

SPIRIT, MIND & BODY

Help Save the World? Enjoy the World? Or Both?

by Pamela Bell

A friend of mine was in Nepal recently working on a movie about the revolution there (*The People's Nepal*). He happened upon this sign in a shop in Katmandu: "Many mornings, I don't know if I should help save the world or take the time to enjoy it."

This is a profound statement and a question that I know millions of people grapple with every day. I wrestle with this question myself - and I thought that, by writing about it, I might possibly provide some perspective, for me at least, on this natural human dilemma.

I don't know how many of you have ever been to Nepal, but it is a deep and mystical place where people value spirit, love, compassion, individuality and respect over just about everything else. Nepal is the birthplace of Buddha and home to many *Sadhus*, mystics and spiritual seekers from all over the globe. They've been at this game

of "deciphering the meaning and purpose of one's human life" for a long, long, long, long time.

The desire to spend one's precious human life in the service of others is not a rare one. Who amongst us doesn't want to know that our time here is of great importance and value? Who amongst us doesn't want to make a contribution of some kind - either to an underprivileged population across the globe, to the senior center down the street, or by cleaning up the carbon footprint left by our own personal existence? Fundamentally, we are hardwired as a species to save our own kind. Throw in our potential for compassion, and wanting to help others is as natural as the sun coming up in the morning.

Let's face it. We live in a world and during a time of great need! There is not one single day that I spend on this earth where I don't witness at least one person doing without - without a home,

a job, food, medical care, a loving family, education, proper clothing and on and on and on. And that's here in Sonoma County - one of the most prosperous, lushest and most abundant areas in the world. Go to India or Africa and the numbers of people in need are staggering. That, perhaps, is part of our dilemma. The need of humanity is so great that we don't always know where to begin. It is easy to feel that your efforts are insignificant compared to the magnitude of the problem. It is easy to feel that you have to run faster and do more to make any difference at all. Either way, the problem is not going away and the need inside you that drives you to help others will only get stronger as the conditions outside yourself get worse. So yes, help save the world! No matter if the deed is great or

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small, every act makes a world of difference.

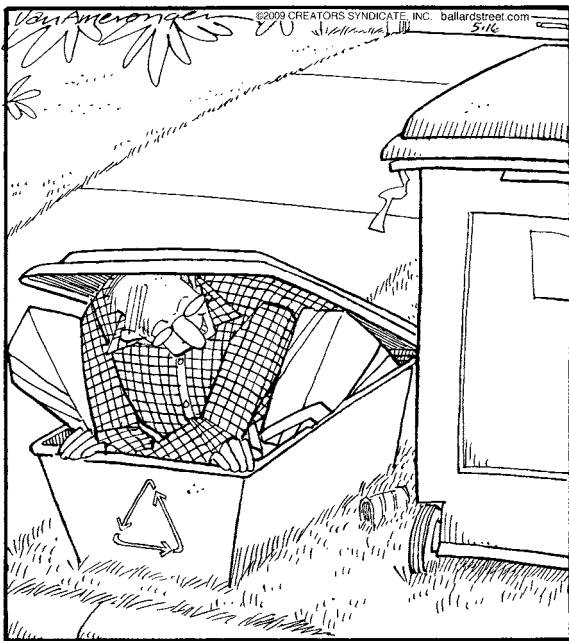
Then there's the strong argument to enjoy life. Yes, of course. This beautiful and precious life that we have been given is meant to be ENJOYED! It's meant to be cherished and to be savored. Stop and smell those roses, really! Take the day off and go to the beach. Dance your special dance on the night of the full moon. Sleep. Eat. Laugh. Love. Do it all! Do everything that excites you and nothing that you find to be drudgery. Celebrate! Be grateful! Be Joyous! Sing your song! Beat your drum! Tell your story! And then when you are tired - when you've had your fill - smile with deep delight, rest, and then do it all over again. Yes, enjoy life. Your enjoyment makes a world of difference.

Lastly, there is the option

of doing both. Why can't we do both? Why can't we help save the world and enjoy it simultaneously? If you are living in the state of joy, celebration and abundance, don't you naturally want to share it with others? Don't you want to lift up your fellow man and offer him (or her) the opportunity to experience the same ecstasy that you are experiencing? Caring is a natural byproduct of our human nature and sharing is a natural byproduct of true joy.

The Buddha teaches something called the Middle Way or the Middle Path - everything in moderation. Help others - yes, of course - but not to the detriment of your own existence. Celebrate life - yes, of course - but don't forget to share your joy with others. Find a balance. Offer your service. Be joyful.

BALLARD STREET by Jerry Van Amerongen



Glenn Spivey is a recycling enthusiast.



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FROM 4:30 TO 8 PM
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SATURDAY MARKETS ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

Jul 4 - Lavender Festival
Children's Craft Day
Music by the Rose Town Ramblers
Jul 11 - Music by Kathy Mezger & Friends
Jul 18- Music by .CORE.
Jul 25- Music by the Courtney Janes
Aug 1 - Free Children's Craft Project Day
Music by Robert B+
Aug 8 - Quilt Festival 11am -5 pm
Music by Petaluma Pete 10:30am - 1:30pm
Music by Fred McCarty 2pm - 5pm
Aug 15 - Music by River Song Duet
Aug 22 - Music by the Refreshments

WEDNESDAY EVENING MARKET ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

Main Stage at C Street & 2nd Street
*Children's Area in Theatre Square

July 8- Music by Petaluma Pete
*Music by James K
July 15 - Music by Robert B+
*Cinnabar Theatre/Mask Decorating
July 22 - Music by Fred McCarty
*The Children's Museum of the North Bay
July 29 - Music by Greg Walter
*Petaluma Boys & Girls Club/Garden Day
Aug 5 - Music by Bruce Sexauer & Friends
*Adam the Bee Keeper
Aug 12 - Music by Bad Neighbor
*Music by James K
Aug 19 - Music by River Song Duet
*Adam the Bee Keeper