

The Way of Cetacea

A Journey into Whale and Dolphin Consciousness

*"Listen to the voice of a dolphin, and you shall learn the secret to mankind's survival:
PEACE!!!"- Mallory Watson*

It was lunchtime on our first day aboard the Blue Dolphin catamaran in Hervey Bay, Australia. We had come to spend a few days with the Humpback Whales as they nursed their newborn calves and courted new partners in the warm Queensland waters. After connecting with a few playful pods during the morning, we stopped for lunch near a few groups of resting mothers, calves and adolescent... One female in particular drifted on the surface about 50 meters off the side of the boat. The wind dropped as gentle waves lapped against the boat, and for the first time, I was able to play my Native American flute. I had played this flute on a few occasions with dolphins, and had been amazed to see and feel how they responded – drawing near, spy-hopping and turning sideways to watch me from the water. But this was the first time I would have a chance to play to these great stewards of the sea... These sentient beings who, 50-60 million years ago were quite possibly the first to bring SONG into this planet with their deeply complex underwater harmonies... Songs and calls which, unimpeded have the power to circle the entire globe in channels of liquid sound. Songs, which last for up to 24 hours, with ever-evolving verse and chorus, rhyme and rhythm. Songs that travel from pod to pod, unifying all in harmony together. My single, wooden flute was hardly a match for this ancient underwater symphony, but I was willing to play my note and see what may come... I watched the single female drifting on the surface for a few minutes, taking in the vastness of her energy, then I closed my eyes and began to play. After a few moments, she responded. Disappearing for a moment underwater, she re-surfaced completely inverted – hanging upside down with her tail openly reaching into the sky. I continued playing, and she remained in this hanging position without taking a breath for over 15 minutes, as she slowly drifted over to the boat. By the time I finished, her massive tail was within arms reach of the rope railing. My family and I stood together in awed silence for several minutes... unified by a deep sense of communion with each other, with this magnificent gentle giant, and with all of life. Then she gently submerged, leaving a circular tail-print that opened out like a silken ring, surrounding the entire boat... and she was gone.

Four years ago, my wife Ashevana, our son Joshua and I set out on a journey overseas, with one primary aim – to follow our intuition and the call of Mother Earth. Our goal was to discover how best we can serve at this time – our own soul's yearning and the needs of this precious living planet. We had followed such a call to go live in New Zealand two years before, and now a journey was calling us onward... So we traveled, first to Hawaii, then up along the West coast of the US into the islands of British Columbia, Canada, and eventually all the way up to Alaska. One recurring theme that emerged

as we listened and followed our inner promptings, was that each step of the way, we found ourselves having synchronistic and often profoundly intimate encounters with whales. They met us in the warm waters of Maui with their young, they were off the Oregon and Canadian coast in pods heading north, and they greeted us in the icy waters of the Kenai Fjords in Alaska. It was only then, as we shared an excited greeting with their playful breaching in the Arctic Sea, that we realized something quiet extra-ordinary... Unbeknownst to us, we had just completed the entire migration trail of the Northern Hemisphere Humpbacks – at the exact same time as them!

Shortly thereafter, we answered a yearning to come back across the Pacific, and arrived in Byron Bay, Australia – on the very day that the last pod of the Southern Hemisphere Humpbacks coasted past the point, heading south for their own summer migration. By now, we knew something was up. We moved into a house near the beach – a beach we soon discovered was called “Dolphins” – and the following six months we were plunged into what can only be described as Cetacean University, as daily encounters with dolphins and whales in the water, ocean-minded people on land, and aquatic dreams at night, rapidly wove us into deep soulful learning and communion with these great sentient beings. It was as though we had entered a mystery school of the natural world, and this semester our lessons and experiences were being guided by the wisdom and energy of whales and dolphins themselves.

From indigenous elders and wisdom keepers of various cultures we began learning of the deep spiritual heritage and navigational partnership of Cetaceans in ancient civilizations all around the world. From scientists we learned of their vital role in the biological balance of life on the planet (among other things, whales are one of the primary fertilizers of plankton in the sea, which just so happens to be the source of 70-80% of our oxygen on land!). From researchers we learned of the unique and incredibly advanced qualities of their senses (their high vibrational sonar used to communicate, hunt and protect; their complex speech and song patterns that mirror – and far outdo – our own classical music construct; their use of image to communicate thoughts and ideas). And from philosophers we learned of their energetic role as wisdom keepers and light weavers in the magnetic pathways of our planet. But of course the greatest lessons of all were learned by our time in and near the water, connecting with whales and dolphins directly. We discovered that they have much to teach us all... about living in community, about moving with peaceful purpose and embracing the storms of life with joy and ease. About becoming beacons and bringers of positive light wherever we go... simply by being who we are.

Answering the Call...

