

PART I



The Principles of the Holistic Model

CHAPTER 1

An Experience Whose Time Has Come

*"When the heart weeps for what is lost,
the spirit laughs for what it has found."*¹

—Sufi Aphorism

Saturday, November 22

Ten young men board a small boat in Karachi, Pakistan. They travel 500 miles south to Mumbai, India. Each carries guns, ammunition, grenades, a bomb, and a cell phone. On November 26 they reach their destination. Two of them head for the Oberoi Hotel.

9:00 P.M., November 26

Twenty-four spiritual pilgrims return to the Oberoi after a public meditation session with their teacher, Master Charles Cannon, from the Synchronicity Foundation for Modern Spirituality in Virginia. Some go to their rooms; some go to the Tiffin Restaurant in the hotel for a late dinner.

Around 9:30 P.M. the diners hear a crash, what one later speculates might be a large crystal chandelier smashing to the floor.

Moments later the shooting begins.

Be wakeful.

Be aware.

Consciousness creates itself newly in each moment.

*Each experience is an experience
whose time has come.*

*Our experience—here and now—
is the experience whose time has come.*



KIA:

When the trip to Mumbai, India with the Synchronicity group was being planned, I naturally thought that it would be exciting to go with my husband Alan and my daughter Naomi. But as the trip got closer, I realized that I had responsibilities here at home and it felt more appropriate to have some time to myself. Then my two sons in Tampa, Florida invited me for Thanksgiving.

So, instead of accompanying my husband and my daughter to India, I found myself driving them to Dulles Airport in Washington. There was a real sense of excitement. This was Naomi's first plane trip and the longest time she would be away from home. I knew she was in good hands with her father and the nurturing support of Master Charles and the group from Synchronicity that they were traveling with. Naomi was way beyond excited about all the new experiences that lay ahead.

We left our car in the parking garage maze at the airport and walked around for a while before they had to go through security. I remember feeling a bit distracted and concerned about finding the car and navigating through that maze to get home. Then it was time, so we put our arms around each other in a big three-way hug and said goodbye.

On the drive home I stopped for lunch at a Chinese restaurant that we had all been to before. It felt strange to sit at the table by myself this time. As usual, the fortune cookie was delivered along with the check. I have always enjoyed those silly little messages in fortune cookies, but this one surprised me. It said, “Today your luck has changed forever.”



*“The spring we’re looking for
is somewhere in this murkiness.”²*

—Rumi

Finding and reading this book is an experience whose time has come for you. You may not understand this, but it doesn’t matter. This is the evolutionary moment in your consciousness and it’s like a snowball rolling down the hill. You can analyze it, understand it or not, but it keeps on rolling. Your consciousness keeps on evolving.

You can have no experience before it’s time. So, relax. You couldn’t be more on schedule if you tried. This book and the experiences you will have reading it are coming to you at the perfect time in your life.

Reading this book will be like traveling between check points of awakening, to create a consistently more enlightening experience. There are words and spaces between the words. There are letters and spaces between the letters. I encourage you to pause as you read ... pause to experience. Slow down ... be wakeful ... breathe and be aware. We are here and it is now.

This is very different than grasping for intellectual understanding, then hurrying on, without anything really significant moving within you. There is nothing more important in this book than the words and the spaces before you in this moment. What you seek is not in chapter

seven. Savor these words, in this very moment. Experience this enlightening moment by surrendering your desire to become enlightened.

Experience Comes First

Most books explain things. Some also tell you how to apply what you learn in daily life, to gain what you do not have. This book is different. Experience comes first; concepts follow. Yes, this means that you can experience what you long for as you read, rather than waiting until later. This is that kind of book.

This book is a map to Now. The simple truth is that reality is only ever reality here and now. And this moment of your reading is the same moment when I wrote these words.

Be still and know.

*Stay with us. Don't sink to the bottom
like a fish going to sleep.
Be with the ocean moving steadily all night,
not scattered like a rainstorm.
The spring we're looking for
is somewhere in this murkiness.
See the night-lights up there traveling together,
the candle awake in its gold dish.
Don't slide into the cracks of ground like spilled mercury.
When the full moon comes out, look around.³*

—Rumi