

James: Okay, so we're doing another David's Desk audio companion.

David: That's exactly right.

James: Welcome, David.

David: Thank you, my friend. It's a pleasure to be doing this again. This month, I wanted to explore the idea behind world work and subtle activism.

James: I did prepare a little bit—I went back to your 2008 *World Work* book, which was based on your 2003 class, and there were a couple of things that really struck me at the very, very beginning. It has to do with the exploration of change, because for me, right now, we're in a huge space of change—like Inner Change, Individual life Change, and what you call Change in the World, which is the world work. I love the little statement you made: “World work is the flow of compassion and a restorative, balancing resource from me to my world.” It's like I have compassion and respect—that's how I would interpret that—for myself, my life, and my world. How does that land with your sense of world work?

David: Yeah, that lands pretty well—after all, I said it! [*laughs*]

James: There is a good reason why it still holds true today. It's like a good wine. I guess, eh?

David: Yes! No, seriously, I feel that's right. What I want to talk about is why we do world work and just exactly what does that mean. I don't want to, of course, get into a long, esoteric description—I mean, this isn't a class. But I do think it's worthwhile reflecting a bit on just what the concept means and why it works because I know that if a person is deeply steeped in the materialistic viewpoints of our age, it can seem like spiritual bypass—I'm not really doing anything, I'm just sort of pretending that I'm having an effect.

James: Yeah, I get that.

David: Yeah. And I think it's very important to stress right at the outset that world work comprises both an inner or subtle side and an outer side, and they need to complement each other because that's the nature of the world—the world as a wholeness is both a subtle and a physical manifestation. But if we think we can make changes in the world or help in world situations only by doing inner work—subtle activism—then we're mistaken; we really do need to do whatever we're called to do, or whatever is at hand or whatever we feel inspired to do at a physical level to help.

At the same time, there are many people who are in a situation where they're not able to contribute that much physically, if only because the opportunity may not be there, or there may be other factors—physical, financial, social, or what have you. It's important that a person not feel powerless or feel disconnected because they think it's okay for a doctor who's part of Doctors Without Borders to be out there serving, or somebody in the Peace Corps, or somebody in the government, but what can I do? I'm just here sitting in my apartment or my suburban house or wherever.

It's important that we recognize that we are part of the wholeness of the planet, and our contribution is always needed, it's always called for. The most fundamental act in world work is to touch into that part of ourselves that says “I care” because that has to be the motivation—one of caring. I care what happens in my world, I care what happens to these people, I care for this idea to take hold and become part of our way of being. Something in me feels that caring, and that allows me to touch into my reservoirs of passion and love and intentionality, all of which are important.

But then I may have to confront what I think of as the warrior images that are so prevalent in various metaphysical circles—I'll be a “Warrior of Light,” or I'll be a “Champion of Light,” I'm a “Light Worker,”—what have you. In a subtle way, those images all speak to a sense of power. Not just being powerful, but the power to make things happen, the power to impose. I feel world work has to rest on this foundation of

caring, not on a foundation of the imposition of my will because I think I know what's best for a given situation. In many cases, I may not. I don't have the insight or the information or the wisdom to give me a sense of what the best outcome may be, if you have any.

James: Yeah, and I feel that coming from a place of caring is actually far more powerful for me than coming from a place of warrior where I'm entering the fight. In caring, if it is wholeness that I'm working with and I am part of the wholeness, if I care for myself, and if I care for my cat, or my dog, or my plants, if I care for the place I live in and the things around me that are man-made or from nature—that adds caring, it adds that wholeness and connection to the world, and that, to me, is world work, and you can do that anywhere in any moment—with a smile, with a touch, with just a loving glance.

David: Yes, that's exactly right. I think one of the attributes of caring is that it carries with it a respect for the other—I care for you and your sovereignty, I care for you and your uniqueness or the uniqueness of the situation or that landscape or that area of the world. That caring makes me open to seeing what actually is needed here. It may not be what I think is needed. What I would want to bring into the situation, energetically, is a sense of a loving vitality that holds the space open for the highest good, for the best outcome for all concerned.

I've been thinking about this in relationship to Incarnational Spirituality. I think about the difference between I.S. and many of the other occult esoteric traditions which have fairly well-defined and developed systems for dealing with negative energies for the healing or the banishing or the transmutation of negative energies. But they require that the individual goes through some process of training, and it's not something that you could leap into immediately.

