

## A BIRTHDAY MANDALA

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I am 72 years old today. This is somewhat of a pivotal time for me because I am actively deconstructing a couple of large mandalas that have been very much a part of me for many years. So on this birthday I will write something about mandalas in general, because they have been so important in my life.

We form a mandala every time we are inspired to start anything new from our heart. We create a miniature universe (a world within our world) in which our own essence-activity is at the center. And that heart-felt activity serves to transform us, creating a sacred flower in space and time, a mandala.

The elaborate Tibetan sand mandalas start at the very center and gradually emerge to embrace the entire universe. Conversely, when they are deconstructed, sand mandalas are swept from the outer edge in toward the center, and the pile of colored sand is then dispersed, often in a river or stream, which carries away the blessed particles.

It is the blessing not the blessed that is key. I don't need to remind you that it is the making, the process of offering the mandala, the offering process itself that is sacred, and not the sand or substance. Sand is just sand, although it too is blessed by the process.

When we take from within our heart and mind, bringing forth something precious to us into the world (like a child of the mind or the body), it is the raising or upbringing of the child, the "process" that shapes the life. This is much like with honeybees, where a larval honeybee is fed royal jelly and becomes a queen. The process is what is sacred, the offering itself, not just that which is offered. Mostly we have it backward, valuing what is given and not the giving.

My point here is that the "process" of creation is the creation, and not just what is created. What is created (the "thing"), like all things, cannot but age and decay over time, but the process of offering, if dedicated properly, never diminishes.

We can share in that creative process. We place energy into our inspired activity to such a degree or depth that a center or core is created within us that reaches beyond time and orders time at its heart. And around that heart we gradually arrange the rest of our world, our mini universe. That is called a mandala.

Mandalas are pretty much inviolable if they are made right. No one else cared to pour forth the kind of inspired energy to the degree and depth we have, and so it is diamond or vajra-like in that it can last a long time, perhaps forever, like spinning a top very fast.

We go in deep with our inspiration and fix it there, lock it in. But temporally all mandalas

also have a duration, at least the physical parts of them. They all eventually fail, hopefully successfully, scattering blessings as they go.

I am looking at two very large mandalas in my life that are about to vanish from my day-to-day life like the sound of music vanishes into silence. The music was heard. Its effect remains, if not in my ears, then in my mind -- the deafening sound of all nature living that we call silence.

To repeat: the true product of a mandala is not the sand or substance, but the merit accrued from the creation and offering of the sand mandala. That merit, if dedicated to the well-being and enlightenment of all beings, is preserved beyond substance and can never be lost.

All of my life I have created mandalas like some create businesses. When the inspiration for a new mandala arises in my mind, the first thing I do is fix upon a logo, a seed image or "bija," which amounts to a visual mantra and I place it at the center of my heart, deep inside me. I hold it there.

The image shown here came from within me through a process that is called a kriya, a spontaneous asana (yoga position) that resulted in this image in my mind. The image is very pure and has been fixed at the heart of a number of projects including the Heart Center Astrological Library. This is the right image for this project – the heart and the flame.

If I can't find the right logo, I don't create the mandala, because it will never work without my heart center being activated. If I am not deeply moved, nothing will come of it. Greed does not work with mandalas. They require pure inspiration.

Anyway... around that seed image I then create the mandala, a grain of sand at a time, but ever increasing and never losing the heart essence or original moment. A properly formed mandala is recursive, endlessly reinforcing itself, until incandescence. The Heart Center image shown here is an example of a logo that has worked.

You see, if we go deep enough within ourselves, within our heart, we actually go beyond time and lay the groundwork or foundation in a sacred space, a space that only someone so motivated and so inspired could ever reach and touch. Of course, this is what Shakespeare did when he wrote. He is mostly untouchable still.

A cheap imitator could never copy that, could never imitate what only a heart-felt impulse can reach. That is why the center of a mandala is inviolable. No one can touch it, and even we may not be able to touch there again like that first inspiration.

I guess I am telling you this because, although two vast mandalas in my life are undergoing deconstruction, nothing of equal value to the merit of forming them will be lost. In my case both mandalas are passing into other hands that hopefully will care for them as I have.

That part is release from the physical. I will no longer curate the Heart Center Library or personally direct Matrix Software. I have been there and done that. So the physical part of these mandalas is undergoing a transformation or at least a transmission. But there is more to mandalas than just the physical.

All of the heart essence around which these mandalas were built remains untouched, perfect vortexes that spin like shining diamonds in the mind.

I offer these mandalas that all sentient beings in the three times (past, present, future) and the ten directions (eight compass directions and up and down) may become aware of the true nature of the mind. And I freely release their physical parts into the river of time.

As for the vows and offerings that inspired the creation of them, only I know what they are and I will do my best to maintain them.

Any questions?

[IMAGE: The bija or logo for the Heart Center Astrological Library.]

