

Soulful Songs and Stories

**With a song and your stories, we
co-create a soft place for hard
conversations and a brave space
for personal and spiritual growth.**



Hi Soulful Song Lovers and Story Tellers,

This is the sixth of Friday emails that we're sending out about songs, stories, storytelling, community, or personal/spiritual growth until we are able to meet again.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX and QUESTIONING AUTHORITY are hallmarks of Unitarian Universalism and of Soulful Songs and Stories as well.

Consider the subject in song (all videos include lyrics):

- “Little Boxes,” Malvina Reynolds, 1962 <https://youtu.be/VUoXtdNPAM>
Same song with stop motion animation: <https://youtu.be/k2lJkCTsDIA>
- “Another Brick In The Wall,” Pink Floyd, 1979 <https://youtu.be/YR5ApYxkU-U?t=141>
- “We’re Not Gonna Take It,” Twisted Sister, 1984 <https://youtu.be/CQoftoiIQxU>

Considering the subject in story:

- “Voices of a Liberal Faith” <https://youtu.be/wezp1W2HKLU> (14:00)
- If you have time: “History of Unitarian Universalism” by Erik Resly (1:07:00)
www.j.mp/uuhist
- Three pages of quotes and David Hayward cartoons, and a poem, “Jailbreak,” by Maya Spector (following).

We end with some links to musical selections to rouse and soothe your soul.

We sorely miss you and your stories. We miss hugs and laughter and coffee/tea with you. We know these mailings are no substitute for meeting face-to-face, but hope that they, in some small way, may fill the gap until we meet again. Take the spirit of Soulful Songs and Stories with you wherever you go; share it, and we hope to see you all, healthy and happy, sooner rather than later.

Namasté,

Alice Giordano and Steve Marston

LITTLE BOXES MADE OF THICKY TACKY

The phrase, “Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom” and similar sayings were used throughout the 18th and 19th centuries by a variety of speakers and authors. It simply means we have to pay attention, else we’ll get comfortable in boxes, either of our own making—or worse—someone else’s. Or staying in a box long after we’ve outgrown it. But know that “people who are too independent, and who think for themselves, and who don’t know how to be submissive, are dysfunctional [a threat] to institutions.”
—Noam Chomsky.



The beauty of life is to be outside the box, so that the box doesn’t exist. To limit a human being to one mode of expression is really a crime.
—Herbie Hancock

Don’t try to fit me in a box. My life is not one dimensional. Your labels don’t limit me; they limit your experience of me. Don’t confuse the two.
—Steve Maraboli

If everyone has to think outside the box, maybe it is the box that needs fixing. —Malcolm Gladwell

And the time came when the risk it took to remain in a tightly closed bud became infinitely more painful than the risk it took to blossom.
—Anaïs Nin, “Risk”

Think outside of the box. Otherwise, even liberal passion for justice just becomes another ideology, and it does not have transformative power. I think that’s a great temptation among liberals who care about justice—is to reduce it to a formula.
—Walter Brueggemann, *On Being*, Dec 20, 2018

Some of the most wonderful people are the ones who don’t fit into boxes. —Tori Amos

When the Christian tradition chose an imperial Christ, living inside the world of static and mythic proclamations, it framed belief and understanding in a very small box.
—Richard Rohr, *The Universal Christ*

Being able to “think out of the box” presupposes you were able to think in it. —Bob Lutz

You’re always in a box, and you’re an escape artist if you do what I do—or if you’re a creative person, period. You build your box, and then you escape from it. You build another one, and you escape from it. That’s ongoing. —Bruce Springsteen

Instead of thinking outside the box, get rid of the box. —Deepak Chopra

Well, sometimes life gives us lessons sent in ridiculous packaging. —Dar Williams





Unable to contain the Great Mystery, religious institutions distill it until they sacrifice the wonder and awe of divinity for fundamentalism and codification. —Vanessa Klimek, sermon preached at Judson Memorial Church, 9/9/01

Of all the ways to avoid living, perfect discipline is the most admired. —James Richardson, *Vectors: Aphorisms & Ten Second Essays*

As an individual who has been in the mental health profession for over 20 years, I agree with Alan Watts 100% when he spoke of legalistic theology being one of the bases for neuroses. The more theology is based in “the greatest of these is love” the better. After all, no amount of fear, guilt, shame, or condemnation ever healed anyone. —Gary L. Webb, Letter to the Editor, *Spirituality and Health*, Winter 2001

Because we are afraid to ask for clarification, we make assumptions, and believe we are right about the assumptions; then we defend our assumptions and try to make someone else wrong. —Don Miguel Ruiz, *The Four Freedoms*

You are unique, and if that is not fulfilled, then something has been lost. —Martha Graham



I have never let my schooling interfere with my education. —Mark Twain

The refusal to accept love, the refusal to respond to it—that precisely is the meaning of Hell. Hell is not a place where God puts us; it’s a place where we put ourselves. The doors of hell, insofar as they have locks, have locks on the inside.

