

INTRODUCTION

In ten minutes, my life changed forever. My comfortable six decades of living became unrecognizable. Change brings different perspectives, and I soon discovered I questioned everything I knew, or thought I knew, about life.

I had moved from Kentucky to Naples, Florida, in 1993. My husband had died in 1987, and I was left to raise both children without him. My life felt like a whirlwind as I tried to balance my new role as a single parent while working full time to keep food on the table. By the time I left Kentucky six years later, things had settled. Phillip had graduated from college and was working in the music industry in Nashville, Tennessee. Cassie had just finished third grade when we packed our bags and headed south. Soon, we had acclimated to our new lifestyles as Floridians.

I began working in Naples as a psychologist in the public schools. The work is often challenging and demanding. As a member of an emergency team, I travel to schools to provide support for students and staff during crises such as the death of a student or staff member. I also conduct violent threat assessments—something that seems increasingly necessary these days. A large portion of my work includes psychological evaluations and counseling to students in need. I consult with teachers on behavior management techniques and academic intervention support in addition to providing district-wide training for several state and federal programs for students with disabilities. Whether it was helping teachers, students, or peers, my career choice as a psychologist fulfilled my life-long desire to help others.

Fast forward to 2013: My children were grown with kids of their own. My life had settled into a predictable yet rewarding routine; I was perfectly happy. I went to work each day, came home, read a book, and talked on the phone or sat in front of some sort of electronic screen. As I look back on my life then, nothing appeared out of the ordinary—not in the way I dressed and spoke, or in my habits, work, friendships, or thoughts. As a psychologist, I differentiated normal from abnormal, and my life represented nothing but the commonplace. My training as a psychologist had prepared me, or so I thought, for the challenges that life presented. That was about to change.

Planning for an average but busy day occupied my mind as I gathered my belongings and headed toward the car one morning. The summer break had ended just a few weeks before, and school was back in full swing. As I exited the garage, I began to mentally prioritize tasks leading up to the back-to-back meetings for the day. Almost on autopilot, I began my fifteen-minute commute. It was dark; the sun would not rise for another forty-five minutes or so. The traffic was usually light this early in the morning, and today was no exception. I had driven about halfway when words that did not seem to come from any conscious thought began to flow through my mind. My purse was in the passenger's seat. I reached over and brought it closer so I could feel inside for my phone. I wanted to record these thoughts. When I could not safely reach the phone, I gave up and yielded to the message.

AFTERWORD

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When you look at a flower, it is at its peak when it is open. A flower is a flow-er, and just like a human, when you let the energy flow, then the human is open to growth and potential. A plant draws energy from deep within Mother Earth, and it then ascends toward Father Sky. When there is perfect connection, this union between Mother Earth and Father Sky, the plant's energy is in ideal alignment. Its energy is flowing, and there are no blockages. It will then burst forth from its current existence and produce a perfect blossom, a flower.

The plant is a flow-er of energy, and its perfect alignment with Source results in a flower. This is also true for humans. When humans allow their energy to flow, they open to potential growth beyond their wildest imaginations. The result is a perfect flower—beautiful, functional, and multifaceted. Let us all be flow-ers of energy, with no blockages.

As these words entered my awareness, a picture of a green plant formed in my mind. Its roots extended deep in rich, dark soil as it began to grow upward. Like a time-lapsed movie, I saw a bud form and then open into a beautiful yellow flower.

I felt shocked. What was this? My breath quickened and my heart pounded. This was so strange. As a psychologist, I questioned whether this could be an auditory hallucination—that I was perceiving voices that were not there. I quickly ran through the basic criteria for hallucinations, and I had none of them: mental illness (bipolar, schizophrenia, psychosis), dementia, psychedelic drug use, or seizure disorders.

The message ended and left me with silence and thoughts that I knew were once again my own. I began to analyze this experience. Father Sky? Mother Earth? These words were not mine, nor were the thoughts, so I could dismiss this as something that came *from* me. I had ruled out hallucinations, but what was it? Was this one of those mystical experiences that I had read about? I had no idea.

