

Wednesday, August 31 - Thursday, September 1, 2011:

Message From Michael*

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Good Morning, Everyone!

It's Wednesday morning, the last day of August. Apparently, according to my astrology chart, the entire second half of August for me was supposed to be a "test." At the end of the reading, it says, "You will be tested to see how strong you are." No kidding.

I don't know if the test results are in yet, but, I am still alive. I suppose the judges will take that into consideration since I think generally you're required to live through the test if you're going to pass it. One thing I know for sure at this point is that I'm so glad to be home again. Having lived twelve out of the past twenty-one days in and out of hospitals and doctor's offices and having had two surgeries and all the medical procedures that go with them, I feel I've had quite enough of all that for now. I'm definitely ready for some time to deeply rest, rehabilitate, and reflect upon my new life.

Daily life for me for the past twenty-one days has been, on the one hand, like rolling in the undertow, caught in a big surf zone where one wave pushes you down under and when you finally free yourself from it's grip and surface for a breath, the next one breaks right over you to take you down again. When you get to breathe in at last, you feel such relief and gratitude, "Thank God, I made it!" Then, the whole thing starts all over again and it feels like you're never going to make it out alive. On the other hand, each time I was able to get my head above the foaming sea, I've caught so many beautiful glimpses of the sparkling, life-giving sunlight, the limitless expanse of the sky, the never-ending acceptance and comprehension of life - those moments of eternity that in an instant erase years of suffering. And, I've learned again and again that the same secret that helped me break free from the repeated pummeling of the ocean waves in the surf zone is what helped me resurrect myself from the repeated pull of the forces of death: Recognizing that regardless of what conditions life may present, I still am. Whenever I realize that, I find that I cease to take the conditions of existence

personally. The waves aren't trying to drown me. In fact, they have nothing to do with me. They are ever-changing conditions of existence. I am. With that realization, I always let go of whatever I may be blaming as the cause of my suffering.

Probably, most of us feel that we know what blame, guilt, and self-pity are - and, we're pretty sure whether we are ensnared in any one of their clutches. We turn on our TV and see screaming matches between guests on Jerry Springer or Judge Judy with each party feeling sorry for him or herself and having great conviction that the other one was to blame for the wounds. Of course, we might laugh at such outrageous demonstrations of anger, unhappiness, and self-absorption, since many of us don't project blame in such crude and external ways. Yet, these feelings go much deeper and are much more basic than we might realize.

When we are blaming we are assigning responsibility for some wrong-doing to someone or something. It means we are assigning the cause of that problem to that person or thing in some way: The wave knocked me over; my colleague's insults hurt my feelings; I really messed things up. All blame is personal. Someone or something did something to me to cause me to suffer. If there is any blame, there is always self-pity. We cannot blame without feeling sorry for ourselves. In fact, it's only when we feel sorry for ourselves that we seek to blame. And, of course, guilt is always the other bookend for blame.

Hell is betting your life force on the trifecta of blame, guilt, and self-pity, fighting against the waves, and repeatedly drowning in the surf zone. We rise up toward heaven, however, whenever we come to realize that the world is nothing but constantly changing tides of conditions and that regardless of what those conditions may be at any given time in our lives, we simply are. Rather than struggling to survive as an isolated person against the ever-changing conditions of existence, we reaffirm that we still are, limitless, eternal being, and find ourselves letting go fully of assigning cause to any of the changing conditions and restoring all cause to that infinite creative power within.

When my heart stopped 21 days ago, I was on the elliptical exercise machine at the local gym. I've worked out regularly five or more days a week for years now. The days when I didn't work out at the gym, I'd take three mile hikes up and down 6 – 10% grades or practice an hour of yoga. At the gym, my regular workout consisted of a jog on the elliptical or treadmill at 4.6 – 5.0 mph at maximum

incline for 45 minutes followed by another half an hour or more on the weights and sometimes a few butterfly sprints in the pool to top it off. I've eaten a healthier diet than most people I know for most of my life and I don't smoke, drink alcohol, or take drugs. My cardiologist said, *after* my first heart attack, "Your diet, exercise, and lifestyle should make you the poster child for Dr. Dean Ornish's Heart Healthy Program!" "As far as I can say," he continued, "your heart attack was an accident - or maybe just bad luck!" The cardiologist who gave me my triple bypass surgery told me, "If you were a 300-pound diabetic patient who ate junk food and didn't exercise, there are a lot of things we could do to help get your heart healthy." But, for me, there wasn't much of a margin for correction. Maybe it's just genetics, another doctor offered.