—Kallistos Ware

Bishop, Russian Orthodox Church

No person is your friend (or kin) who demands your silence, or denies your right to grow and be perceived as fully blossomed as you were intended.

—Alice Walker

I tell you: you must not be afraid of making mistakes. People think they will become good by doing no harm, but that is a lie. Such a frame of mind leads to stagnation and mediocrity.

—Vincent van Gogh

All of the places of our lives are sanctuaries; some of them just happen to have steeples. And all of the people in our lives are saints; it is just that some of them have day jobs and most will never have feast days named for them.

—Robert Benson, *Between the Dreaming and the Coming True*

We thought that we had the answers
It was the questions we had wrong

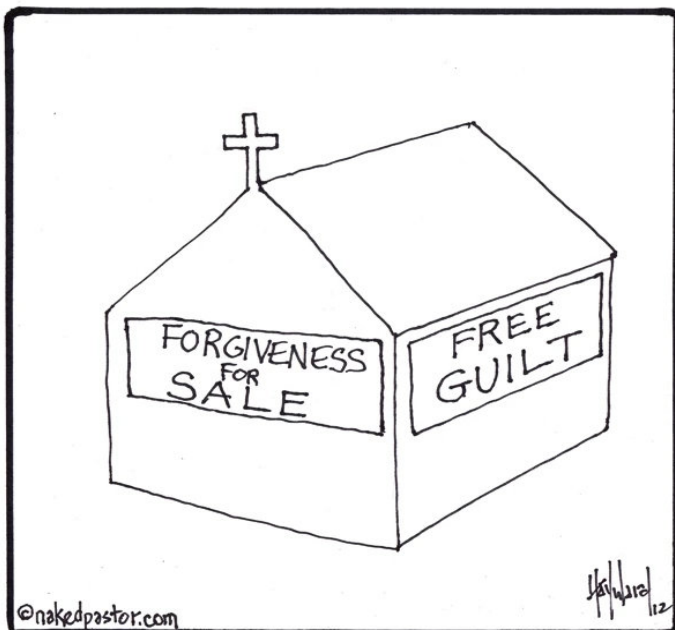
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Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth. —John F. Kennedy

When you spend your life in a cautionary crouch, the greatest relief of all may come from simply standing up.

—Jeffrey Kluger, *Time Magazine*, April 2, 2001



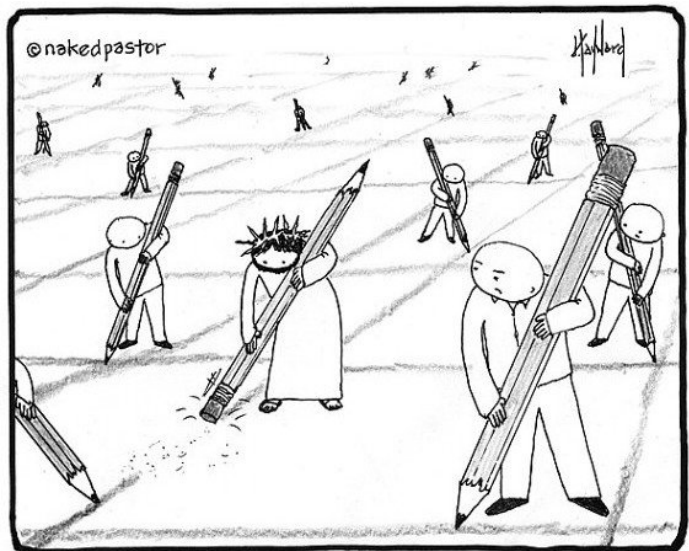
When you think of the long and gloomy history of man, you will find that more hideous crimes have been committed in the name of obedience than have ever been committed in the name of rebellion. —CP Snow, "Either-Or," *The Progressive*, Feb. '61

A system tends to grow in terms of complexity rather than of simplification, until the resulting unreliability is intolerable.

The more you depend on forces outside yourself, the more you are dominated by them.

