

INTERCHANGE

OUR WORLD, OUR CHOICES

by Judith Robinson

The night sky was bright with stars and the moon was almost round as it nestled into the midst of them. The smells of the green and growing filled the air around me — a little girl walking her dog who came home to ask her mother — why do people want to kill each other when it is so beautiful? Her answer was — what a silly question.

But that question is still in my heart — what do people really gain by killing others? The goal behind the means can never be satisfied because there will always be something else to destroy until there is nothing left.

Instead of this fear-based control over other beings, which is born from deep feelings of worthlessness — otherwise why would there be a need to control and a fear of vulnerability — that same vibrant energy can be channeled into the excitement and joy that results from the treasuring and nurturing of life in all its expressions and creating connection, not separation.

It is the feelings of separation from the very basis of life and love that lead to the intense emotion of abandonment. When we feel abandoned we feel helpless and hurt and to protect that pain we rage and re-

sent and strike out at the more vulnerable.

How can we begin to heal this wound and find a way back to feeling connected with our innocent and valued selves? What could then unite us in nurturing a reverence for life and the constant wonder at the recycling of that life energy? We could choose to see it embodied in the greatest gift to us from the earth — our food as a symbol and model as to how to move forward in cultivating healthy and cooperative societies. Is not this gift of sustenance to be treasured — grown from soil that has taken millions of years to form?

Do we treat this soil of our earth

with respect? Gently opening it to receive our seeds, nurturing it with its own natural substances, moistening it with clean water, letting it rest itself so that it can gather its strength and again give back to us. Or do we attack it with sharp blades — unconscious of ripping apart the intricate structure of its ability to be in balance? Do we choose to douse it with caustic chemicals—to apply intense synthetic fertilizers that starve the soil of life sustaining nutrients and of organic matter so that it lacks the ability to absorb and store water, and erosion and flooding become common occurrences. Do we look at food as a celebration or do we mindlessly throw it into our mouths with no enjoyment of

the richness of taste and the nourishment of our bodies?

To cherish and to practice the stewardship of our earth teaches us the cherishing and practicing of our constant growth in building community and nurturing balance between us. We cannot control the surges of the elements. Our task is to understand them as much as possible and as in the managing of our passions — to work with them. Nature is not personal — not for or against anything — it just is.

We are part of that life cycle — of the beauty and power of it. Spiritually, politically, and economically we can unite our energies to choose to produce food in a way that sustains our earth and our people in a positive and joyous way and that will be able to cradle our children and theirs in the years to come. It is our Choice.

Editor's note: Judith Robinson, the former coordinator of the Princeton Farmers' Market, has professional experience in communications, and has been an environmental educator and advocate, an organic grower, actor, and director. For more information visit her website: www.ourworldourchoices.com.

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