



Orindawoods Tennis News

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"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it" – Celia, As You Like It, Act II, Scene IV

Keith's Message

The Future (Is Now)

As I sit here this morning to write the newsletter, which will not come out for another week, it is hard to know, impossible to know, what will be different, relevant, important to say, in a week's time. The world changes daily.

As you know, I have been writing emails to you over the past couple weeks, many times stressing to stay in the moment, and the challenges, and dangers of trying to predict the future. Or getting lost in fears about the future, that seem real, but are just our imaginations. And of course, the problems with getting lost in the past, as well.

Now I'm tasked with writing something relevant for when you receive this, and yet so many things may change by then. The length of shelter in place, people's health, the club's plans going forward, the state of the world, the health of friends, so many things...

So, the "present," in a week's time, will be different than the present this morning, as I write this, but it will still be the present. And many things we know, will be true.

*Though the Earth is touched by everything alive
It never stops turning around the fire at its center,
And thought we are touched by the stories of strangers
And the far-off songs of birds lost in the wind
We find our way by following the spirit's voice at our center
Too much is lost in waiting for someone else
To tell us what moves us is real
— Mark Nepo*

I thought in this newsletter, I would share some of the ideas I have been sharing with you over the past few weeks. Because I think the essence of it, will still be true. Many things offered here, that have been true throughout the ages, and stood the test of time. And I hope bring peace, comfort, joy and hope as we live through this crisis.

There is lots of tragedy, sadness, concern, worry in the world today. It is easy to get thrown way off balance in the negative direction. So easy. But there are blessings too. And to fight this virus, at every level, requires a strategy that includes every level.

So, while we take care of the physical part of the pandemic by physical distancing, wearing masks, staying close to home, we need to be on the offensive in the mental, emotional and spiritual realms, addressing the needs of the whole person, and not just that of the body. It is through being strong at every level, that we best resist the troubles of these times.

Individually, our collective spirits, our community, can pull together and put much needed positive energy back out into the world, supporting each other, our loved ones, our friends, our community, our nation, the world.

As a history major, a reader of the Bible and other great spiritual works, I know there have always been plagues, famines, death, disease ... what is so shocking to me, is that it can still happen today.

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Club Events on Hold

As of this writing, all Club events are on hold, but not canceled. When it is safe to do so, we will revise the schedule and get back to our beloved Club. We are still hoping to have Twilights, and some form of Monday Team Tennis, plus a Grand reopening party, Just Because... but the dates will be determined later.

What a joyous day that will be!!!

E-mails & Newsletters

You can find all the past club e-mails and newsletters on the club website. Both can be found on "information" menu. Third and fourth items down.

Board Meeting

The Orindawoods Board will meet on April 28th to discuss all things Orindawoods, including the Tennis Club. Dues and other topics will be discussed.

The meeting will probably be done via ZOOM, and is for residents of OW, management and staff only.

Junior Tennis Program

The Spring Junior program was canceled due to Shelter in Place. We have plans for the summer and will start up when it is safe to do so, which is still to be determined. Patric and Keith have discussed and planned for several scenarios, but it is still too early to announce. Stay tuned.

USTA Closes Tennis

Those of you who play league tennis and get USTA e-mails, all events are off through May 31st, and USTA recommends that we should not play. The National Tennis Center is being used as a hospital and support center.

Quote of the Month:

"We are not STUCK at home, we are SAFE at home." – Craig O'Shannessy

Somehow, I thought we were beyond this. Immune. That science, technology, would save us. And it may still, we don't know. But the virus is here now. Most of us were much more focused on man hurting man disasters (most of us grew up in the cold war after all) than on a plague.

In playing tennis over the years, I have learned the importance of only thinking thoughts that can help you (Allen Fox's great line). It doesn't have to be logical, or make sense, it just needs to help. An idea that brings you to a positive place, where you can play your best. An idea in your long-term best interests. And to control the thoughts that hurt you, that bring you down. This is mental toughness. Emotional strength. Spiritual fortitude. Our beliefs are at the base of this. We need to tend to our beliefs. There is the Native American story that goes like this:

An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life. "A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy. "It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil – he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego"

He continued, "The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside of you – and inside every other person, too."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

I've really tried to limit my negative news input to "need to know." I know "need to know," varies from person to person, but trust your inner voice to tell you what is healthy for you. And I have limited my personal contact to mostly positive energy, while still supporting those that are in need, and under stress. We can only be good for others, if we are good to ourselves. Strong for others, if we are strong ourselves. And that goes for our whole community.

