

Dorothy Maclean: The Woman Who Heard the Angels Sing

January 2, 2018 By Thomas Miller



January 7 marks the 98th birthday of Dorothy Maclean, one of the Findhorn community's founders. Few people have left a more remarkable legacy on the spiritual landscape of our time than Dorothy. Most famous for her work with the consciousness of plants, her spiritual explorations ranged far deeper and wider.

God is within – the foundation of a new age

Dorothy's spiritual foundation and the source of all of her later work was in her realisation that God is within. In her early days when she was trying to find the courage to end a loveless marriage, she had a profound experience that God or universal awareness was within her – that it was, in fact, her inner self.

Her experiences of knowing herself to be an aspect of universal awareness was part of a much larger spiritual awakening that characterised the dawn of new age spirituality. 'New age' has now become associated with self-help gurus and personal improvement books. However, for Dorothy (one of the people who helped define it) it was the coming of a new way of being. She wrote that the foundation for the future lies in realising that consciousness, not physical matter, is the one reality from which everything else flows.



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Explorations of consciousness

As she explored this realisation through meditation, she began to encounter beings from different realms of consciousness in the shared psychic space. She recorded her impressions of these encounters, always aware that her own personality and perceptions influenced how they came through.

In the beginning, borrowing a slightly Biblical flavour, the inner voice addressed her as 'my child' and spoke in first person, as if it were separate from her. These limitations of language

notwithstanding, her writings (presented here in italics) convey some of the most transformative spiritual insights of modern times. At times they were incomprehensible to her, as when her inner guidance suggested she begin to contact the consciousness of nature:

“Yes, you can cooperate in the garden. Begin by thinking about the nature spirits, the higher overlighting nature spirits, and tune into them. That will be so unusual as to draw their interest here... In the new world to come these realms will be open to humans – or I should say, humans will be open to them.”

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Discovering the living universe

Dorothy Maclean’s experience of the universal consciousness led her to explore a vast multiplicity of its beings and forms. Through meditation, she heard:

“There is no such thing as dead matter. Everything is living and everything has a place in my one life and that life force is more than what you call magnetism. It is an influence consciously wielded on the higher levels. You are simply surrounded by life; you are a life force moving among other life forces. As you recognise this and open up to them, you draw near to them and become one with them, and work them in my purposes.”

The devas

Probably her most well-known contact with non-physical consciousness was with devas. She chose this term to describe the beings that oversee the development of forms, for instance of plants.

Dorothy wrote that whereas humans mostly identify with their personalities, devas had a difference sense of self. Humans, she wrote, usually see their limited selves, needing contrasts like love and hate to make sense of their experiences. Devas, by contrast, live in the consciousness of their oneness with the divine consciousness. Their lives are expressions of joy, without the contrast or sense of separation that makes human life spicy and often difficult.

Yet the devas asserted that humans are capable of living with as much power and authority as themselves. In the words of the pea deva, Dorothy’s first recorded contact with a plant deva:



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“What I would tell you is that as we [the devas] forge ahead, never deviating from our course for one moment’s thought, feeling or action, so could you. Humans generally don’t seem to know where they are going, or why. If they did, what powerhouses they would be! If they were on a straight course, how we could cooperate with them!”

A different group of devas expressed the same idea more pointedly:

Why go around like zombies, following this or that external guide when all the time your only guide is within you?

| “There is no sitting still in my life, but a continual reaching forward



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The future of humans

Dorothy Maclean’s life became a process of building the new human consciousness. She believed that humans have unique potential. Our free will gives us an ability to shape the world in ways that other beings cannot. Referring to the role of our free will, she called humans the ‘growing tip of Earth.’

She wrote that she sought to help shape a future where humans live up to their true potential and are active agents in co-creating the life of Earth. Instead of separation from

Nature and the divine, she envisioned an all-pervading involvement and participation. Instead of humans exploiting and using Nature, she envisioned future humanity using its unique abilities to bless and enhance all life.

She sought to embody this co-creative consciousness in even the mundane details of her life, though she (like many others) found it challenging to truly inhabit this new consciousness. One of her encounters with a mole illustrates the difficulties of learning to establish her identity in consciousness first. The mole in question began digging up her garden so she meditated, asking the mole to leave the garden alone, and dug a mole fence.

When despite her efforts, the mole reappeared she heard in meditation:

“... the mole fence as constructed is right... but it is the mortar, your belief, which crumbles. Part of you expects it not to hold up, and therefore of course it doesn’t hold up.”

After initial unsuccessful efforts to mend her thinking, she heard

“... How often have you been told that there is no sitting still in my life, but a continual reaching forward? This is being brought home to you constantly with the mole, until at times you wish you could shoot the thing, or you think it is all a pack of nonsense, or unfair. But I tell you to go on and on. Let moles be a challenge instead of a burden. “

She rose to the challenge and eventually communicated clearly to the mole convincingly, so that it left her garden. In future years, after the Findhorn community that she had nurtured grew, she didn't give advice on moles to other gardeners. She said that it was more important for them to learn on their own. The real goal was not to learn tricks of communication, but to learn to stand in our full human identity and free will.

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Joy

Decades ago she received the following angelic advice:

“Throw all conditioning overboard and experience from within. Let the joy roll out and unite you with all life. It is limitless, it sweeps all before it, carrying with it the flotsam and jetsam of all the kingdoms and lifting them up to the One.”

Her 98 years have included endless disruptions and the continuous tearing down of old, familiar concepts and patterns. Yet she has persistently moved through these challenges, finding ways to get past the human tendency to cling to the known. Trusting that everything is one universal consciousness expressed in different types of forms, she remains both adventurous and at home with herself.

And as any local community member who has seen her radiant smile can tell you, she is still joyfully exploring.

Learn More

Dorothy's experiences are recounted in her books, which include **To Hear the Angels Sing, Memoirs of An Ordinary Mystic** and **Come Closer**.

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