

Beginning again, again

BY THE REV. DR. KHARMA R. AMOS

Spirit of Life

This month is a time of new beginnings for many people. Students, teachers and administrators are back in school following the summer vacation. Rosh Hashanah has ushered in a new year, which we hope is sweet and peaceful, for our Jewish friends and neighbors. And for Unitarian Universalists, we have convened for homecoming, when we begin a new congregational year with intention and purpose.

Each time we begin again — whether it is a new year, a new day or simply a new conversation — we have a fresh opportunity to be the people we want to be. And who among us doesn't need another chance to live into our potential? We're human. We make mistakes. We fall short of our aspirations. This much is true

for every single one of us. What is also true is that we are human. We can learn. We can adapt. We can be and do better together.

Spirit of Life

This reminds me of an old wisdom tale I heard years ago. I don't recall the source, but it goes something like this:

A seeker after truth came to a wise elder for guidance. "Tell me, please, how did you become wise?" "Two words," replied the elder. After a moment, the seeker asked, "What are they?" "Right choices," came the response. The seeker followed up, "And how does one learn to choose correctly?" "One word," replied the elder. "Please share it with me," urged the seeker. "Growth," the elder responded. Naturally, the seeker pressed further, "How does one grow?" "Two words," replied the elder. "Wrong choices."

Each time I hear this story, it solicits much



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The Rev. Dr. Kharma R. Amos

more of an "ouch" than an "amen" from me. We grow when we learn, and we sometimes learn best when we make spectacular mistakes. Even when we do learn a lesson, it may still take some time and a lot of practice to integrate that wisdom into the fullness of our lives. That whole process of growth can be messy, complicated and, occasionally, painful. It also makes life worthwhile.

Second chances, new beginnings, re-starts and

do-overs (by whatever name) are important opportunities we would do well to approach with thoughtfulness and intention. If you're having one of those renewal periods now, may it be rich and have plenty of joy in the mix. If you need and don't see an opportunity for a re-boot in your own life, why not create one yourself? That goal you made and then abandoned can be picked up again. That vision or dream you had but were too afraid to share with others can still come to life if nurtured. That relationship that feels stuck or broken might be improved if you start over, wipe a slate clean or decide to do the hard work of reconciliation.

Whatever your new beginning is — or needs to be — may it indeed be sweet, meaningful and full of peace.

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