As I looked back at my initial physical reactions—my heart pounding and my breath quickening—I must have felt fear, but my analysis of the message revealed there was nothing negative about it. In fact, it seemed to have only positive attributes. I smiled broadly as I realized this was *awesome*. It was as though I had peeked into some unknown, magical space. The mystery of the words played over and over in my mind as I continued my commute to work, surrounded by a sense of wonder of what had just occurred.

I arrived at my assigned school and drove into the staff parking area. The elementary school's lighted parking lot was empty, with the exception of the office manager's car. I gathered my briefcase and my personal belongings and headed toward the building's side entrance that led directly to the guidance suite, where my office was located. With building keys in hand, as I walked from the parking lot, a royal poinciana—a tree I had probably passed a hundred times before—demanded my attention. Its graceful, widely spreading branches that curved from a gnarly trunk seemed to beckon me. As the morning sun peeked through the tree's fern-leafed canopy, the rays produced mesmerizing patterns of shadow and light on the ground. As I gazed at the tree, I realized it was not just a living tree, but a sentient being—as much alive as I was. I stood still and was admiring the tree's beauty when my focus shifted to a tiny bud amid the tree's orange-red blossoms. My thoughts returned to the words: *"Let us all be flow-ers of energy."* I knew I had been guided to the tree to see this unopened bud.

Although I could not explain how the message and the experience with the tree had occurred, I knew something significant had just happened. I felt I had accessed a mysterious and perhaps mystical realm. I took a deep breath and sent my gratitude to the tree. I walked away not with answers but questions: Did this bud represent me—an untapped potential waiting to blossom? If I

heeded the advice to be grounded and in alignment, would my life flow as well? Would I burst into bloom like the tree? Was this a once-in-a-lifetime event, or would it happen again?

This first message had turned my world upside down. It represented a beginning, the cracking of a door into a world of the unknown. Yet as strange as the events had felt, I settled back into my normal routine. I went to work as usual, and I was soon involved in the daily activities that had consumed my life before the experience. I spent my weekends recovering from the workweek and talking on the phone or visiting with Phillip and Cassie. Although always in the back of my mind, the experience began to fade within the daily routines of my life.

On September 12, I received a message from a friend who had passed away, followed by a steady stream of similar communications. What had been neatly tucked away as a once-in-a-lifetime experience came center stage. The significance of these messages began to weigh on my mind because they were different—they were meant for others. This was a pivotal moment for me as I recognized I was being asked to *share* the messages. *Becoming* the messenger presented much greater challenges than simply receiving them.

As I tried to sort out these new events, I felt more than a little overwhelmed. My initial shock at becoming a messenger rendered me without a plan, so I listened and recorded. By default, I remained opened, and this laid the groundwork for more messages to flow. After much thought and deliberation, I began to realize the impact the onslaught of these new communications had on me. The messages had thrust me into this new role of messenger—without my consent—yet deep within the recesses of my mind whispered a voice of reason, and I knew this was the right thing to do.



At one time, I belonged to an online meditation group that encouraged many interesting philosophical discourses on expanded awareness and other similar topics. One evening the task was to gather information about human consciousness. Does human consciousness have the ability to learn, and if so, how can we develop it? While responding to this nebulous prompt, I felt the familiar shift in awareness as a message came through, and I watched as content spilled onto my computer screen from my keyboard. I never gave this experience much thought until a couple years later, when I attended a workshop at The Monroe Institute in Faber, Virginia.

As the first session of the training ended, a man approached me and introduced himself as Fred. He had a soft smile and a twinkle in his eyes as he reached into his hip pocket for his wallet. He opened the wallet and pulled out a tattered piece of paper. Without explanation, yet maintaining eye contact, he offered it to me. I read it, looked into this stranger's eyes, and smiled—it was my online entry.

