

Tuning into my internal resonance frequency ...

In retrospect, I believe one of the greatest gifts my parents gave me (and one of their most significant parenting decisions) occurred when I was about 16. I had chosen several years earlier to attend a different church from my family - one that had a more active youth group. At the time, my parents (recognizing the value of a good peer group) supported me. Now, at 16, here I was making another choice - this time one they considered at best unnecessary, and perhaps theologically 'wrong'.

Although I had been baptized by 'sprinkling' as an infant, at this point in my faith journey, I had decided to be baptized by immersion. At 16, this was a crucial step. Having listened and taken in information, I was now making choices and following my own path - tuning into what was happening inside of me. In a very significant arena, I was learning to distinguish what 'resonated' within me - 'practicing' listening to the still, small voice inside of me, clarifying what I believed (even if it was different from my parents).

The wonderful gift they gave me at that time, was supporting me in that choice. Even though they made it clear that for them, this seemed unnecessary, my mother made me a new dress, and my family attended the ceremony and celebrated with me. In my teenaged myopia, it seemed to me they were 'merely' doing the obviously 'right' thing! From my vantage point more than 30 years later (and myself a parent of grown children!) I recognize how crucial this moment was.

I believe this was the moment in which an enormously significant belief system was firmly 'installed' in my psyche. The understanding that in the area of faith, I had the wisdom to discern, and make choices of my own. As I have gained knowledge, and life experience (and presumably greater wisdom!), I have had the freedom to continue to change, to adapt what I believe, and some things I have chosen to UN-believe! While there are for me a few foundational truths, my faith journey has not been contained or constrained in a 'box'.

I recognize that not everyone has had the fortunate experience I did. However I DO believe that we ALL have, and at some level recognize that sense of whole body resonance. We read a book, and the words 'feel' like they could have been ours. We hear someone speak, and something inside us says 'yes! - that's it!'. We see a movie and our hearts are warmed - something just 'feels right'. We 'hear ourselves' saying something, and think WOW!, I didn't know I thought that, but that's so true! We observe or are part of an experience and something 'touches us' - we simply 'know' we are meant to be there, and that this is 'right'.

When addressing the issue of making personal choices - of deciding what we believe - I remember some words of Robert Benson from his book *Between the Dreaming and the*

Coming True. He says "I ... am ... the only person on earth who has any clue at all as to what was whispered into me in the depths of my mother's womb. Everyone else is just guessing, and their guesses are a lot less well informed than mine."¹

This is the voice, the frequency, that we must gently practice listening to, if we want to live truly authentic and autonomous lives.

¹ Between the Dreaming and the Coming True - Robert Benson. Published by HarperCollins 1996