Ah! But, those are just the perspectives of medical experts who deal strictly with the workings of a physical body. We know that there is so much more to health and healing than just working with the body, right? There are psychological factors, our feelings and thoughts, and, when we become even more aware, we realize there are psychic factors - those subtle energetic components within the soul along with unfinished karmic cycles that ultimately affect the health and well-being of the body. Well, in my case, I've made that my life-long study and practice. So, how does someone who has healed himself to depths that few people even venture into end up dying from severe gout, having two heart attacks and a full-on cardiac arrest, and needing two stent surgeries, a triple bypass surgery, and an operation to implant a defibrillator/pacemaker device, not to mention all the medication and supplements to keep him alive? And, I still have two more years to go before I turn 60. So, much for the poster child of physical and spiritual health!

There are also more than a few healers out there who have been watching me, wondering, "If a healer like that gets that sick, what's the use?" And, yes, I've had a few healers, too, offer me their perspectives on what I might be doing wrong or what might help relieve me of the bad ju-ju I've been holding for lifetimes. Yet, one of the most significant things I've learned from all of this is how much we tend to look for what's wrong with us, what we've done wrong, or what we're not doing right. All part of some deep need to assign blame for what ails us. When we're feeling sorry for ourselves that we're suffering the last thing we want, on top of everything else, is to feel like we have no control over any of it. When we find something to blame, it makes us feel like we have some sort of control - at least we

know who or what made this happen. Then, there's a chance that we might be able to fix it. There just might be an end to this suffering.

Each time I started to come more fully out of the effects of anesthesia and pain suppressing medications administered for my surgical procedures, of course, the first thing I would notice was the pain. It was interesting to note, however, that at first what I experienced was the sensation of physical pain. After my bypass operation it felt as if I had my chest sawed in half and had it pried open. Well, in a sense, I had. After my defibrillator implant surgery, it felt as if I had been shot in my shoulder and a bullet remained lodged there. The ICD was implanted in my upper left side of my chest, under the muscles. It's much bigger than a bullet. Distinctly different sensations of pain, but pain nonetheless. Then, as I was able to bring more of my awareness into my body, each time, I began to experience that a much greater aspect of the pain was much more emotional and mental in nature. There were layers of thoughts and feelings that seemed to emerge out of the depths of my body.

After each surgery, the first layer contained guilt, sorrow, and the thoughts, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry." *Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*.... There were many voices saying, "I'm sorry." I discovered the voices of those who were apologizing to me for some wrong they felt they did to me. I heard the voices of many who felt sorry for me for what I had to go through. Then, the voice became my voice as a little child saying, "I'm sorry" for what I felt that I had done wrong at the time. Finally, the voices became voices of several of my prior incarnations devastated by sorrow and guilt of wrongdoing and my refusal to forgive myself at the time. In the absence of greater awareness, the voices, the thoughts, and the feelings all seem so real, like they are happening right now.

When we climb into those pictures that hold those thoughts and feelings, it's much like being in the *Holo-Deck* on the Starship Enterprise. It seems so real - you can touch it, feel it, talk to it - even wrestle with it! Yet, when we choose instead to recognize our being, the limitless spirit that we are, and have our awareness, the images fall away like dust in the wind. As I released all the "I'm sorry" pictures, I discovered an underlying tendency for feeling sorry for myself. What would I be sorry for myself for, unless I felt I was lacking something?

Then I recalled how when years ago I first had to restrict my diet severely in order to maintain my internal chemical balance to keep the gout at bay, the feeling

that I didn't recognize at the time was self-pity. I had felt sorry for myself that I could no longer eat many of the foods - healthy ones at that! - that I so enjoyed. Now, as a consequence of my most recent surgeries, I was facing the high likelihood that I would not be able to participate in many of the activities in life that I have so enjoyed. All my life, I've delighted in the utter freedom of taking off by myself, even for just a couple of hours, into an unexplored part of a foreign city or take a stroll in the dark of the night. Even when it was a cardinal rule of skin and scuba diving to always dive with a partner, I've often gone off to dive by myself just to commune with the ocean. And, of course, one of my favorite pastimes has been for years now to be out in the open sea cavorting with my dolphin friends. Now, I was like a known convict. I was not to be trusted on my own. I had a history of sudden unexpected heart attacks - the latest one, even a complete arrest: one moment going along fine, the next, dead. And, had I not been divinely blessed with having someone close by who could give me immediate help, I would have remained dead.