During our first month back in Byron Bay we had so many encounters with dolphins in the wild that it felt like we were being stalked! While at first it seemed like they were simply everywhere that we were, on further reflection, we started to see a pattern in their appearances – one that coincided with

our own willingness to follow moment-to-moment impulses and sparks of intuition. It seemed that whenever we made ourselves available to hear and to openly answer the spontaneous call of the moment, so would they. That quiet voice that calls us up from the computer mid-sentence to run down to the beach despite the pressure of impending deadlines... that shift in breeze that makes us turn left for our walk when we normally turn right... that little whisper that says to stay and surf just one more wave before going in... These quiet streams of inner promptings which are so often drowned out by the rivers of our busy minds and daily to-do lists, seems to be the realm in which the dolphins and whales move, exist and communicate. While I would not say that they are in any way predictable, it became clear that within this realm of universal timing that operates not on logic but on FLOW in the moment, their timing is impeccable!! And so the more we allowed ourselves to follow and move with this quiet voice of flow within, the more we found ourselves in the same place at the same time, doing the same thing as the dolphins! And this became one of the first clear lessons ... to be willing to respond to that little butterfly whisper inside, and to move with the subtle waves of energy that prompt us into positive action – even when we don't know why... even when we are surrounded by pressures and more dominant forces on all sides. To be able to hear and follow the path of flow is one of the greatest gifts for us all to learn, particularly at this time of such rapid change on the planet. The dolphins are masters of FLOW and they are ever so happy to share this gift. They call to that part in each of us... and they meet us there each step of the way.

The more time I spent with them, the more I found that they would time their arrival at the precise moment that my mind shifted to a higher place of positive thought or that my body became fully present in the moment. It was as though they would wait there underwater until my energy was a match for theirs and ready to connect, and then – often just as I forgot about trying to find dolphins and just surrendered to the moment I was in – they would suddenly appear in the wave beneath me as if to say, “Yes! You got it. Thanks for showing up. Now, on to the next lesson...”

During this first six months of daily, nightly, and spontaneously moment-to-moment tutorials into the Delphic way, we learned many key lessons that applied directly to our life, and to humanity as a whole at this time. Lessons about the power of the pod and collective energy of community. Lessons about the importance of honoring the playful spirit of our children... and of playfully honoring our own child within. One of the greatest gifts we received from the dolphins – one that we also receive from the whales and from our own son Joshy on a daily basis – is their way of opening people's hearts wherever they go, simply by being who they are. In a world of doing, where we have become defined by that opening question in most new conversations, “What do you *do*?” dolphins are masters at BEING. Not trying to be anything in particular, but simply being a dolphin, playing in the waves. Their peaceful, playful presence causes a palpable wave of magic and light to sweep through all who are there to witness and partake in the moment.

Within about five seconds of the arrival of dolphins, a beach of total strangers will suddenly be united in open-hearted connection, laughter and even tears. What greater message can there be for us all, but to express our own unique, inner light with such freedom and joy that it naturally overflows, causing light to open in others...?! This must be a definition of enlightenment, and perhaps why many perceive dolphins and whales to be enlightened masters and beacons of Christ Consciousness. One thing for sure, time spent near and among them invariably awakens the call of this energy within all who are near...

As the seasons and currents shifted toward winter we welcomed the return of the dolphins' great cousins – the humpback whales – to the region. Ancient and massive but often unnoticed, whales have been around for 50-60 million years. They have the largest hearts, minds and lungs of any creatures on the planet. The sound pressure level of the whale's song is equivalent to that of a jet engine and yet their lullabies are hauntingly sweet and non-intrusive. They are the most powerful of all animals and yet to watch them move in the water is like watching the most graceful ballet. To witness a 40 ton, 65 foot mother humpback with her calf is to witness the most gentle, tender and nurturing exchange one could ever imagine between mother and child. I once heard a marine biologist remark that there is no other living being that has such a profound and lasting effect on people of all walks of life simply by taking a breath. Perhaps it is in this moment when a whale surfaces from the deep blue to breathe, that we are reminded of our inherent connection to them, breathing the same air to sustain life... Perhaps it is in our sudden realization of their sheer immensity (they are HUGE!)... But maybe it is something else that triggers within us on a deeper level... a call of sorts to the innate stillness and vast presence of peace deep within our own being... Whatever it is, it is very real, and all those who have had this experience know, when you come close to a whale in this way, something in you changes...

As much as researchers around the world have learned about whales, there is a great vastness of sheer mystery... For us, it is in our willingness to enter this mystery that we find ourselves most moved and deeply affected... Perhaps more than anything, we have been repeatedly humbled by the way that they and their dolphin cousins continue to go out of their way to seek connection, friendship and even to protect man – despite the barrage of abuse they collectively receive from humanity in the forms of sound and waste pollution and direct, intentional hunting and threats on their lives. In many ways these gentle beings exemplify the essence of benevolence and unconditional love that virtually every spiritual path pursues. They continue to give and share and shine their gentle but vast light, no matter what is going on around them.

