

# WHAT RESONATES

BY WARREN KRESS

EDITING:  
TRACIE KRESS  
DAWN KRESS



# WHAT RESONATES

## Why did I write this?

I imagine that we are camped at my favorite campsite (#69) in the High Banks region of the Au Sable River. It is just you and me and my sweet dog “Lucy”. She’s a rescue and her stature suggests that she’s part Australian cattle dog. Her tri-colored leopard coat and crazy 2-color eye hint at Louisiana Spotted Leopard dog as well. She couldn’t be happier camping with us.

We are at the end of the peninsula that juts out into the river, washed by a stream that empties into the river and provides a home for beavers.

To say that this is a river is deceiving, as a series of dams (from the early 1900’s Work projects) back the river up into what resembles a series of lakes. Cooke Dam lies about  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles downriver. Mother Nature’s love is abundant.

What’s left of the sunlight is now ambient light, it’s a cloudless June evening, while the sky, stars and moon are magically mirrored in the river.

Our fire, built in the hole from a fallen tree, is embers now after providing the heat for a dinner of turkey burger, salsa, and grilled onion with red pepper.

We came here to talk and many hours have passed without notice, in this first of several talks, as the sun gives way to the reflection in the river. Much of the conversation has been about finding your heart, soul or spirit. We settled on “Spirit” as our choice. Many Westerners have difficulty identifying their spirit. Early Eastern civilization was more focused on the love within us and developing our ability to guide our lives by what is within. All of that changed with the Industrial Revolution as the world shifted to a more material focus and there was a loss of spiritual understanding. Yet we see in Eastern countries, parts of Europe, Scandinavian countries, Central and South America that the spiritual life continues. In particular, with a social structure built around the family and a caring for all that is expressed in such government programs as Universal Health Care and a good education for all.

So we have identified what resonates with me as the most important idea I can pass on to you – developing your understanding of your spirit – and this is no easy task. We’re talking about a part of life in which words fall short. One of my favorite German writers, Eckhart Tolle “The Power of Now” wrote that words are inadequate when we describe them. The best he can do is put sign posts around them that will point you in the right direction. You can’t box ideas in or surround them with words.

So here in lies the great challenge, looking within to feel your spirit. I am so tempted to turn to the world of the political right for its abundant expressions of fear and ask you how those rantings make you feel inside. Is that your spirit telling you that this violence, this fear, is contrary to your spirit?

It doesn't take Pat Robinson to infest us with fear. Perhaps the person that is closest to you can trip your buttons with a few fear based comments and you respond with the same old tape loop of anger. What do you feel inside? Eckhart Tolle talks about being the "Watcher". Being the "Watcher" you are able to spot the influences of fear and recognizing it is more than half the battle of choosing love over fear. That's what it is all about – love over fear.

### ***Love vs. fear***

*Common practice among Native Americans is for elders to pass wisdom to the young. It's not a thing of ego. It's recognition that it takes a lot of years and suffering of others to grow as a species.*

*There was a different time in my life when I recognized that it would have been helpful if my father and grandfather had passed on wisdom to me. For that reason, I'm throwing this out there for grandchildren, sister, son, daughter...*

*Fear is the closest to the opposite of love. Most of our struggles as individuals, as families, and countries are struggles between fear and love. For most people, if we listen to politicians talk from a place of fear it stirs us in a negative way. It doesn't feel right. For example, a politician talking about immigrants taking jobs and public assistance away from Americans, many hearing this would feel uneasiness in spirit. You have to recognize the influence of fear so that love prevails.*

### ***What if's?***

*What if we are evolving the love side of ourselves and rejecting the fear side? I don't believe this completely, but it resonates for me. I would like to explore it in my mind... What if it's at a higher level than that? Going through evolution as a human species in support of love rather than fear, resonates for me. What if life gives us the challenges we need to grow?*

### **Parables**

I love parables. I was at a Drew Nelson concert, he is part Indian. There are phrases he said like, "my mother is half Ojibwa, my father a Fin. Half a half breed, what the

Jesuits call a sin." At the concert, he recognized me by my feather in my cap. He said that in Native American culture feather equals power.