The message detailed humanity's progression toward harmony. The last paragraph read, "The evolution of your species will be in the direction of more highly sensitive beings. It is happening even now, whether you encourage it or not. All over the world, people are beginning to wake up and re-member who they truly are. To help this process, learn to trust what your body tells you, not your mind. Allow the truth to unfold. Do not *try* to do anything, but learn to let it flow and accept what you receive."

I began to recognize the impact some of the messages had on others: I did not even remember this post, yet a complete stranger had printed it and carried it in his wallet. I didn't know the meaning that it held for Fred, only that it was important to him. But I understood how he felt, because I had experienced the gentle tug of these communications that called me to explore worlds

AFTERWORD

I never knew existed, to see connections, and to understand there is more to life than what I had thought.

Was this another reminder for me to step into the role as messenger? I didn't feel like a *reluctant* messenger—more like a *terrified* one—yet I felt a nagging sensation that dragged me, sometimes kicking and screaming, to accept this unsought position. So, I began to tell my story to others.

At first, I told a few friends about the messages; they were supportive and often eager to hear more. This sharing seemed to open the door for more people to explore. Shortly after I met Fred, the leader of The Monroe Institute's Local Chapter Network asked me to become a regular contributor to their online quarterly newsletter. As I began to share my experiences through this international venue, I realized that what had begun as private communications meant for me alone or just a few friends had expanded beyond my expectations. My circle had grown as I collaborated with larger audiences, and I traveled beyond the self-imposed limits that had constrained me in the past.

As the audience widened, however, so did the reactions. Although I had worked through much of my initial fear and doubt about exposing these very personal experiences, sometimes my discomfort with being a messenger resurfaced.

In fact, not long ago, I accompanied my daughter Cassie and her husband, Dan, to a cookout at Dan's parent's house. Several families were there, and children were running around, happy to be playing with their cousins. The toddlers occupied themselves at a water table area while the older children jumped in and out of the swimming pool. People meandered between the covered lanai and the granite island bar—which held generous offerings of delicious appetizers—just inside the opened sliding glass doors to the kitchen. Both inside and out, I heard laughter and lively conversations as people greeted each other and shared the latest family news.

Dan's sister and her husband welcomed me with a hug. Through Cassie and Dan, they knew I had been writing a book, so as polite conversation goes, they asked me about the book's topic. As I responded to this simple question, I realized they were unaware of the book's subject—and apparently uncomfortable with its esoteric nature. Dan's sister's mouth dropped open, and her eyes widened as I fumbled to describe my experiences. I recognized her fear, so I tried to give details that, in my opinion, might convince her that these messages were genuine. But it seemed the more I tried to explain, the more frightened she became. Her reaction brought a flood of tears to my eyes—so in the middle of this celebratory gathering of family and friends, I cried.

Why couldn't I have just acknowledged her fear? Why couldn't I have told her that I understood her feelings, because initially I had felt the same way? I recalled how my heart had pounded and I had felt breathless, but why couldn't I have told her that soon, very soon, comfort, curiosity, and even awe replaced my shock and disbelief? After all, I had learned valuable lessons from the messengers, and my life had changed for the better.

The more important question, however, was why was I upset over her reaction? I should have never tried to share what she was not ready to hear. I certainly should have never tried to convince her of anything, because truths discovered are uniquely our own, and each person's truth should be honored.

Now when doubt or fear of being a messenger creeps into my awareness, I think of Fred's printed copy of my online post. If the messages were important to him, perhaps they would be for others, too. So I gradually acquiesced to my role as messenger.

As I look back on this journey that had begun with a message about a flower, I realize how far I have traveled this path of the unknown. Message by message, day by day, how I viewed the world changed. Something nebulous guided me, and I could no longer define the events in my life by

what my physical senses measured. I realized this synergistic process had unanticipated results: I had accepted the role of messenger—I had become a *“flow-er of energy.”*