I realized also that at this point, for me to drive a car wouldn't only be a danger to myself, but to many others. That one restriction would change so many things in how I live my life. There's a lot I have to give up in my life now that I've enjoyed before and, I have a feeling the list is just beginning. Should I feel sorry for myself?

Not in the least. In fact, having to look at these things for the first time in my life opened up new vistas for me. Rather than imposing more restrictions in my life defining what I could no longer be, do, or have, these new conditions of living my life offered me not only new creative challenges, but, interestingly enough, more freedom for me to be. It reminded me of my mother, three years before she died, saying, "I saw the most beautiful vase in a store at the mall today. I started to walk into the store to see whether I wanted to buy it. Then, I realized that I didn't need it at all. I could just enjoy it." I realized the same thing she did at that time - I didn't need to do all those things that I've delighted in doing in the past. I could just enjoy having it. The experience isn't out there, it's within me already. I instantly found peace. If I never drove, if I never swam with the dolphins, if I never explored exotic places by myself again, it was fine. Now, I had so much more to live for.

I remember as a young child that many a night I would fall asleep and immediately find myself hovering over flashing red, blue, and white lights. At first, perceiving things still from a child's perspective, I wasn't quite sure what was going

on. Soon, however, I realized that I was floating over scenes of recent car accidents with the flashing lights of police cars and ambulances. Gradually, I found myself becoming more involved with both the injured and the dead people at the scene.



Somehow, I seemed to know what to do in taking care of them. When I became quite proficient and comfortable in doing this, I became aware that I started to have some kinds of master teachers who would be with me to train me further in this out-of-the-body nightly healing work. I discovered as well that I became more and more adult during these times even though I always awoke in the morning still a child. Over the years, I found my nightly “assignments” evolving from providing healing and counsel to those affected in local car accidents to tending to larger-scale disasters involving human injury, suffering, and death: Major earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and fires, as well as wars and other manmade calamities. Not only did the number of people involved become exponentially larger, but also I found that I was called to many different places around the globe. Early in my life, I was receiving much training on the astral planes to prepare to work on a global scale. We each have our place in this world and for some of us, it’s not necessarily that much on the physical plane of the world. This is one of the reasons why we can never judge the level of advancement of a soul by what he or she appears to be doing in the physical world alone.

As I started to consider the many changes I would be making in how I live my life now, I began to see my earlier life unfolding in a way I had not seen before. Some people might think that I’ve lived a pretty full and exciting life already, but, for me, I’m just getting started in what I’ve been preparing for all of my life. Instead of having to give up some of the best things in my life, I’m being given the freedom and opportunity to bring in something so much more. I know now that I have so much more to live for than I had ever imagined before. I, too, have been to the mountaintop and have looked over to the other side. Whatever the hardships that may come into each of our lives, they don’t compare to the treasures that await all of us. It’s time to celebrate.

The first time I died, in 2004, I was received by a council who put to a kind of “vote” whether it would be best for me to return to my body and continue my work

in the physical world or for me to join them in the spiritual realms and continue my work in spirit. The decision was made at that time that I would return to my body and continue here in this world. When I “came to” in my body at that time, I knew everything was different. Over the course of the following month, my osteopathic doctor, a Wasu therapist, and a clairvoyant healer who worked on me each independently of the others said to me in almost the same words, “I’ve never worked on anyone who was in the state you’re in. The closest would be a newborn baby. It’s like you’ve had your slate cleared and you’ve been re-set to zero.” I was literally reborn.

In 2006, I died my second death. Before my death experience, I was met with a group of masters who stood by in support but at a distance while I made my choice to live life without conditions. The momentary death itself was to get out with full consciousness, “touch base” with the Divine, and return to my body. This was the beginning of the healing of my heart that I may live longer to fulfill my work here.

On December 13th, 2010, when I had my second heart attack, I didn’t die, but, it was also a key event and turning point in my continuing journey into the heart of wisdom. It was an experience that changed my entire relationship with my body and this incarnation. I also know now that it was a precursor to and preparation for my most recent death. My relationship as a soul to this body had to be secure enough for me to be able to fully return from my third death that was yet to come.

