

A Vision of World Harmony

Words by Frank Ravenwolf Henninger and Chief Seattle

Everywhere we look in nature there is rhythm and harmony at work. The wind is like the breath of the earth. It moves through the tree branches, the leaves rustle and the branches moan. And the sound is like the earth crying out to the sky, or conversing with it, much like when a human being takes up a wooden flute and breathes his life into it- to create sound, to create music.

Like the wind blowing through the trees, to talk to the sky,
Like water rushing over a precipice, passing through the air to create the sound of a waterfall,
The air rushing through the feathers of a bird in flight,
A breeze blowing through the reeds in the wetlands, or in the bamboo groves high on the hills,
All are caused by the planet and its elements moving against the air to create sound, to create wind, to breathe.

So do we move through each other's lives, like breezes on the prairie. And the harmony that is there between the wind and the trees, and the breath and the flute, is also possible between us, as beings on this Earth.

Emerson, in all his wisdom, formulated the lessons for humankind that can be derived from observing nature. The tribal peoples of the world, including our Native American ancestors, have all given us the blessing of their knowledge from living in the natural world. These lessons are of harmony, love and joy, and these are expressed in the music of the wooden flute, and in the sharing of our lives together. This is the vision; this is the harmony that is intended for this planet and all its inhabitants.

“Every part of this earth is sacred to my people,” Chief Seattle said, “Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing, and humming insect, is holy in the memory and experience of my people . . . We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices of the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and man- all belong to the same family . . . The air is precious to the red man, for all beings share the same breath- the beasts, the tree, the man, they all share the same breath . . . All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons and daughters of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. . . Men come and go, like the waves of the sea. Even the white man, whose God walks and talks with him as friend to friend, shall see. One thing we know, which white men may one day discover-our God is the same God.”

As the wind moves through the trees, and as it moves among the mountains and valleys, the sound it creates is how the earth speaks to the heavens and the planets. So should the words that come through our mouths, through our lips, and across our teeth, like the wind through the teeth of the mountains, speak only truth, love and harmony.

Many tribal peoples have had flutes made of wood, which they learned to make from watching nature. They appreciate these flutes as the gift of the natural world to the human world, a way to blend human breath with wood to create rhythm and harmony. And rhythm and harmony everywhere in nature creates beauty and peace and love. The echoes in the canyons, of human voices and wolves and flutes, are lessons about how our lives reflect back to us our thoughts, our beliefs, and our dreams.

So, my friends, whenever you hear a wooden flute playing, or the wind in the tree branches on a cold winter day, or when amidst the mountains you hear the wind rushing up the valley, creating a deep sound in the distance, think of the harmony, the love and the great joy being expressed by Mother Earth. Model your life after these things. Take inspiration from these natural events and strive to live in a way that is the way of the tree, and the wood, and the breath - in rhythm and in harmony.

Let the healing of each heart begin
Let the healing of all beings begin
Let the healing of the Earth begin
May all live in perfect rhythm and harmony.

Ah-ho!