

Donnie's Conversation with God

I've known Donald Yance for 30 years. He is my go-to guy for all of my health guidance and was one of the first alternative health practitioners I had met who truly treated his patients holistically. He is intensely interested in all of you - your physical self, your emotional self, and your spiritual self. Donnie studied to be a Franciscan monk but left the monastery when he felt a calling to help others heal on both a physical and spiritual level. He is a Master Herbalist and certified nutritionist as well as a Secular Franciscan, SFO.

When I met Donnie in 1985, he was the supplement guru at a local health food store in Westport, CT. The line to reach him at the counter to learn from his expert advice was always down around two separate aisles in the stores. The store finally instituted an appointment-only protocol so that other patrons could shop in the store. From the tiny natural food store to opening his own office in Norwalk, CT to moving to Ashland, Oregon to found a all-encompassing alternative health center is the epitome of someone passionately following their dream and having that dream just keep manifesting on a larger scale every day. Donnie's dream of being able to help as many people as possible has led him to be one of the most sought after speakers on herbal medicine and alternative healing at major hospitals and oncology centers in the United States. He is a truly gifted healer and wonderful friend.

When I had my most recent phone consultation with Donnie (he in Oregon, me in Virginia) in May, 2015, I casually asked how he was and he told me that he had almost died. I couldn't believe what he was saying. Here is a man who is the epitome of health, living a balanced life of work, play and spirituality, with a client calendar booked out a year in advance. What happened? I was shell shocked to say the least. Here is Donald Yance's amazing story relayed to me the day of my May phone session:

- On **Good Friday, April 3, 2015**, Donnie woke up with feeling flushed, fatigued and feverish. He couldn't eat and went home after some appointments in the morning to take natural flu supplements and get some rest. He felt nauseated and was urinating every five to ten minutes. His headache was monstrous.
- **April 4th and 5th** brought no relief and by evening of the 5th, he was having neurological and adrenaline issues.
- By **Monday, the 6th**, there was blood in his urine and still no sleep or food.

- On **Tuesday morning April 7th**, the fever was down but he was still urinating every five to ten minutes and his head felt fuzzy. He decided to go to the local ER although he hadn't been to any hospital in many, many years. The doctors there determined through blood work that he had a medium grade bladder infection. He came home from the ER but still had a very rough night. He felt a great loss of salt, particularly in his brain. He knew he was in a life threatening situation.
- By **Wednesday, April 8th**, his tongue had swelled up and turned black and furry. Again, no sleep but he had a distinct electrical feeling in his body. Suddenly, his journey became one "out" of his body versus "in". Donnie felt he was being pulled into a vortex of energy still experiencing great pain but felt tremendous joy and love at the same time. He slid into the energy of an elephant which he feels is the most spiritual animal on the planet (with the horse coming in a close second.) While in the vortex with the elephant, he encountered Christ, the energy of all love and joy.
- **Thursday, April 9th**, Donnie went back to the ER, where the infection had gotten worse. He was having a serious reaction to the antibiotics the doctors had given him and his furry tongue had become worse. He went home and began vigorously dosing on natural supplementation using high dosage compounded formulas from his clinic, The Mederi Center for Natural Healing. He discontinued the antibiotic. He was sleeping off and on, and trying to eat some.
- **Friday, April 10th and Saturday, April, 11th**, Donnie was starting to feel a little better but still very fuzzy in his brain and he had a huge craving for salt and watermelon, which he credits to saving his life along with all of the supplementation. He consumed copious amounts of nerve enhancing natural remedies. His nervous system was highly compromised because of the illness but also because he had been going in and out of a universal energy vortex with the elephant as his guide.
- **Sunday, April 12th and Monday, April 13th**, Donnie was definitely feeling better but still had neurological and stomach issues to heal. The UTI infection was almost gone but he was very weak.

When I asked Donnie if he would be willing to share his story with you, my reading audience, he didn't hesitate to let me bring this amazing journey to you so that you would know that you are not alone when life gets very challenging. I asked him what he thought caused this sudden onset of kidney and bladder issues. Donnie is a prolific writer of alternative health research books on adaptogenic herbs and cancer healing supplementation. He lectures all over the country on healing and

nutrition. So, what could cause this sudden turn around in this man's health? He told me that he was not listening to his intuitive guidance about when to slow down, when to take a break and let your body relax. He would work for hours at a time, never leaving his office and forgetting to eat or visit the restroom. When you are so dedicated to helping your patients and the world at large, you sometimes lose yourself in the process. That is what happened to Donnie. He lost his way in the digital world of research, doing everything he could to find answers to help his patients heal.

I asked Donnie what he would like the readers of *Bootstraps 2* to learn from his experiences. He gave me the following to give to you:

1. God is most impressed with humility.
2. Live from your heart.
3. Seek beauty, truth and love.
4. Fresh bread is the most important nourishing food of all because it binds us together. Bread provides more than physical sustenance. We use the phrase "breaking bread together" to indicate the sharing of a meal with someone. In a spiritual and social sense, bread binds us together in our humanity and offers a sense of community. "For we many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread," (1 Corinthians 10:17). In the Jewish Passover meal, bread plays an integral role. The Jews were to eat unleavened bread during the Passover feast and then for seven days following as a celebration of the exodus from Egypt. God rained down "bread from heaven" to sustain the nation (Exodus 16:4), referring to it as "manna" (Exodus 16:31). There are many reasons to appreciate a humble loaf of good bread. Everyone, no matter what his or her economic status, can afford to make bread. You need not be wealthy to afford bread—God made bread for both the rich and the poor. Organic wheat and other whole grains used to make bread are inexpensive, yet nutritious ingredients. Whole grains, including wheat, and specifically heirloom wheat, have the least negative impact on the environment. And last, but certainly not least, modern scientific research has validated the enormous health benefits of whole grains.
5. Use technology sparingly. You can lose your heart-centered focus to the outside physical world if you live in technology too much of your day.

