



The Dignity Project

Guiding the Way

Promoting awareness and understanding of dignity
through education, communication and spirit.

Navigating Chaos

The Nature of Chaos

1. We need to keep in mind that the terrain itself is changing. The map in our mind is based on the past. It is best to consider a new map, one that reveals the terrain one step at a time. There are moments when a longer view appears and we can steer in a direction for awhile with confidence, but the need for caution will return because chaotic times are not organized. The lack of organization brings about change. Change, by definition, is a rearranging of parts, with additions and deletions possible. New order arises from the new arrangement. It is not always seen as 'order' because it takes time for us to become familiar with it and we can resist what is new, hold onto what was, and lament what we lost and not embrace the gifts or what has transpired.
2. Chaos includes the interruption of cycles that have given us structure and continuity. For a time there is nothing to orient to. This is a frightening phase for some of us because we don't recognize it, and, we might grab onto something as an anchor or central point that is not truly stabilizing but distracting or distorting, such as excessive eating or drinking alcohol. Orienting within is the most stable solution. This involves relating to the *hara*, the area around the navel, the center of the physical flesh body. Like a compass, the *hara* navigates our surroundings. Relating to the heart will direct us to intuition as a guide when the outer world is fracturing.
3. Navigating during a storm requires a steady hand at the helm, a sense of the dynamics of the storm, and the willingness and courage to sustain inner balance for a time while vision is limited and variables and forces are at play in a larger than usual way. Storms are, by definition, an increase in the activity of the forces and elements, causing what we think of as conflict, involving resistance, pressure, eruption, increase in speed and volume and impact.

This describes the situations that humanity is experiencing in relationship with the planet: personal, collective, and planetary interplay that is so intense as to disrupt life as it has been known for thousands of years. To bring about mental presence, we can walk calmly, noticing our footfall, feeling the ground beneath us and the sky above, locating ourselves in time, as having a name, a family, a history, and touchstones such as a job and friends. This may need to be repeated throughout a day. The primary requirement for navigating chaos is to be present, to the moment, to the day, to the situation at hand. It is difficult to predict tomorrow, so dealing with a situation for what it is and what is known or seen is helpful.

4. Hanging on to preferences creates pain during times of great change. This is not about resistance. Preferences come from the body/organism and the mind - from familiar ways of relating and finding comfort, or even withdrawing or cloaking. This can be tough to keep up when there is great change. We feel vulnerable, we have to change up the way we do things, go without, be uncomfortable at times, adapt, compromise. As we remind ourselves that this is all new, our old preferences may die. And at some point we will find that we are developing new preferences that are based on how our personal and collective world has changed. This could be seen as a 'letting go' process, but it is more about 'assessing' where we are and what is appropriate and likely possible.
5. Being of assistance to others brings about a sense of connectedness when we may want to isolate, protect, and hide intense emotions or fear. During a crisis we see people coming out of their usual persona to demonstrate courage, selflessness, or compassion -- stretching beyond their usual comfort zone because they weren't *thinking*; they were *responding* from the larger Self that is not afraid to die, that is not restricted by thoughts of limitation. It inspires us to see this in others. It opens our hearts to one another, showing us we are indeed capable of more as a human family. So it is, during escalating chaos -- we can turn off the television and computer, leave the protection of our home, and discover how and where we might contribute calm, reason, and flexibility in the face of uncertainty and inevitable change.
6. As chaos breaks up the current order, there is a time of fragmentation when we cannot know what will come next. *Being with and in the fragmentation is what is up*. We are not separate from it. We are what is fragmenting; everything we have created as humans is shaking and falling and calling for new order, different foundation, wider encompassing of need and provision, and rejoining pieces to the whole that were separated for personal gain.

Chaos is necessary and beneficent. We cannot know if a star is better for the galaxy of stars if it remains intact, or if it feeds and serves the cosmic relationships by breaking apart.

We cannot know how the breakup of civilizations will serve the future. We can only witness the breakup with the sanity of accepting that it is occurring.

The Witness in each of us can, from its broad perspective and awareness of our life path, see where and how we can contribute to the new order. The chaos doesn't need our help; it is in process, like a building collapsing or a wave crashing. We may have contributed to the decline of our systems of human operation but we have to step aside and witness the stage of collapse. We can be inspired to rebuild and align with the new order that begins to reveal itself. We can ripen and share wisdom and experiences. We can help bring understanding of the cycles and patterns that brought us to this turning point. We can improve our listening and observation skills and see what still has meaning and potential application. History can become interesting to us, as a guide, as hope for breaking out of repetitive cycles.

7. Billions of people will die from drought, starvation, disease, conflict, climate events, and the hardship of migration. This is not the tragedy, for *the soul of each person is imprinted with experience*, and progress will continue toward awareness of the larger field and the relationship that we have to Light and its life-giving and sustaining properties. The massive loss of life is the result of the tragic *disregard for diversity* as part of the intelligence of Earth's functional and flourishing environment, and the subsequent diversity displayed in humanity through color, facial features, language, cultural expression, and perspective on the cosmos.

When an old culture is dying,
the new culture is created by those people who are not afraid to be insecure.

R. Baio