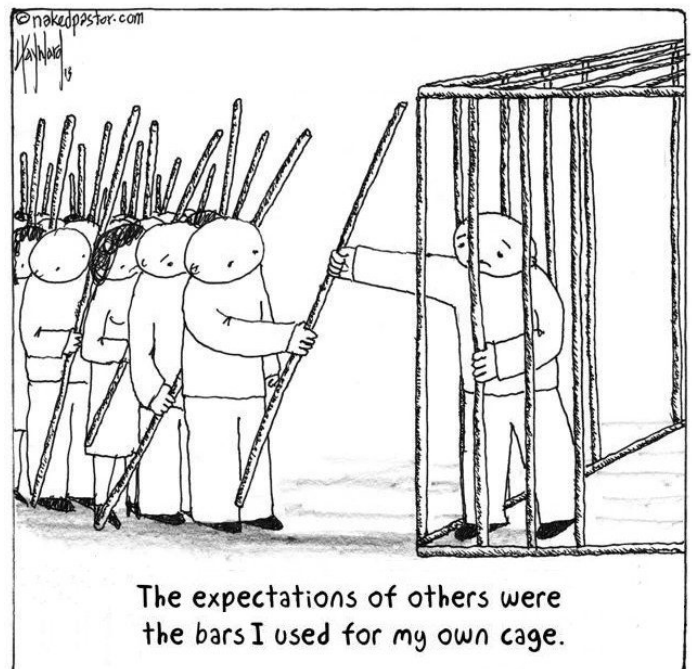
—Harold Sherman

If you let other people do it for you, they will do it to you. —Robert Anthony



If a one does not keep pace with their companions, perhaps it is because they hear a different drummer. Let them step to the music which they hear, however measured or far away.

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854, adapted



JAILBREAK

MAYA SPECTOR

It's time to break out—
Jailbreak time.

Time to punch our way out of
the dark winter prison.

Lilacs are doing it
in sudden explosions of soft purple,
And the jasmine vines, and ranunculus, too.
There is no jailer powerful enough
to hold Spring contained.

Let that be a lesson.

Stop holding back the blossoming!

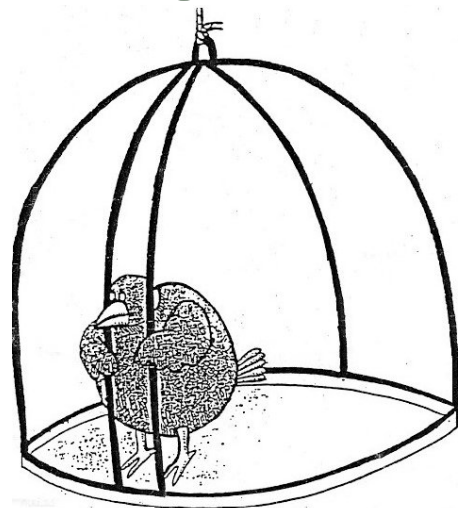
Quit shutting eyes and gritting teeth,
curling fingers into fists, hunching shoulders.

Lose your determination to remain unchanged.

All the forces of nature
want you to open,

Their gentle nudge carries behind it
the force of a flash flood.

Why make a cell your home
when the door is unlocked
and the garden is waiting for you?



Some rousing music to lift your spirits

- José Pablo Moncayo - Huapango L'Orchestre de Paris, Alondra de la Parra, conductor https://youtu.be/NbgAHpD4W_8
- How can you reduce this orchestral piece to a piano? Watch.
- Bernardo Michel Flores Ríos <https://youtu.be/XQ3H3okJo-w>

Creativity and improvisational prowess

- Keith Jarrett: Last Solo, Tokyo '84 Encore <https://youtu.be/HPqK1JJOFxw?t=18>

For your contemplation and meditation

- “Blessings” with Brother David Steindl-Rast “We invite you to experience six blessings in this short, meditative video.” <https://gratefulness.org/blessings>

For your relaxation

- Erik Satie: Gymnopédie No.1 (Daniel Varsano) <https://youtu.be/S-Xm7s9eGxU>
- Jay Ungar: Ashokan Farewell, performed by David J. Nielsen, (unaccompanied cello) <https://youtu.be/3RMNoIzUY-0>
- Relax with Sheep at Shafer Vineyards in Napa Valley. No commentary, no music, just sheep mostly sitting, bleating, or munching grass. <https://youtu.be/UrKkchVOOAs> (6:00:00 / 1:00:00 looped 6×)
- Pie Jesu from Gabriel Faure's Requiem <https://youtu.be/DUBtNI2JB1Y>