

Learning to Move through Darkness. Part 2 of 3

by Todd Clark

John 1:5 “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Following the prompt for writing about “moving through darkness”, before the Capitol was attacked, I joyfully and comfortably lingered in the memories of the many ways I have positively moved through darkness throughout my life. As with many transformative moments, many happened in the wild, on the remote mountain tops or in the deep freshwater lakes of New Hampshire, when I was an adolescent and young teenager, camping in the summers, and experiencing challenges and self-awareness in oftentimes creative ways.

One of my first memories of moving through darkness was literally skinny-dipping in the warm waters of a summer lake, late at night, in the cover of darkness, moving through pitch black water, naked, free and totally without the ability to see what was around or below me. There was a kind of nervous apprehension before jumping in, but it soon dissipated. The water felt good flowing over my entire body, as I gave in to the joy of free-falling in the watery darkness, buoyed to the surface every time I dove deep into the unknown depths.

I would flail about like a wild porpoise, diving and lurching into the water, plunging deeper below the still surface of the late-night lake. Then, coming up for air I was mesmerized, aware of the seamlessness between the dark of the night time air and the dark that was deep below the water line, in the depths of the beckoning water, barely a difference between the two, even with my eyes closed or open—neither allowed me to see any better than the other.



I loved that feeling. I trusted where I was. At some point I would swim down deeper and allow myself to hover eight to ten feet below the surface, perfectly balanced. I felt cradled in the stillness of the lake, in the darkness, floating, suspended, for as long as I could hold my breathe. In just a few minutes time it felt like . . . forever, and I suppose I was triggering all kinds of associations to when I had been cradled and carried in the amniotic sac before birth, before emerging into the fullness of light.

I treasure those times. I trusted every moment of them. The physical sensations were almost intoxicating and I loved learning how to move through that darkness. It was a true dance of

life, a sacred place of renewal and yes of rebirth and pure joy, being truly alive, playing in the darkness of midnight waters.

Dear God, I pray with comfort, certainty and faith that your light will never be extinguished. That even in the deepest of darkened waters, we can still find joy and faith abounding, that we will forever be cradled in your loving arms and be buoyed to the surface, again and again.
Amen