The Greater Gift

In the last hundred years, humanity has reduced most whale populations to two percent of their original size. And we are now close to experiencing the

first cetacean extinctions ever in human history. But it is here in this critical moment of crisis – not only for the whales, but for many other species and elements in the interconnected balance of our living planet – that a great gift and opportunity exists...

For if we look closely at any of the environmental challenges or animal species under threat, we will find that while it seems we are making efforts to save the whales, save the trees, etc... in truth, these beings are helping us. They are giving us clues to save ourselves. From a biological standpoint, each of these precious endangered animals and elements hold a special key to the preservation of life on planet earth. And from an energetic standpoint, each of these different species and beings hold within them qualities that we truly need in our world right now. The whales with their immeasurable energy of peace and presence, the dolphins with their spontaneous joy and communion, the interconnected productivity of bees, the perspective of eagles, the wisdom and stillness of trees, and the list goes on and on... Each of these beings remind and teach us of virtues that we also carry within ourselves... virtues worth fighting for and treasuring at this time. For if we are all part of the same living organism, what happens when we kill off the part of us that carries the strongest light of joy, of peace, of harmony...? Not only do we lose a species and a vital biological link to life, we also lose a doorway to the energy and qualities that they carry and share with the world.

On the other hand, when we activate, honor and claim these qualities and virtues in our lives and in our community – even in little daily ways like running to the beach when we feel the inkling – we open new pathways of communion and connection to all of life and to our own higher selves.

Singing the Same Song

Of all the lessons, messages and gifts we have received in our short time of schooling with Cetaceans, perhaps the most profound and important at this time has to do with their song... The Humpback whale song is deeply complex and poetic with verse, chorus and rhythm, and much like human pop music, it constantly changes and evolves over time. Science has begun to scratch the surface of understanding these melodies and courting hymns, but one unexplained fact remains... Even though the Humpback's song is constantly changing and the whales themselves are spread far and wide, at any given moment, ALL of the humpbacks of a given region - are all SINGING THE SAME SONG.

What greater metaphor could there be for humanity at this time? For millions of years their unified songs and migration trails have woven webs of light around the globe under water. Right now, they are simply asking us to do the same above ground.

"See Us Free"

After spending several months connecting in seemingly miraculous ways with whales and dolphins in the wild, we came to the deep realization that the

greatest thing we could do to help preserve the Cetacean community (and in turn, the planet) ... is to BE MORE LIKE THEM. We had spent months exploring traditional paths of activism through film and other mediums before we realized that if we could simply learn to express the Delphic and Whale spirit in how we live, that would be a huge first step toward not only preserving the Cetaceans, but our own race as well. We too must learn to open hearts wherever we go, simply by being who we are. And from there, whatever initiatives we undertake on their behalf must in some way express their incredible energies of peace, joy and connective, positive power.

We took this intention to the waters and asked, "How best can we serve?" The answer that came back was simple and clear: "*SEE US FREE.*"

So we sent a simple prayerful intention to a small email list, with the hope of unifying positive planetary energy on behalf of the Whales & Dolphins -- to bring people together to SEE and FEEL them free, swimming in clean, quiet waters. Within hours we began receiving email responses from all around the world. After months of trying to move mountains in more traditional ways and meeting many road blocks, this one simple email seemed to swing wide open the doors of possibility. During the first 33-day "prayer window", people tuned in from all walks (from children to indigenous elders) and many amazing events transpired – TV ads were sponsored, songs written, films inspired and groups of people took time to come together and share positive energy toward something they believe in. Just that act of coming together was a tremendous gift in itself...

The project has grown organically over the past three years, and in 2008 we launched the PEACE in the WATER website (www.peaceinthewater.com) as a global gathering place for conscious initiatives and water-based creative projects. So far, people from over 80 NATIONS have tuned in, among them many brilliant artists, thinkers and visionaries, sharing stories, songs and visions for peace in the water, yes, and all across the world.

In one sense this is about our Oceans and Cetaceans, but in another, this is all about humanity learning once again to step up and unify our voice ... and SING THE SAME SONG, like the whales have done for millions of years. In truth, our ocean kin are giving us a great gift – the opportunity to remember how powerful we are when we come together, in peace, for the greater good of all. **IT IS TIME.**

Mother Earth is calling each of us in different ways. Leading us back into communion and positive co-creation with her natural world – and with our own true nature. Whether our passion is for whales or forests or orangutans, the opportunity is the same – to come back into direct communion with the pulse of life on planet earth. To open our hearts to each other, to stand and move together... and once again to dream and sing the world we want to experience into being.

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