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SUBJECT: MP.13 9-11 stimulus to decade of devolution
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9-13-11

MP #13

9-11 Stimulus (not Cause) of Decade of Devolution

As I was listening to a series of testimonies on the power of crisis to evoke positive change in people's lives, I reflected on my on path as it bisected 9-11-01. I had a ten year marriage and a 8-year old son, a good paying job and a community I wanted to remain. Everything should have been fine. But all was not well. I had not finished a long overdue dissertation. The stress of non completion only reinforcing my sense of inadequacy. Passing my 40th birthday brought reflection closer to the surface. Further down was a core of negative self worth fragily protected by rooms of activities that together formed the infrastructure of me - Allan lummus: father, husband, activists, singer, academic, teacher, free thinker and social justice advocate.

As the scenes of panic and crisis riveted a nation/world, my own fears broke through leaving me shaken. My loneliness an despair enveloped my whole self instead of staying nice and compartmentalized in a section of my heart. My long learned coping techniques of externalization became my refuge. I looked my job, wife, marriage, life and found them wanting. I contemplated drastic changes. The first action: divorce and moving out. Then additional enjoyable activities: another choir and activist organization.

The additional activities did provide added distraction. I successfully pulled my attention away from what needed attention: a self-abused self. I created a new and improved divorced, living alone, more singing, more social action me. But the new me was just superficial changes, with an iceberg of self hatred awaiting contact.

A decade after the events, I wonder at my ability to escape being honest with myself. I did come around to seeing my marriage and wife were not my "problem." We decided to give it another try. But even as I stared over with new outlets for my self nourishment, I did not look below the surface.

The next couple of years I tried to make the new schedule and marriage work on me. And for a while I was hopeful. But as the distractions again failed to address my needs, I looked for some reinforcements. The internet with all its glory was there to explore. I filled my inbox and home pages with news and facts. My head swam with opinion and information. When that was not sufficient, I added the exploration of erotica both written and visual, but primarily written. First on the weekends after the family went to sleep, then every night. Then several hours every night. My thirst was insatiable. When the stories were not enough, then it was cyber chat. then images to accompany the chat. Then taboo stories with their accompany images.

There was no satisfaction with each step along the path. Each step devolved away from my true need. The entire decade spiraled down not because of 9-11, because each step was my choice. I could have chosen a healthy honest response but did not. 9-11 was only a stimulus and me I provided the responding choices. The choices did not lead to satisfaction but pain and suffering.

More next post.

Mindful Prisoner