Some people don't behave particularly well in crisis. And we all have tough times. While "bullies are scared people in scary bodies" (Michelle Obama), strong people are strong at the core, at the heart. And act from integrity of their beliefs. "The last temptation is the greatest treason, to do the right thing for the wrong reason" – TS Elliot.

All that said, I wanted to include here, some ideas, thoughts, great wisdoms from the past and present, that help me to stay in my golden bubble of light, in the here and now, being the best, I can be.

I know I'm not always there, some days I'm not often there, but my job is to return to that place as best I can. Because, strange and tragic as these times can be, this is life too. Our life, our shared experience. And to waste any of our precious life, in worry, depression, fear, anger, hatred, seems like a double tragedy to me.

"I travel everywhere looking, looking breathlessly, for paths with a heart." – Carlos Castaneda.

Blessings to you all. -- Keith

Orindawoods, A Community

First of all, we are a community. A community that started with tennis but is much more. The friendships many of us have developed at the Club are for a lifetime. They bring joy to our lives, and to our days. It is difficult that the best thing we can do for each other, the most loving thing we can do, is to stay apart, but that is what is required now. The Club has followed the government directives to do its part in physical distancing.

But that does not mean that we are not friends, or that we cannot continue to connect in safe ways, and that we can stay together as a group, to the best of our ability, so that when that day comes, when we can reunite on the court, looking over a net, or at a tennis event, we will all be there once again.

As I have mentioned in e-mails, Orindawoods is also a residential community. A place to live, and the Tennis Club is own by 258 families, just like ours. It is not owned by a corporation, and it is a non-profit. Which means that in dues, we only ask for what it takes to run the Club. That means that there is not a lot of money saved up (from profits) to keep Orindawoods going through these tough times. These Orindawoods families really appreciate your support in this time to keep our beloved Club going.

The Board will be looking at all these issues at the April meeting. Club has always run quite lean, so there may be some places to save a little, but there are bills to play, and staff to support, contracts to honor, and commitments to be met. The loss of lesson income is tough on the staff. They still have their salaries. Overall, in our larger society, it is important to keep the economy going as best we can, so that the things we treasure will still be there on the other side of this. Orindawoods has done its part here too. I'll have an update after the Board meeting as to how to best proceed.

Resources to Help

Here are a couple of the resources that I used to help me deal with troubling thoughts, ideas, events, and fears. I hope you find them useful too, if you find yourself in a tough spot, or thought, in need of some tools to help.

Byron Katie has a method call **The Work**. It is described in several of her books but look at *Loving What Is* if you want more detail. It is a powerful exercise that involves four questions and a turn around that you ask about an idea in your head that is troubling you. 1) Is it true? If the answer is yes, 2) Can you absolutely know that it's true? (there are very few things in life we know are absolutely true) 3) How do you react when you think that thought? 4) Who would you be without the thought? And then turn the thought around (example: "I hate my backhand" becomes "I don't hate

my backhand” or “I love my backhand” or “My backhand loves me”) Does the turnaround seem more true? Which of the new thoughts seems more true? Repeat the work on the next idea, get closer to loving what is.

The Work can really shift you out of some wonky thinking, that sure seems real and true in your place of panic and fear, but really you don't know if it is true, and you realize it probably isn't. It's just the mind on a walkabout. It very effective at getting back on a balanced path.

A second method for dealing with tough beliefs, information, and events is call **RAIN**. I learned RAIN from listening to Tara Brach, the popular meditation teacher and spiritual leader (check out her podcasts if you are interested). RAIN stands for four steps in a process: **Recognize, Allow, Investigate, and Nurture**. First you **Recognize** what happened. Step into the scene, feel it all. Which thoughts create the feelings. **Allow** the thoughts, experience, and accept that pain is here right now while you deepen your attention to it with kindness, curiosity and acceptance. Your higher self. **Investigate**: uncover what is happening, creating more space. Step back. What am I feeling right now? Where do I feel it in my body (stomach, head, heart, back...), what is it? Name the emotion (fear, anxiety, sorrow, dread). Have curiosity about the emotions and the body. Are they constant or changing? What are my beliefs? What is the story in my mind about this situation? What am I assuming? How do I know if this is true? What would it be like to let go of this thought? **Nurture**: a kind, compassionate attention to your inner experience. We all have needs, hurts, this is just part of the human experience. As you see more clearly, see your thoughts in a relaxed way. Place your hands on your heart. Pause and breath for a moment of kindness and self-compassion. Admit this situation is hard; what do I need right now? It's human to feel this way. I'm not alone. What will best serve right here? Breath in and out, saying “here (in breath), now (out breath), here, now, here, now...” Observing the situation from your higher, loving self like this allows you to come back to the present, and away from your fantasies and hurtful thoughts.