Whereas what we're looking at in Incarnational Spirituality is how to enable the individual to tap those spiritual resources which are there naturally? What is an organic process to touch into our sacredness, to our holiness, and to our innate sense of caring and love without necessarily going through a lot of occult training to do so, or mental

training or, or even emotional training. I was thinking about this and one of my subtle colleagues said, think about a bucket brigade. If you have a fire in a neighborhood you may need all the neighbors to come out and form a bucket brigade to help put it out and you can't rely only on the trained firemen. In a sense, that's what we are in doing world work. We may not be trained occultists or trained workers with subtle energy, but we're all able to carry a bucket and we're all able to carry a sense of love and of caring and of Light.

My sense is that, as you mentioned, there's so much change in the world and so much fear and anxiety and conflict arising because of that, that we're like people in a neighborhood where a lot of houses are on fire and there just isn't the time and there isn't the space to wait for trained firemen to come. We really need to be all picking up our buckets and carrying them and forming a bucket brigade to put out the fire.

But at the same time, we have to be able to differentiate between water and gasoline. This is why in the training that we have in subtle activism/world work, we ask people to stand in the quality they want to give and to hold this calmness and to hold an emotional balance. In fact, if you're not able to do that, then you don't want to do this kind of inner work, at least not at that moment. Because if I turn my attention as a world working into some situation in the world around which I feel strong emotion of anger or duality—I favor one side over the other and I have this sense of working against the opposition, of the Light Worker against the forces of the dark or of evil and so on—that's like pouring gasoline on the situation; I'm bringing my emotional conflicts into the situation, and that's not the energy that I want to bring.

James: No, it really does. That's a beautiful image of a bucket brigade. It reminds me of the story of the hummingbird in the forest fire, where you do what you can do, and you do it from a place of love and compassion. You don't do it from a place of fear and anger. If people are being called right now to join their neighborhood bucket brigade and that's world work, then we can all do that if we're in a place within ourselves where we're coming from that natural tapping into that well

within us and sacredness of love and compassion and caring for our neighbors.

David: Exactly, James, I totally agree. The reason that world work works is that—as modern science is increasingly demonstrating or just other disciplines like ecology, for example—we are part of a highly interconnected, interrelated world. We don't have to say we're all one, but we can say we're all deeply connected.

In a sense, there's no part of the world where my influence does not reach, that I'm not part of. Increasingly, we see that demonstrated digitally and electronically as a kind of metaphor for this interconnectedness. I mean, here you are—you're up in Canada, and I'm down here near Seattle, and we're having this wonderful discussion and we could just as easily be sitting in the same room together. So there's not the separation between you and me that there would have been 50 years ago or 100 years ago. If we turn our attention into the subtle dimension, the subtle side of life, then it's like we're all living in this virtual digital space where we all have connections.

If I see something on on the news, or I hear of something somewhere in the world where there's a crisis going on, there's part of me that's there. Just the very act of seeing it and hearing about it and registering it in my consciousness—that makes me part of it. And so how am I part of it? Am I part of it with anger? Am I part of it with fear? Am I part of it with anxiety? Am I part of it with “well, I don't care what happens to those people, they're different from me”—in what way am I part of it?

If I can receive that information and I take it in to a loving place, to a calm place, to a caring place, then I'm pouring my little bucket of water onto that fire. It may seem to me that my bucket is kind of tiny—it might even seem more like a thimble brigade than a full bucket brigade.

But the way the subtle world works is akin to matching funds. If I give \$1 and somebody else says I'll match that—I'll match \$5 for your \$1. That's exactly how the subtle world works with our allies and partners—that my little bucket of caring and love and transformation of those

images I've seen from the news is matched by a much more powerful and knowing and wise response which would not be there if my little bucket hadn't triggered it.

You see, that's the important thing. We think these greater beings are all powerful, they can send their blessings, they don't need me. But that's not true because we're all so interconnected with them as well as with what's on our level of existence. They are heightened in their ability to respond, they are empowered by our responses. So even the smallest gesture of love and caring that we give out to our world is matched by a powerful gesture from the subtle realms,

James: It's very uplifting and hopeful, this discussion that we have the power to empower in the world work. We have that call within us to respond to that call, and to create change, to be co-creative in the change that's happening that we're called to be part of. That power to empower through the subtle work and through our own physical actions, in our subtle actions—that puts us in a very unique place in the world; that with our little thimbles we can actually make a difference.

