

## *Homecoming*

From an abandonment and recovery workshop experience at the Fall Camp Recovery at De Beneville Pines 9/18/10

During a guided meditation I imagined one of my safe places, a stream at a bend in the road between the Meadows neighborhood and Altadena proper in California where I grew up from birth to second grade. I still go there from time to time when I am visiting the area as it is a very peaceful and pleasant place, forested with old oak trees arching out among the sycamore and spruce.

I imagined sitting on a rock looking up to the sunlight through the leaves and branches of the trees. White and spotted rocks line the stream bed, lush green vines and crimson poison ivy carpet the hillsides. I hear the leaves rustle in the breeze I feel on my face and hair. I also hear the trickling stream, the birds darting about, and the occasional car going by. The plaintive cry of a hawk, my spirit animal, calls out from a tree top nearby. I whistle back and he returns the call.

After a while I see myself as a little boy, my inner child arrive. He gently joins me, and gives me a hug. He sits on my knee and we share the peace and solitude of this place along with the comfort and assurance of being together. I ask if he is scared or sad. He says no, well maybe a little, but is so happy to be in this place and with me that that is far away. He then starts to wander about visiting with the lizards, dragonflies, water skaters, butterflies, and other stream life.

My pubescent boy arrives on his Schwinn stingray and joins us to talk and play. He too needs a hug and some time softly talking and sharing our lives, our joys and fears, pleasures and sorrows. He too then runs off to join my little one exploring the wonders of this natural and yet magical place.

My teenager then arrives on his bike and once again we visit and relate. His life is more difficult as there are much more expectations and pressures in junior and high school, and socially in the family and with friends. I realize now he never really felt completely accepted or appreciated. The close friends he had felt the same, also "lost boys," troubled and sometimes criminal in their behavior. His making it through without getting in trouble with the law, alcohol, or drugs was nothing less than a miracle.

My late teens and early twenties lost boy arrives on a motorcycle, his escape from the confusion and desperation he feels at being so alone and without help. These boys didn't have a mentor, a guide whether that be a teacher, parent, or other to help them navigate the difficulties or joys of life. He has given in to peer curiosity and started to smoke grass.

My late twenties self also arrives on a motorcycle, faster and more dangerous. His life was that too, as he smokes pot and drank beer every day. In fact he crashed once less than a mile away accidentally wheelying off the side of the road late at night after getting stoned and drinking whiskey. His angels stayed close as he wasn't even scratched. He had to walk the five miles home pushing his motorcycle due to a flat front tire, a sobering experience in many ways.

My young man of early thirties arrives with a wedding ring but still very much alone. He tells how he plays the role of husband by doing the yard work, paying bills, and staying to his own much of the time. He took a job working nights delivering pizza as he still doesn't feel welcome, even in his own home. The marriage ends before long, after giving birth to a lost boy of his own.

The man that arrives next is at last finding help and healing through a 12 step community as he rediscovers his spiritual self and finds loving and true friends dedicated to recovery. Sadly, there will be many more years of disease as he struggles to control and manipulate others and his situation to manage his disease.

The last of the lost ones arrives, late forties and married again. These were very hard times as I continued to struggle, but this time to finally find full awareness of and recovery from my disease. Work and home life are still a great challenge but getting easier as I learn the tools I need to cope with life one day, one moment at a time.

We all are so happy to be together at last that love and joy are overflowing from each of us. The excitement and joy sends us off following the stream and our adventurous spirits. We take care not to step on the salamanders hiding along the stream or tiny frogs hopping about. We must look up as well to avoid walking into the spider webs draped between the trees, the big fellows standing guard in the center of each. Here and there the stream is exposed by rocky outcroppings or disappears among the foliage as the canyon meanders left and right.

A passing storm tries to put a damper on our fun by drenching us in a short cloudburst, but to no avail, our happiness cannot be cooled. Drenched head and shoulders I think it is best we turn back to enjoy again the wondrous beauty unveiled at every turn. Back at the roadside, we smile, we laugh, we hug, we huddle!

As we rest and relax, the little one reaches into the stream and cups his hands around a glint of sunlight, then drinks it in and is filled with light. Others start to splash the sunlit water onto each other until we are all bathed in light, an incandescent aura glowing from within us all. The little one runs and hugs the next larger boy and miraculously merges into him, becoming one. He turns to the teen and merges into him, one by one all becoming one, finally stepping into my present self, whole and complete.

It's time to go home, all of us together, within me. As I climb the short bank to the street I see the bicycles merging as well, smaller into larger, then into the motorcycles, older into newer. I turn and look to see this safe place once more to take the image and experience with me. Riding off I can't help but do a wheelie to salute the lost boys within me as well as all the lost boys and girls, and men and women out there, still searching, and who can find help and healing as I did.

I hope you enjoyed my story, but even more I hope it helps you find hope, that you are not alone, that you can recover and re-parent all of your lost and scattered selves from through-out your life. Personally I use many tools and have many maps to help me find my way home. Chief among them are 12 Step programs like CODA and ACA, but I still use the Christ teachings I was raised with, and embrace Buddhism, The Power of Now, and Compassionate Communication. For a look at what works for me, Google "Cowboy Dharma" or log into [www.cowboydharma.blogspot.com](http://www.cowboydharma.blogspot.com) or [www.hikingbikingviking.blogspot.com](http://www.hikingbikingviking.blogspot.com)

I need to tell you my parents were lost kids too, my father moving from place to place most every year, usually without his parents. My mother's parents divorced then remarried when she was a child. He then died during an operation when she was twelve. Her mother never remarried but had, as I understand, troubled relationships. She couldn't wait to get away, and did when she was seventeen. She did have an aunt who was a great help and comfort to her.

They did the best they could with what they had to work with and gave me many fine gifts of character and personality. I owe them a lot and certainly don't wish to discount their help. True, it wasn't enough, but between God, myself, my family, friends, and recovery programs, we're getting the job done. I mention this because I don't want to blame anyone, rather I think it best we have compassion for those who raised us, best as they could. Best of luck and wishes in your recovery, Lars

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