

Nature

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world seems to have forgotten.”

It seems we have forgotten, and often never learn these things in the first place. A disconnect with our natural world in a daily consequence of our distracted, disoriented culture.

The seasons are changing yet again here in the mountains. We see muted colors, with trees as thirsty as the birds and bears, beetles and bees. And once again we need the reminder to connect and listen—to connect through listening, and learn through connecting.

If we are not finding nature a place of healing as much as recreation, then we are unable to listen, to hear what we may need to hear more than anything – maybe even more than the “voice of God.”

It also seems to be deeply rooted in us that we sense a need for something or someone greater than nature – certainly greater than ourselves. So we go to church or



Immersion in seasons and streams (French Broad River) CHRIS HIGHLAND/SPECIAL ASHEVILLE CITIZEN TIMES

other “house of God,” spend time at a retreat, hike up to a mountain monastery or travel to the Australian outback. What are we looking for? Do we seek a “sacred”

experience in a “sacred” place perhaps led by a “holy” man, or woman? Do we long for “transcendence” – to transcend or get above the commonness, busyness and stressfulness of our lives?

It makes sense that we all want healing and need healers. If they have to be healers with “supernatural” abilities, we may be disappointed or even deceived. It may be costly and potentially harmful.

I’ve always admired those persons, Native or not, who live in a closer relationship with the earth, the wild things, the cycle of seasons. They simply have a more expansive appreciation for what can be harvested when we find ways to be immersed – planted – in our world, open to deeper listening.

The Aboriginal elder has a word of invitation: “We’re waiting for all people to listen and hear what we hear so that we can connect and belong together.”

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