerned with being centered. When you are faced with illness, when you hear of tragedy, when you experience tragedy, what provides for your capacity to continue in the midst of such diverse challenges is your ability to be centered. It is in your centeredness that you are both a recipient of love and its provider. It is in your centeredness that you are vulnerable and you are enabled, you are strengthened, you are affirmed.

What exactly is meant by being centered? Centered does not mean being unaware of what surrounds you. It does not mean being uncaring, not noticing, not responding. Centeredness, rather, is an awareness of connection. You think of being centered as being aware of a connection to God that provides for your strength and sustenance. But centeredness really involves your connection to what is around you. It is a conviction on your part toward the oneness of all. When you are truly centered, you are at one with every human being. When you are centered, you are at one with the perpetrator and the victim. When you are centered, you are at one with joy and with sorrow. When you are centered, you are at one with health and illness.

This connection, this centeredness, can be achieved through prayer—not the kind of prayer that you extol upon God the need to respond, but rather the prayer that opens you to connections, that opens you to all that is, that opens you to the reality of what lies beyond your immediate understanding and awareness. Being centered is being connected. Being centered is being loving. Being centered is being vulnerable to the love of others. You cannot be proud when you are centered. You can only be humble and accepting.

Being centered requires a level of peace. When you are consumed by anxiety, by concerns of the immediate, you are distracted from what it means to be centered, for you are distracted from the condition of peace. The peace which is required of being centered is not merely a military or political peace. It is more importantly an emotional, spiritual peace. You can be *peace-full* in the midst of crisis. You can be *peace-full* in the midst of your own suffering or the suffering of those you love. You can *peace-full*, and all around you one sees only tension.

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This peace is a peace of connection to God. It is the strong conviction that in the midst of all God is, that in the midst of All, everything is connected—connected to one another and connected to God. The peace we speak of is not the peace of being uncaring or unknowing, but it is that peace of indeed knowing—knowing there is a loving Spirit presence that illuminates and gives meaning and value to all. When you feel peace in this sense, you are becoming centered.

If others recognize your strength of character, as defined in whatever way but manifested in an environment of tension, you are said to be centered or peaceful. And although it may be true, the peace that is observed, the centeredness that is observed, is only superficial. The real peace is invisible and yet absolutely present, for the individual who is truly centered knows the connection to all.

When you are concerned about your own health, it's difficult, of course, to turn your attention to your connection with others, for your thoughts are centered upon your own particular needs. This is where your vulnerability becomes essential, for if your needs dominate your relationships to life around you, you must allow yourselves the gift of being a receiver of strength, of love, of care and concern offered by others. It is when you are not in control that you must allow yourselves to be the recipient of the love given you from beyond your own concerns. When you exercise this kind of vulnerability, there is a peace, there is a centered quality to your lives, because you know there are others who care and who wish to be of service spiritually, emotionally, medically, in whatever way responsive to your needs, willing to offer the loving hand of care.

Being centered therefore provides a two-way kind of communication, a two-way recognition of connection: one that can enable you to be responsive to what lies beyond; secondly, to allow you the gift of love offered by others. Being centered is never filled with pride, but rather with generosity—generosity in giving, generosity in receiving. There is indeed an application of generosity when you are the recipient, for you are giving of yourselves in your openness to the love of others. You are not rejecting their assistance. You are not rejecting their prayers. You are not rejecting their concerns for your welfare. That lack of rejection, that lack of judgment for why something may be offered, is an act of generosity of spirit. Centeredness therefore requires the generosity of spirit.

You give because you receive; you receive because you give. In giving love, you receive love. In giving care and concern, you receive care and concern. In giving your friendship, you receive friendship. That open connection, being nonjudgmental in either direction, is an essential component of being centered, for you are acknowledging your belonging to All That Is, and you are allowing all that surrounds you to acknowledge your value. There is nothing arrogant, there is nothing that promotes self, there is no ego in being centered, in being open to the recognition of what it means when all belong at the table with equal validity, with equal strength.

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We speak of being centered as a way of achieving a kind of balance. You can be centered and your physical health may not be balanced. You can be centered and your emotional well-being does not feel balanced. You can be centered when there is great pain. You can be centered when there is great sorrow or anxiety. You can be centered in the middle of negative energy because you are connected to that negative energy.

No human being exists who consists solely of what is positive. Each of you experiences, each of you generates what is negative. Each of you is a part of what is dark, but each of you is equally a part of the Light. You are part of what invalidates the final difficulty of darkness. Each of you validates the great achievement of All That Is Light. Since you are a part of what is dark and what is Light as human beings, that connection unifies you with all that is dark and all that is Light in the world as you know it.

You are not in any way in any position to be critical of another, for you do not have a unique place in the position of being perfect. When you observe the acts of others as being abhorrent to what you hold to be sacred, rather than cast your wrath out against that individual, recognize that you share what is dark and what is Light. You may find it difficult to find what is Light in another. It is equally difficult to fully recognize the commonality of your own darkness with the darkness that you observe in others. Not acknowledging this dual relationship that you share with all human beings, you are unable to truly be an agent of unconditional love, for you superimpose your own conditions as necessary components to accepting with love the divinity of another. When you do accept that other's divinity, you are centered, for you sense a balance, a sense of unity that others may be unable to acknowledge.

You can be criticized for being centered, for not taking a, quote, "moral stand" in punishing another individual to great measure. Yes, there is negative force in human life. Yes, there are those who do great harm to others. But you, as individuals and collectively, are not immune to that very darkness.

It is because of the need to experience Light and dark that you are given human life, for you must learn this common bond, this connection that you have. We, your guides, are committed to this joint mutual relationship of all. We experience and exercise unconditional love. We communicate with you as your guides, not because you deserve or earn the communication; we communicate with you because you are loved by us. You are loved by the Spirit Center, God. It makes no difference what you do in your lives. You are eternally loved. That is the bond each of us has with you. That is the centered character of our interaction with human beings.

Where did we get this from? How did we learn this? We learned this through human interaction, sometimes in the course of many human lives. We learned this in other life-forms, sometimes through multiple lives. But we learned this when living in a condition that was different from our current spiritual plane. It is a lesson all human beings ultimately learn.

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We are centered, just as you can be centered, and when you experience that centeredness, you are experiencing, even momentarily, the reality that belongs to the plane of life that is all Spirit. Look for those opportunities to be centered, for they provide you a view of what it means to evolve and to become the embodiment of the very love and peace that you seek.

You are blessed as you are centered. You are blessed as you seek to be centered. You are blessed as you are strengthened in your centeredness. And you are blessed as you become humble in that divine state.

Amen.