David: That's exactly so. The other thing that's important to think about here and is kind of touched on in quantum theory is that the act of observation collapses potential into reality. You could have many, many potentials that exist simultaneously, but the act of observation causes them collapse and one of the potentials to become manifest. A lot of the world is like that, in that, viewed from the subtle levels—even from the physical level—situations are open to many possible outcomes, and it may not take much to tip the odds towards one outcome or another. My thimble-full of living water, of loving water may be just the thing that tips the odds and allows one outcome to come to pass rather than another.

It's those juggling of probabilities that is so interesting and so much a part of our world. We think, well, everything's kind of a “fait accompli,”—we've got all these causes, we've got the effects and everything moves in a kind of linear way. But in fact, it doesn't. The most amazing transformations and changes can happen when the

scales of probability are tipped in one way and not another. That's what world work can do. That's what our energy moving in a certain way, in a certain direction, in a certain place, and in a certain set of relationships—it can shift those probabilities.

James: It really does make me excited about stepping into world work from where I am right now and what I can draw upon from within me to add my thimble and tip the scale in a particular way.

David: Exactly. So James, you are part of a team that's putting together a really exciting program on subtle activism and on creating change. I'm wondering if there's anything you'd like to say about that—we can bring that into our discussion a little bit.

James: It really does invite individuals who are experiencing a sense of wanting to do more, and provides a year-long training program to help them hone their skills—both their inner skills of listening within and their presence, and being as clear as they can be to ensure that their thimble, their bucket—we're hoping by the end of the year that you would move from a thimble to a bucket.

David: Yes.

James: But your bucket is with clear intention. It is with love and compassion, and it is what's being called for in this situation. Individuals will learn how to develop those skills within themselves so that they can have a greater knowing of what's being called for. It will also teach the skills of reading the environments that what is being called for—not just from what you have the sense of, but what are the other things. We expand the opportunities to actually make a difference. And, again, we work within the the the teachings and the exercises and practices of Incarnational Spirituality. So it's very much in alignment with what we're talking about. We actually are talking about it as world work.

Individuals are invited to come to the lorian.org website, where under the classes, it's called ChaNGE, it's actually called ChaNGE. So thank

you for asking about that. Again, it's a year-long training program, and we will work with you—especially if you have a grounding in some of the foundational practices of Incarnational Spirituality—to deepen into the world work and to engage in a way that you may find more fulfilling than where you are right now.

David: Well, certainly more fulfilling than just sitting in front of the news and getting agitated.

James: Definitely.

David: Thank you, James, I felt it important to bring that into our discussion—not so much because now it's time for a paid commercial from our sponsor, but more because I think there really is a growing need to expand the bucket brigade, there is a growing need for more and more people to take up the challenge of doing world work.

It can be very, very simple to do because it's not like it's something that requires a lot of time and a lot of space. But what it does require is an open heart and a loving heart. In the process of doing world work, it's been my experience that we are ourselves expanded and transformed. We can't do world work effectively without being blessed and changed by it ourselves, because we deepen into becoming the world and that's a powerful spiritual experience, one to have.

James: That's one of the words we're using to describe the program itself, the training program—it's transformational. You're going to be a different person coming out after the year than you were coming into it. You can't do this work, as you say, without growing and changing yourself. You become more of who you were meant to be, more in touch with the inner aspects of your generative self and the mystery that you are in the unique expression of that mystery.

It really is an immersion, it's experiential, it's transformational. We're looking to expand the bucket brigade. Because at the end of the day and the end of the program, we would like individuals to be able to go off and do this work, not rely on us to tell them to do this work. So you'll

have all the tools and the practices and the experiences and hopefully the confidence as well that you can step up and join with others or with yourself, with your allies and make a difference in this way. It's time.

David: Yeah, it is time.

James: Well, thanks, David. This was very delightful and, like I said, it's a very uplifting conversation given what's happening in the world right now—that we can work with the world, within the world and make a difference in the world as well.

David: I agree. And I love that we're adding this audio aspect to David's Desk. It's exciting and it might actually give me some ideas about what to write about.

James: That's great. Okay, till next month, David. Thank you very much.

David: Ok, my friend, take care.

James: Bye for now.

David: Bye bye