

TOUCHING HOPE

“It is only when we stand on the mountain peak that we see the true direction of our trail.

In the valleys, we acknowledge the stance of each broad stone, trusting it to accept our next step.

Thus we progress, shifting our weight from leg to leg and moving ever on by taking one small step at a time.

And when we emerge to the thrill of the high places we see the journey laid out below us.

An invisible thread woven through the land and joined into a larger weave.

And we learn to look beyond ourselves and touch the web of the stars.”

Song of the Circle

My recent seventy-fourth birthday was wonderful. One gift was a scruffy little children's book, a 1954 eleventh edition of *The Adventures of Wonk*, entitled *Fireworks*. *Wonk Goes to Sea* is the only book that survived my childhood. Now two evoke precious memories of wonderful bedtime stories.

Looking back I see an ever-changing successions of seasons life stages and projects absorbing huge energy and giving even more back. All bound together by remarkable friendships.

As the seasons change, we change and move on. Sometimes moving on is difficult. When too much changes too quickly, we desperately try to hold on to the familiar. Adjusting to the new reality takes time. Today's Press says six thousand homes in Christchurch are soon to be demolished; whole suburbs are about to disappear. How do those families cope?

A letter arrives. A few words announce the new reality. Yet, all around is the old reality - the home, in which you raised a family, that's still serving you well. Yet you have to go. Why? Because your low-lying suburb has dropped two metres to become a flood zone and liquefaction factory. Because the hillsides and cliff-faces on the high ground have been torn apart. You now live in a rock-strewn avalanche zone. With the number of after shocks at over 8,500 there is no end in sight.

A year has passed and the families hit so hard by the Pike River mine disaster, and all touched so deeply by that tragedy, still struggle to cope.

We all face a succession of new realities. Some are as big as an earthquake or mine disaster and others are small. Yet, all require a response. Pretending they don't exist works for some for a time. At the other end of the scale, worrying endlessly merely wearies. But eventually, resisting the new reality, resisting an irreversible event causes stress and pain, depression and paralysis and makes it difficult to move forward to embrace all the possibilities in change. I know that's easy to say and difficult to do. Yet, it is a crucial truth.

“Ma te wa”.... are old words that speak strongly to us today.... “Let things unfold in their own way in their own time.” Grieving for what has gone asks for space and time. Grieving also cries out for hope. While we can't push the river, we can learn to accept its flow and let go of what is no more.

“ The ancestors chose to honour the good within the Balance.

They found hope in all things because they understood everything moved within the circle.

They knew that even though harmony was the peak of life, it would in time move towards chaos that would give birth to new understandings and a new Balance.

They understood the prime lore of the Universe was change.”

Song of the Old Tides

Acceptance of the new reality frees us to create in positive ways and heal and grow.

“In my grief I learned to grow, found in the realms beyond despair a new hope and in the depths of pain saw healing and wisdom.

I am not as I was. Peace walks in me as never before. Each day I thank the Universe for everything that has come to pass and for the learning within it.”

Song of the Circle

“Hear the wisdom hidden deep within and move with confidence. This is a dramatic time of re-creation. Within the tumult, reclaim your life, transform and reshape your purpose and build anew. Excitement is written large in the land. Hope is reborn every dawn.”

Wisdom of the Four Winds

It's been an exciting week with Insights, our latest publication arriving from Taiwan. It's now available but only through www.stoneprint.co.nz

Also we are now on our Castle Hill land living in our motorhome for the summer. Here we now have a new 10 sq metre hut [4m x 2.5m] that is Cushla's office and my writing space. In the next two weeks I will finish the final chapters of *Only a Shack by the Sea*, which is the second novel in the *Wisdom Seeker* series. The first novel, *Only a Hut in the Mountains* is ready for printing but awaits funding.

The four quotes shared today have been taken from *Touching hope*, the first chapter of *Insights*, which has twenty quotes in all. Each has an illustration to allow us to pause, gather our thoughts and move on. *Insights* allows us to dip into rivers of ancient lore and explore new trails as we chart our path. The remaining four sections are *Knowing love*, *Living magic*, *Finding self* and *Remembering spirit*. In all that's a hundred quotes taken from my books and a hundred ink and brush images that were a great joy to create. I love having pictures stand beside my words.

I've jumped in and offered some thoughts on coping with the challenges we face at this time. Others brought me to these understandings. I share them knowing we all have our own journeys to make. Take from them what you will. Dip in as the spirit moves you. Put aside what is not of you. Walk your truth!

Wishing you a time of love and laughter as we move into the festive season.

And happiness in all you seek in the days ahead.

***Arohanui
Barry***

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