### ***Native American Parable***

*A Native American elder talking to a young brave about life...*

*There are two dogs in each of us, one happy and one angry. The good - he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. People in the village love to see the happy dog coming. They love to pet it and throw him a bone. The mean dog bites. He is evil - he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, self-doubt, and ego.*

*People chase it away and it causes a lot of disruption.*

*The young boy asks, "Which dog wins?"*

*The elder responded, "The one you feed."*

As much as I love Native American parables and that they have a point, I find that East Indian parables go beyond a point and open your mind to months and years of exploration.

### ***East Indian Parable***

*Man goes to see his guru every week. He says, "I have done so many things and they have not turned out right". He is flushed into water.*

*He is born a woman of upper cast. She falls in love with a man. Her love is not reciprocated. She goes her whole life like that. Then she is spinning in water.*

*She is born as a male of lowest cast in Calcutta. There is nothing he can do about it. Nothing his parents can do to improve his situation. Before his first birthday he dies of starvation. There is water again and he is spinning in it.*

*He is reborn as a woman in a village where they work together to make rice. She is very happy and likes working with her neighbors. A great tsunami swept across the field destroying crops and homes. She is swirling in water. This time a hand reaches in and pulls her out by her hair.*

*Now, she is the man with the guru crying and sobbing. The guru asks the man, "Whom do you cry for?"*

How is the boy in Calcutta any different than you? We could have been born in India of the lowest cast and die of starvation within a year. Given that, I have compassion for all people.

### **The Scientific Method and the Ego**

When conducting research, scientists use the scientific method to collect measurable, [empirical evidence](#) in an experiment related to a [hypothesis](#) (often in the form of an if/then statement), the results aiming to support or contradict a [theory](#).

The steps of the scientific method go something like this:

1. Make an observation or observations.
2. Ask questions about the observations and gather information.
3. Form a hypothesis — a tentative description of what’s been observed, and make predictions based on that hypothesis.
4. Test the hypothesis and predictions in an experiment that can be reproduced.
5. Analyze the data and draw conclusions; accept or reject the hypothesis or modify the hypothesis if necessary.
6. Reproduce the experiment until there are no discrepancies between observations and theory. “Replication of methods and results is my favorite step in the scientific method,”  
No reproducibility – no science.”

Most of us struggle our entire lives with our understanding of our egos. Scientists also identify with it but they are restrained by the actual experiment. They have their idea and are resistant to other ideas, but the scientific principle pulls the ego out of it.

We can apply it to political beliefs as well. We can look at how the government has handled public health care and education. If we review how the United States has handled these areas compared to other countries, it’s a very valuable tool....it takes the ego out. Some countries have public health care, good public education and built in safety nets. In these countries when the economy is bad, they have a safety net to help with unemployment. They have a cushion like Scandinavia, etc. Germany pays corporations to not lay off as many employees. They invest in retaining skills and snap back when the economy recovers. This resonates with me, because the ego is not part of the experiment. Through this process we can learn from others in a very socially conscious way.

## **Belief and things that resonate**

These days I am more comfortable not using the words “I believe”. That phrase has been so misused and people are expected to subscribe to it in totality. Instead of “belief”, I have things that resonate with me. If you ask me if I believe in reincarnation, I’d say parts of it resonate with me, but I do not necessarily believe. I’m not married to it. It would not destroy my world if I found out it was not true.

Daughter asks if he believes in heaven...

I would not say I believe in heaven, not as most people would define it. I believe that what happens next is so foreign to our word system that words can’t describe it. It promotes love.

If you believe in something it's like writing a script, writing rules that you lock in a box until that subject comes up. When it comes up, the belief comes out. That belief has no life to it.

My earliest Buddhist Mentor, Alan Watt taught the approach of directing energy at what resonates with you is like being in the Sahara desert in a Ferrari. You can go in any direction how fast you want. It has life. There is nothing wrong with not having the answers. It is good not to always have the answers although, we want to have the answers and be in control.

As the last embers of the fire fade into the sky, it's off to the tent, listening to frogs and Lucy cuddled up next to me for body heat...

