

The Garden of our Hearts by Raven Murphy



*Lean close to
the land and
touch the soil
for you will feel
the pulse of life
in the earth's
heart.*

Spring - a time of birthing, celebration and transformation. A time when silent seeds awaken from the earth's womb and bud's rise out of the winter ground, laughing like children set free from school. Sounds beautiful, doesn't it? For many of us transitioning from winter to spring is not always a pleasant experience. The world can seem drab and weary without the snow to cover the brown mush with a clean layer of white and can often times feel dirty, dull and downright depressing.

Every late winter I find myself longing for the freshness that spring rains bring, I miss the smell of earth and the sound of thunder. But, try as I might I can barely recognize any beauty in what I see around me just before spring officially arrives. I have come to realize however that the dreary appearance of the land is often times a metaphor to what happens inside me before my own inner awakenings occur. It is an awkward in-between time when I am no longer embraced in the silence of winter yet not emerging with the natural re-birthing of the land. I feel like something wonderful is about to take place outside my window yet I don't feel inspired to witness it. *My heart is just not in it.*

When my inner world experiences these difficult times the temptation to fight and resist change can easily overwhelm me. I'd rather draw the bedroom shades and stay in bed with the covers over my head for an extended period of time. I find myself conflicted as I feel my inner wisdom informing me that an enormous acceptance of the process is asked of me before the greening of my heart can begin. In the spirit of the ancestors before me, I do my best to surrender to the land for guidance.

I begin by taking a walk through an abandoned wooded area. With great trepidation I trudge through large pot holes of muddy water being careful not to slip on the last layers of ice beneath the wet. I become increasingly aware how each step I take holds a clue towards feeling happy, whole and connected again. Broken tree limbs that have succumbed to the winds and weighted snow of winter block my path as I am forced to veer around them slipping on tattered leaves. I find myself questioning with great irritation how this walk will lead to any peace of mind.

In my state of struggle trying to find relief and meaning I stop at a large rock that begs me to climb upon it. As I do a gentle warm breeze arrives as if summoned by my spirit caressing my hair inviting me to breathe deeply and fill my lungs with life. As I do, memories of my mother come to me as I recall the times she would stroke my hair with a loving hand and place her kiss on my forehead. She had a powerful way of instantly relieving my stress or illness. *My heart opens.* I take in the earthy aroma of wet cedar trees and find myself letting go of the tension stored in my shoulders and neck. I relax and *connect with my body.* My thoughts bring realization of the parallels between this journey into the woods and my life. As I strategically avoided broken tree limbs and greasy leaves, I was being shown that through trust and self-love my ability to navigate through the obstacles in my life could be overcome. *My Spirit returns.*

Like the sun that penetrates the frozen forest floor I receive her gift of warmth, beauty and growth. I am restored by the awesome metaphoric teachings that Nature has offered me. Slowly, patiently and gently, *I am ready to emerge.*



I leave you with this...

If you want to know the wisdom of the land, listen to her poetry. Listen for each season's voice. Be attentive to it. Identify the lessons she has for you. Let the heartbeat of the seasons resonate with the heartbeat of your life. Hear the questions she asks. Receive her wisdom. Listen closely.



As a dynamic speaker, educator, storyteller and author, Raven wholeheartedly shares her experiences and the wisdom of her Ancestors through a wide variety of presentations, workshops, retreat days and guest appearances. Held in Udora (15 min North of Uxbridge) each event incorporates a traditional experiential learning style that offers an inspiring and fulfilling experience for all. For more information please go to www.ravenspeaks.ca