

## NOW WHAT?

Time has passed - 6 days, 144 hours, 8640 minutes. We are here, together, again. I've reread those last two chapters and find myself wondering about you: how did you receive the idea that you are a leader in our world? What about the responsibility that you have to be the leader in your life? You are still here. What do you need now?

Reassurance. That's what came to me in the pause. Some of you have heard these ideas for the very first time and do not feel anything like a leader. You may even have been tempted to set down this book forever. Perhaps you are currently buried in some deep challenges in your human life and feel totally powerless. If that's the case, how can you possibly even want to be the leader in your life? That could be a pretty scary thought! Possibly you are surrounded by amazing leaders whom you respect and you can't possibly fathom yourself as one of them. Perhaps the folks around you have very strong personalities and tend to control, rather than lead, and you feel trapped by their energy. If any of these scenarios is yours, please stick around. For you, reassurance seems to be in order.

That said, I believe that some of you latched on to the idea that you are a leader and immediately felt its truth. You just needed to hear it. You are on your way! If this is you, I encourage you to stay with me for an experience of expanding leadership impact even as you continue to claim your powerful inner leader.

I didn't feel like a leader for the first 50+ years of my life. For most of those decades, in fact, I didn't possess much in the way of self-love, self-esteem, or self-confidence. Fear and doubt were constant companions. Not pretty enough, not good enough, not enough were ever-present messages to self. I sought answers "out there" from self-help books and from society at large as I compared how I felt inside to what I witnessed outside. *(An aside here. Just this small paragraph of recalling my past, writing about history, is boring me! I think I*

*owe it to you and I will continue at a high level anyway. But I agreed to be authentic with you and I couldn't ignore the growing resistance in me.)*

In case you haven't heard it already, comparing "my inside reality" to your "outside expression" is a very damaging thing. Even as I was feeling small, insignificant, insufficient, others were witnessing my outer expression and seeing a capable, talented, organized, efficient, amazing human being. They saw my skills as a computer programmer, analyst, manager. They appreciated my musical talents shared freely in spiritual community. They received my generosity of spirit. And the saddest thing of all? *Some of them were comparing themselves to me and coming up short.* They were using me to judge themselves as "not enough" even as I was judging me. This cycle must stop.

***Who do you compare yourself to?  
In what ways do you come up short?  
Who is comparing their insides to your outsides?  
What do they see in you?***

Hopefully you just received a bit of reassurance. You are so much more than you have been willing to acknowledge.

*Why is this important?*

Here is my answer. As long as I felt small, insignificant and not enough, I wanted to go unnoticed, hide from the world. Sure I did the obligatory stuff of life. My employer received the best I knew to give. So did my family and spiritual communities. But no one received my uniqueness, creativity, the magic in me that was only mine to offer! Not even me. In fact, at age 40, when a friend suggested that I write songs, I quickly and clearly stated:

***I am NOT creative and I do NOT write songs!***

Ginny saw something in me that I could not see. This dear soul cared enough to ask me again and again until my hardened core

started to melt and I found a wee bit of willingness to try. That was about 200 songs ago.

Ginny is a leader. She has claimed her precious unique self and dared to share it freely in our world. She knows the power of personal expression and sees others as pure potential. Her impact is to awaken us to our greatness. Do you think she could do that if she didn't believe in herself? I don't.

Here's another secret. You would not be reading this book today and experiencing your own inner shifts if Ginny had not claimed her inner leader and chosen the path of ministry. She dared to do her part, to develop her talents and skills and share them confidently in her life. Her commitment to others' greatness meant that she wouldn't let me off the hook.

### ***Who is inspiring you to claim your greatness?***

I am a songwriter because of Ginny. As a songwriter, I have created both works of beauty and works that deserve to be burned! Yet I needed the "bad" songs in order to learn how to create the "good" ones. As journeys go, it took a few years to be willing to share my songs freely and without apology with fellow musicians. My confidence grew bit by bit with each song, each time I sang for others, each time the community sang the music that had flowed from my creative muse.

### ***This did NOT happen overnight!***

Nor did it happen without tons of support and encouragement from close friends, my life coach, and other musicians. In particular, I was blessed with two other songwriters who so graciously shared of their time and knowledge and music. Remind me to tell you about Jana Stanfield and Chris Foster, okay?

Daring to claim, "I am a singer/songwriter" and risk looking like a fool (that's what it felt like!) supported my growing self-esteem and self-confidence. These qualities morphed into a strong desire to encourage others to express their "inner

songwriter" and to let their voice be heard in all its imperfect beauty.

Wherever you are on your personal leadership journey, on your personal life journey, know that all is well. It is a journey of a lifetime. There is no *arriving*, no *completion*, no *perfection*, no *stopping*. At least that's what I believe. Life has guided me to this point and will continue to express itself through me until I leave this planet ... and beyond! To the extent that others like yourself have been impacted by my walk in this world, you carry me into the future. We continue to co-exist and co-create. What I choose *today*, what you choose *today*, is part of an ever evolving whole. The human tapestry would be incomplete without our unique contribution shared from full acceptance of our greatness.

If you haven't gotten the message already, the story is not about Jeanne's accomplishment of writing a book. It is about you and me, daring each other to stretch, move out of our comfort zones, step into leadership. Each of us has made a commitment to lead our lives in new directions and, from there, inspire others to their greatness. Whether or not you are aware of others in your life inspiring you to greatness, inspiring you to lead powerfully, I am here to say:

*I have chosen to take on the task of inspiring you to your greatness!*

As we end this conversation for today, I leave you with these questions:

***What is your unique voice?***

***What is the message of your inner songwriter?***

***What "bad song" do you need to express in order to reveal your unique essence?***

## Music to Inspire

These lyrics grew from the phrase, "release your imprisoned splendor", which I first heard in 2002 at a spiritual retreat. It took a few years for them to sprout. I wonder if my awareness wasn't deep enough at first hearing to grasp the full implication of their meaning.

### Release The Imprisoned Splendor

*We all know that Spirit walks the Earth  
as people like you and me.  
Each of us expressing as God's Love  
as we create abundantly.*

*Release the imprisoned splendor that's hiding inside of you.  
Go within to your sacred center and discover your hidden Truth!  
As you joyfully feel your surrender to the Spirit that is your Light,  
follow your heart: let Spirit as you shine bright.*

*Deep within I know we are one with God:  
the Master Mind of planet Earth.  
We've a passion burning that's ours to share.  
It's time for our creative birth!*

*Release the imprisoned splendor: the essence within your soul.  
Just give birth to this inner defender;  
keep an eye on your dreams and goals.  
As you travel the road together  
with sweet Spirit now as your Guide  
give to the world your gifts. You've nothing to hide.*