



A Quantum Moment

Messages from the Other Realm

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How We Present Ourselves

Creatures, large and small, are furry, elegantly skinned with scales or complex patterns of color or feathered for warmth, adorned with a countenance that is adorably cute or intensely fierce. Man is, for the most part, made without such decoration. Man is essentially bald. Skin is easily marred or discolored, and with age and increasing weight, stretched to its limit or left sagging. Where Man has hair, it thins or sheds altogether. How can we call Man beautiful, especially when our prejudices about what to us is beautiful gets in our way?

Without the benefit of a furry covering, we clothe ourselves to withstand our environment—as well as the scrutiny of others. For millennia, men have draped themselves in certain ways, women in others, to earmark our affinity to one sex or another. We clothe ourselves in a certain way to show that we are either male or female, according to custom. Some use clothing and accessories to signal which gender they belong to, in spite of their genitalia.

It is an awesome dance, dressing ourselves as we want to be; as we want others to see us. So much time and energy is expended in the pursuit of presentation of membership or belonging to a certain group of others. A large part of our economy is devoted to dressing and accessorizing, even the type of car we drive is a kind of outer shell. Why is how we dress ourselves so important? How else can this demonstration of outward identity be easily achieved?

We are constantly changing our identity with our clothes. Fashion comes and goes, to play with our sense of self. A white wig on a man wearing tights in the 1800's was considered masculine, not so today. We wear clothes of a certain type for certain activities beyond their functionality. Our particular spin on workout clothes gives others an idea about us. Our business suit for work or church gives others clues about our personality. We would be uncomfortable if we were confined to one style, one color. We need to demarcate the “what” we are to the world through the clothes we wear, the colors we adorn ourselves with, much like the patterns and colors do in the animal community. But do clothes tell others “who” we are?

What we are is not the same as *who* we are. Clothes are like a uniform, making us identifiable by others. Who we are is constant, the core of us, our soul-likeness, not just in the

current lifetime, but in all lifetimes. You can tell the *who* by looking at a person's eyes. The energy in the eyes does not change from lifetime to lifetime. You look into them and you know the person, rather, the soul behind them, no matter if they're now brown, instead of blue or green.

I think it is fair to say that for most of us, we are obsessed with how we present the “what” we are, as we each day find challenge in the selection of clothing that best suits our mood, our perception of self and desire to present an image to others. We feel differently about ourselves, depending on what we select. We feel beautiful, sexy, intriguing in certain clothes or virile, competent, playful or boyish in others. Each time we make a choice—a specific choice to have a specific effect not only on ourselves but on others. Some who do not have the resources to acquire the clothes they wish to present themselves in may well feel less than they could be. Our society places a psychological label to dressing that keeps us feeling less than or better than we are.

What about those who prefer not to wear clothes at all? Are they more “authentic” in doing so? Presenting themselves without dressing? They do not hide any of their flaws. What makes us want to hide ours? Aside from the need to keep warm or protect us from the sun, what does clothing do for us that we can't do otherwise? Are we endeavoring to be art forms? Or are we endeavoring to be someone else? Perhaps the person in the catalog who has been teased or sexually aroused by the photographer to get the right “look?”

We have only one body per lifetime. It is designed in the Divine to be a certain composite of features like hair color, skin color, height, weight and gender to evoke the kind of experiences we need to mature our soul. What we are given may be troublesome to us as we make our way through that lifetime, but it is what it is, by design. Trying to make it different or using clothes to alter others' perceptions of us may give us different and unintended experiences. How then should we present ourselves to the world if changing ourselves changes our experiences?

First, get in touch with the who you are—your natural attributes, the ones you recognize in yourself as you were a child in this life. That is who you are.

Second, look not at the models in the magazines for what you should look like but find manners of dress and hairstyle that makes you most comfortable “in your skin.”

Third, wear your clothes, your style with pride. You designed you—celebrate the courageous act of coming to this earthly dimension to have experiences of all types, being YOU.

And last but not least, understand and empathize with others who make a show of themselves with their clothes and their demeanor. They are presenting themselves as they wish to be seen, even though it may not match with your sense of who they are. They are, like us, doing the best they can to tread this treacherous schoolyard called Planet Earth. I say this, reminding myself of these truths, as I struggle through the latest pile of catalogs of winter apparel.

