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The Gathering

A Celebration of Tao and Defiant Women Everywhere

November 2007



Dear Tao and defiant women,

Driving to my son, David, and daughter-in-law, Jessica's, house yesterday my mind was preoccupied with thoughts of this newsletter. I had several ideas about topics to write about in this space, but none really piqued my interest. And, if I am not excited about a subject, how can I possibly expect you to be?

Traffic was not on my side and I found that my arrival was going to be delayed. That caused a bit of stress for, not only would David and Jessica be there, but my brother, Norm, was driving down from Massachusetts. We were gathering so Norm could meet David and Jessica's four-month-old son, Benjamin.

Not only would I now miss precious moments of being with them all but, because of my delay, they were all going to starve. It was my assignment to stop at Trader Joe's on the way and pick up bread, tomatoes, cheese and turkey for lunch. Now they would be hungry. Starving probably. Begin eating the furniture for much-needed sustenance until I got there.

Of course the rational side of me recognized they would probably not starve to death. And, as that rational side of me came to its senses, it also brought me the topic I want write about this month. It has nothing to do with starving to death and everything to do with wasting time agonizing over things that might (but probably won't) happen in the future.

Recently a friend told me the story of a woman who was hiking alone in the desert. As this hiker was walking along she found herself confronting a snake lying on the path in front of her. Terrified, the woman began to visualize the snake rearing up and biting her; the pain of the bite; the venom coursing through her blood stream; knowing there was no one nearby to help; and her eventual demise due to the snake bite.

And then, forcing herself to take another look at the snake - assuming it would be the last thing she ever laid her eyes upon - the hiker realized the "snake" was merely a stick.

That, dear Tao and defiant women friends, is what I want to share with you. Just as the hiker would surely not expire because of the bite from that "snake", my family was not going to starve if I arrived a bit late with the food for lunch. We spend far too much time and energy agonizing over the future, envisioning tragic events that will most likely never occur.

The next time my mind begins to obsess over some imagined, negative future scenario I shall remember the lesson of the hiker and the "stick-snake" and I shall not waste unnecessary energy bemoaning what probably won't ever happen. I shall, instead, remember these four important and powerful words:

It's usually a stick!

This month's Gathering also features:

- The Wisdom of the month
- Wow!
- A listing of my November travels – I would so love to meet you when I'm in your part of the world
- A few final words

Spread the word – please remember to forward this issue of THE GATHERING to your friends!

NOVEMBER'S WISDOM OF THE MONTH

The pessimist may be right in the long run,
but the optimist has a better time during the trip.



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Wow!!!!!!

As of mid-November, Borders Books will feature

TAO OF THE DEFIANT WOMAN

in the front of the store - nation-wide - for a special holiday promotion.



tj

I am, to say the least, very excited!

NOVEMBER TRAVELS

Monday, November 12 8:00pm
ANN'S PLACE, THE HOME OF I CAN
Old Ridgebury Road, Danbury

Thursday, November 15 1:00 - 1:50
CONNECTICUT WRITER'S CONFERENCE
I'll be giving a reading/talk
Norwalk Community College Norwalk, CT
188 Richard's Ave. Norwalk, CT

Thursday, November 22
I'll be at the Thanksgiving table with Joe and our children
remembering all the good things and people that are in my life and being very thankful!

Keep checking the [Travels Around the Country](#) page of this website for current updates.

A FEW FINAL WORDS

I want to take these few final lines to wish you, your family and all those you hold dear a very wonderful and uplifting Thanksgiving.

CJ

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