



INVITATION

When was the last time you were invited to a gathering which you really did not want to attend? Most of the time attendance is optional, whether it is a party, a city council meeting (open invitation), a grand opening or any number of public and private events. There are a few invitations, however, usually called *summons*, where attendance is required. Remember that time when you were called to jury duty, and failure to show up carried serious consequences? You showed up even though it was not the most convenient time for you, right.

Strange as it may seem, we are all currently involved in a *summons* to participate in a world event that we probably feel we didn't sign up for. Charles Eisenstein, philosopher and author of several books, including *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*, compares it to an intervention: "Covid-19 is like a rehab intervention that breaks the addictive grip of normality. To interrupt a habit is to make it visible; it is to turn it from a compulsion to a choice. When the crisis subsides, we might have occasion to ask whether we want to return to normal, or whether there might be something we've seen during this break in the routines that we want to bring into the future." Do we have the forbearance to choose to go through this "intervention" with as much wakefulness and intention toward positive change as we can muster? Many voices I've heard state they do not want to "go back" to how things were. Without knowing quite what it might look like to foster positive change, there is a growing

mood toward a more “human” pace of life, more open caring and awareness of one another, more valuing experience and exchange with other living beings over the acquisition of things.

Let’s pause for a moment and consider the other name for COVID-19. It is also referred to as a coronavirus, of which there are many, named for the crown-like spikes on their surface. Yes, corona means crown. Did you know there is a constellation named Corona? The mythology behind it is that the Greek god Dionysus immortalized his union with his wife Ariadne by placing her crown into the night sky. Ariadne is also known as the Greek maiden who provided a life-sustaining thread to Theseus so that he could escape from a labyrinth where a deadly Minotaur was housed. To think of corona in relationship to finding our way through a potentially deadly excursion that, like a labyrinth offers only one way out which is “in and through”, can be a scary image. That is, unless we realize that “in and through” can also be a metaphor for an awakening, a taking hold of the life-sustaining thread, trusting in something meaningful that wants to manifest through our awakening. One of the stories of Ariadne is that she was abandoned by Theseus, left to die on the shore of the sea. But she eventually awoke and met Dionysus who found her, saved her and eventually crowned her. She is considered a model of one who serves those in need. It’s true that in mythology there is always more to the story than we first imagine. This is also true of world events that can at first send us in a tailspin. It is not that what it looks like is not true; it is that there is usually much more going on than is initially seen. Like Frodo, in the quote above, we may wish it hadn’t happened in our time. We may quell at the idea of being called to be agents of change. However, as Gandalf responded, “All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”

So many beautiful and encouraging thoughts have been expressed by others that it is with humility that I invite you to lend your open heart and mind to the words that have been coming to me over many days. It is my, perhaps naïve, attempt to be of service through words. While I began with the hope of offering a somewhat uncommon view of “freedom” and some hopeful suggestions for overcoming fear, my profession as an educator and carer urged me on to share ideas about the innate needs of children at various stages of development, the Living Arts as a foundation for sheltering at home, and thoughts regarding Screen Time.

Thus, rather than offering a rather long essay, the content is divided into separate, but somewhat intertwined, segments: Finding Freedom, Meeting Fear, Supporting Children’s Innate Developmental Needs During This Time, Screen Time and Mattering. Thank you for your interest in reading however much calls to you. I’m sending you a loving embrace as you navigate this amazing time we are travelling together.