6. Botanical Medicine saved his life; and his heart; the wisdom acquired from ancient and traditional medicine, and must access the mind, the knowledge acquired from modern medicine and research and never the other way around.

7. The physical and the spiritual in all of us must be co-partners in inspiring us to live lives of great joy and passion.

8. Death for most is spiritual very painful for most, and we need to prepare ourselves as if today is our last. Also people in transition need to be prayed, held, sung too, and anointed with sacred oils.

Through my illness which within it came an experience I can only describe as spiritual rapture, where I endured many days of unremitting suffering, and simultaneously unparalleled love and joy. From a place of raw vulnerability, deep love, and humility, I learned a great many truths and discovered renewed strength, courage, and wisdom. Through this experience, one of the gifts bestowed upon me was the conception of a special blend of sacred essential oils for the purpose of anointment. This formulation came to me from both my deep intuitive wisdom of medicine and my connection to the Divine, as I was recovering from my own illness, searching for remedies, and reflecting on my roots as a Franciscan monk. My sacred blend includes frankincense, lavender, Holy basil, rose, nutmeg, myrrh, and sandalwood.

I created the Oil of Anointment as a means to simply assist people in drawing closer to their spiritual essence, or seeking spiritual enlightenment, and especially for the sick, suffering, and those who are ascending (dying), since I often work with people who are terminally ill and seeking peace and connection to God.

When we anoint and perform unction, we are calling upon divine influence, a holy emanation, spirit, and the power of God. Uction not only unites us to Spirit, but creates in us renewed Spirit, an inner sanctuary: “and let them make for me a sanctuary and I will dwell in thee.” (Ex. 25:8)

The mystery of unction includes praying before, during and after the anointing. The prayer may be as simple as: “May grace be bestowed upon this spirit and body and let us evoke the Love and will of God in our hearts.” As such, the Oil of Anointment is meant to be used with sacred intent.

These human, energetic “bubbles” we call bodies are a gift. I have so often abused mine and taken it for granted. It can only do so much. Your body is the house that your soul lives in. It must be cherished and treated with divine respect yet we must surrender our body at some point and we cannot be afraid.

I have found this to be a fundamental truth in my work with patients, their families, and with the medical profession. Fear is a natural and understandable reaction to illness; none of us wants to be sick, and few of us are prepared to deal with the many unknowns that come with the diagnosis of a serious illness.

I believe the answer is to make peace with the state of unknowing. When we learn how to be fully alive in this moment—accepting that we don't know what the next moment may bring—we free ourselves to live a life that is richer and more fulfilling than any life lived by the strictures of control. What is most important is the willingness to embrace the unknown, what Christian mystics call the “cloud of unknowing.”

As a practicing secular Franciscan, I find great solace in my practice of daily prayer. But I do not pray with the intent of petitioning God. When we make requests of God, we are attempting to control outcome, which merely leads us back to fear when our problems are not solved in the way that they think they should be. We have no control over God, and we cannot know or understand God with words. The only way that we can know God is through love. We must relinquish the practice of petitioning God to answer our prayers. Instead, we must let go and trust. We must pray with pure love, because it is only with our hearts that we can penetrate the cloud of unknowing. We must cultivate a place of inner peace, quiet our minds, and allow pure love to connect us to God. We must forget everything, and in this forgetting, we discover that God is everywhere, and that we are everywhere as well. We become more comfortable with uncertainty, and thus are better able to fully inhabit the present moment. We must recognize with humility that uncertainty is inherent in all situations, and we should be open to the ever-present possibility of the surprising, the mysterious, and most of all the holy.

“Entering into the mystery”, Pope Francis explains, “means the ability to wonder, to contemplate; the ability to listen to the silence and to hear the tiny whisper amid great silence by which God speaks to us”... it “demands that we not be afraid of reality: that we not be locked into ourselves, that we not flee from what we fail to understand, that we not close our eyes to problems or deny them, that we not dismiss our questions” ... “To enter into the mystery means going beyond our own comfort zone, beyond the laziness and indifference which hold us back, and going out in search of truth, beauty and love.”

My illness was a means to my vision, a foretaste of heaven, where after long-suffering (the passion), that was still filled with a sense of Agape (selfless) Love, transformed into a joyous state of luminous Light (the resurrection). The Light-mysticism is the same as Agape Love, for love lives in an atmosphere of Light. The apostle John who said, “God is Light” also said “God is Love.” (I John 4,8); and in Psalm 36.9 it reads “In thy Light shall we see Light.” I need to do everything I can to serve and love God above all else, and although I am a sinner and full short I do aspire to be a saint above all else. Blessed are those that can say, “I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” (Acts 26.19).

I pray that this open and candid sharing my experience as well as my personal faith with God inspires you onward to explore greater mystical heights through your own relationship with the Divine and lights under you a renewed passion to love

more – love the Lord through your loving kindness extended to all.