When my heart suddenly stopped on August 10th of this year, it was an entirely different kind of death experience again. This time, I had no consciousness of anything. In fact, with this death and subsequent resuscitation and surgery, I was left with no memory of the six days leading up to that experience as well as no recall of the three days following. I have an intuitive knowing that I was “taken” somewhere very different in spirit for a new level of initiation. And, as I have been making my gradual return to earthly life, I have noticed that this time, what followed my death was not a rebirth where the slate is cleared, but a definite kind of resurrection. Rather than starting anew, I am bringing back with me much more of the aspects of my soul-self that I have not incarnated into this body yet. In my re-birth, I felt as a baby starting fresh. In this resurrection, I feel as an old man returning home from a long and challenging journey from which I gained a great deal of wisdom.

For the time being, I am a bit tired. I spend much of the day taking care of this body that has been through quite a bit of trauma and is now in the healing mode. I admired the artistry and the marvels of medical science and technology each time I see the reflection in the mirror of the long, clean scar running down the middle of my chest and the short, bulkier scar on my upper left side. The former is what remains visible of the triple bypass surgery in which veins from my right leg were stripped out to serve as new thoroughfares to supply blood flow to parts of my heart that weren't being adequately nourished. The latter scar serves to remind me that beneath it is implanted a potential life-saving device in the event that my heart goes into a lethal arrhythmia.

I know my heart is now receiving more blood flow and the nourishment that provides. Yet, even more than that, I know that my heart is overflowing with gratitude. First and foremost, I find a profound gratitude to the One who created me. Whenever I find myself looking at something "wrong" in myself or something insufficient, I ask myself, "How can there be anything faulty or inadequate in that which was created by the limitless and eternal?" It never ceases to amaze me how easily we convince ourselves of lack where there isn't any. I remind myself of the care I put forth into what I create, whether it is making a dinner for family and friends, preparing a lecture, or writing a book. Then, I ask myself, "If I put that much care into what I create, how much more would the Supreme Creator put forth in His creations?"

I've been truly blessed, too, to be married to an angel. Like her well-known celestial namesake, Raphaelle, my wife, has been my heaven-sent healer, friend, and partner. As challenging as these past three weeks must have been for her personally, she's been my steadfast guide to help navigate our course through the uncharted white-waters of this fast and turbulent journey back to wholeness. I don't know if I would have made it through without her at my side. It was the young EMT who kick started my physical heart, but, Raphaelle played the major role in helping to restore my inner heart back into its true rhythm.

Every day I've been filled with gratitude and appreciation for each and every one of you who have been offering your love, support, friendship, and prayers along with the many get-well e-mails, Facebook messages, and cards, beautiful flower arrangements, your services, and monetary and other gifts to help us along on our journey. Thank you, thank you, thank you! I know without a doubt that all

of your support has made this challenging period so much more manageable with grace and ease. It's said that it takes a whole village to raise a child. Likewise, it takes a whole community of loving souls to heal each of us. As healing is restoring oneself back to wholeness, you are truly helping me restore myself back to the wholeness that is all of us.

I know I'm going to be moving much more slowly for now, but, I am gaining my strength back daily. Until my scars heal fully, I'm not allowed to shower, so, for now, I am bathing in four parts: Neck and above in the sink, abdomen and below in the bathtub, chest with a sponge bath, and my back scrubbed by Raphaelle. Shanti, our great pyrenees, got her bath today and it took her three hours from start to finish. I got my bath routine down to 45 minutes! How about that? In order to give the ICD implant "hook-ups" time to take hold in the heart, I'm forbidden to raise my left arm above my upper chest level for the next six weeks. To allow for my wired-together sternum to heal, I must keep from picking up, pushing, or pulling more than five pounds for another eight weeks. I did, however, walk a solid quarter mile, half of it uphill, without much huffing and puffing. Just don't bring any magnets and high-powered electrical devices too close to me and I should be able to see you soon. I'm so looking forward to that, too!

May God's Grace open your heart, open your mind, and open your soul. And, may the radiance of Love Divine open the doors to all the miracles that await you. Walk in peace always.

With gratitude, love, and laughter,

Michael

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