

Seeking the Emerald city

Tina Faulkner Elders

So Dorothy never left Kansas. A tornado comes and wreaks havoc with her home. Before she knows it she is in a strange new place, confused, afraid and alone apart from her dog Toto. Tina Faulkner Elders on getting home

Throughout most of the story Dorothy is on a journey to the Emerald City because she is told that the great wizard there has all the answers and will show her the way home. It turns out that the great wisdom she has been searching for was not with the all-powerful wizard in the shining Emerald City, Dorothy has had the power to find her way back home all along. As soon as she realises the truth she just clicks the heels of her ruby slippers and there she is, back home, as if waking from a bad dream.

The reality

Well that's a very nice story with a happy ending but the reality is that most of us are living in a world where we often feel lost and confused causing us a great deal of anxiety. It can be frustrating which then leads to either anger or sorrow. It's exhausting. We are just reacting to events the best way we can but still looking for that great wisdom somewhere out there. Where is our Kansas? Where is our home from where we can wake up in our safe and calm space? Even if we are told that the answers lie within us, they still seem buried so deeply it feels impossible to find them.

The need to find our home

I think that, as we have developed a better understanding about, mental health we have realised the importance of the need to 'find home'. There is plenty of talk about 'self care' and being kind to oneself, but what exactly does that mean? Let me ask you this: when was the

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body had arrived at the destination they would sit and wait for their soul to catch up. In many ways I believe a lot of us live our whole lives like this. Our bodies are going through the motions but we haven't let the rest of us catch up. We have lost that part of ourselves and it is still looking for home.

Being with yourself

To me this is what real 'self care' is about. Just being with yourself. Truly BEING with yourself for long enough that your soul can find its way back home. To me, my practice of tai chi chuan and qigong are my ruby slippers, giving me the way to train in how to really pay attention and to be with myself. The movements are present and give the mind a stillness whereas sitting still can be a struggle to stop the mind wandering off. The more often I bring myself back home the more I find I rarely wander far. I am never lost. I am here. In the words of Dorothy when she clicks her heels together, 'there's no place like home'. 🌿

last time you were truly with yourself in a kind and compassionate way? When was the last time you left all the outside noise behind and were really attentive just to yourself? We are often far too busy for it. We give our attention to work and to our loved ones and that alone can feel like a heavy burden.

Waiting for your soul to catch up

I heard a story once that really stuck with me. There was a tribe somewhere that used to travel everywhere by foot. When railroads came and the tribe started to use this new means of transport they would get off the train at the end of their journey and just sit whilst others disembarked and went about their business. Their reasoning was that the train had travelled further and faster than their soul could keep up with. While their

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