

Asking myself and then Spirit

by **Connie Brisson**

I was curiously (and maybe a bit giddily) walking around the famous Salt Spring Island's Market one Saturday afternoon in late August when I saw it.

There it was... this amazing painting of vibrant horses. Yet one lone golden horse reflected my soul back to me like a mirror. I thought: "That horse is me."

Although I've always felt a connection to horses, I've only ever ridden one a few times in my life. But each time I experienced a rare freedom/power inside of me that was utterly blissful, but unusual.

Unusual, because from the time I was little, I've consciously (and unconsciously) given away my power/ freedom to others for a number of reasons... often because I thought that someone else knew 'better' or more than me.

It's always been my first instinct to ask God for advice when I didn't know what to do, but He didn't seem to ever hear and/or answer me. So I spent most of my life looking to other people to act as a medium between myself and God - to tell me what God thinks and what is right for me. And in doing so, I often ended up giving away a lot of my power (and self) to get guidance from others and then follow it/them.

It wasn't until 2000, the birth of my daughter and the death of my brother, that my soul awakened. One of the things that changed me the most was widening my perception of what God is (from the one I learned in catechism) to the energetic vastness that I now associate more with the word 'Spirit' or 'Universe'.

After much healing and learning over these last years, my growing self-awareness has opened me to see that God/Spirit does communicate directly to me. This has been *absolutely* life changing for me. Now I ask Spirit to directly send me signs/messages when I need guidance.

There are no burning bushes. Instead Spirit talks to me in the most subtle ways - through words I hear or read in songs and books; themes and stories in dreams or movies; my own vivid memories; powerful images in everyday life and artwork; ideas and daydreams that 'somehow' pop into my mind; or animals, butterflies and other parts of nature.

In fact, today Spirit again left me a white feather. This is a sign I often get as a confirmation that I'm on the right

path with a particular thing in my life - whatever I'm thinking about at the EXACT moment I see the feather. For me these feathers (especially white ones) are like a precious gift; it means Spirit is listening and affirming me.

Whenever a painting stops me in my tracks, I know it's a message from Spirit to me. When I looked at this painting I saw this golden horse, amongst all the chaos and instinct to follow the flurry of the herd, stopping to ask: "What do I think? Do I want to follow the others? Which way is right for me?"

Once upon a time, being part of the crowd was okay with me; it was like a safety net. But here I am, many years later saying that I want (and in some ways already am) that independent, golden horse. I want to find my own path.

I don't want anyone telling me who to be, or how to be, or how to think, anymore. I want to be free to be completely me. I want to be as independent and wild (as this golden horse) to decide each part of my life, whether that is what is right for me or what God/Spirit is.



A Wild Party © Julia Lucich

The artist, Julia Lucich, was at her Salt Spring Island booth as I was looking at the painting, contemplating whether I should buy it. She called it: 'A Wild Party' which seemed quite different from the message I was getting from the painting. Then I thought to ask God/Spirit for a sign (if the painting was right for me or not). Spontaneously I turned to her and asked: "What were you thinking when you painted this piece?"

She contemplated me for a moment (I don't think she gets asked that question very often) and then said: "I thought that we all need to stop and think for ourselves and not just follow the crowd or the popular choice." "Yes," I said. "That's what I see too."

If I could go back in time and give just one bit of advice to my younger self, it would be to ALWAYS ask myself: 'What do I think? What is right for me?' (and follow my inner guidance, not giving my power away to anyone else, no matter how 'brilliant' or 'Godly' they are) and then ask Spirit for a confirmation to whatever intuitive answer I receive.

This one practice has changed my life. This painting (that now hangs in my office) reminds me to live it.

Connie