I leave you with some wisdom, from many sources, that helps me in all times, not just troubled times. This is a world pandemic, and these are a few of the world's time-tested answers and wisdom. Blessings – Keith

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
Who violently sweep your house
Empty of its furniture,
Still treat each guest honorably,
He may be clearing you out
For some new delight

The dark thought, the shame, the malice
Meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond.
- Rumi

My beloved child, break your heart no longer. Each time you judge yourself, you break your own heart. You stop feeding on the love that is the wellspring of your vitality. The time has come, your time, to live, to celebrate, and see the goodness that you are. Let no one, no thing, no idea or ideal obstruct you. If one comes even in the name of truth, forgive it for it's unknowing. Don't fight, let go, and breathe into the goodness that you are. -- Bapuji

The Beatitudes (Mathew 5:3-12)

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they will be comforted

Blessed are the meek,
For they will inherit the Earth
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness,
For they will be filled,
Blessed are the merciful,
For they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they will be called children of God
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of
righteousness,
For theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven
-- Jesus

What is the difference

Between your experience of Existence
And that of a Saint?
The saint knows
That the spiritual path
Is a sublime chess game with God
And that the Beloved
Has just made such a
Fantastic Move
That the saint is now continually
Tripping over Joy
And bursting out in Laughter
And saying, “I Surrender!”
Whereas, my dear,
I'm afraid you still think
You have a thousand serious moves.
-- Hafiz

Fear is the cheapest room in the house
I would like to see you living in better conditions.
-- Hafiz

Now Is the Time

Now is the time to know that all that you do is sacred.

Now, why not consider a lasting truce with yourself and God?

Now is the time to understand that all your ideas of right and wrong were just a child's training wheels, to be laid aside when you can finally live with veracity and courage. Hafiz is a divine envoy whom the Beloved has written a holy message upon.

My dear, please tell me, why do you still throw sticks at your heart and Him?

What is it in that sweet voice inside that incites you to fear?

Now is the time for the world to know that every thought and action is sacred.

This is the time for you to deeply compute the impossibility that there is anything but Grace.

Now is the season to know that everything we do ... is sacred.

-- Hafiz

Shakespeare Sonnet 29.

When in Disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone bewep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heav'n with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising.
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate
For thy sweet love remembered such wealthy brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

Invictus

Out of the night that covers me
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeoning of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

-- William Ernest Henley

Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

– Reinhold Niebuhr

"It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing because you can only do a little. Do what you can." – Sydney Smith

"Life is the many pieces of that great heart loving itself back together." – Mark Nepo

Tao 38 – Lao Tzu

The Master doesn't try to be powerful
Thus he is truly powerful
The ordinary man keeps reaching for power
Thus he never has enough

The master does nothing,
Yet he leaves nothing undone
The ordinary man is always doing things,
Yet many more are left to be done.

The kind man does something,
Yet something remains undone.
The just man does something,
And leaves many things to be done
The moral man does something,
And when no one responds
He rolls up his sleeves and uses force.

When the Tao is lost, there is goodness
When goodness is lost, there is morality,
When morality is lost, there is ritual.
Ritual is the husk of true faith.
The beginning of chaos.

Therefore the Master concerns himself
With the depths and not the surface
With the fruit and not the flower,
He has no will of his own
He dwells in reality,
And let's go of all illusions.

Not they who soar, but they who plod
Their rugged way, unhelped, to God
Are heroes; they who higher fare,
And, flying, fan the upper air,
Miss all the toil that hugs the sod.
'Tis they whose backs have felt the rod,
Whose feet have pressed the path unshod,
May smile upon defeated care,
Not they who soar.

High up there are no thorns to prod,
Nor boulders lurking 'neath the clod
To turn the keenness of the share,
For flight is ever free and rare;
But heroes they the soil who've trod,
Not they who soar!

-- Paul Laurence Dunbar