

## Foolish, Random Thoughts

*By Sheila Johnson*

Ironically, in the midst of today's shifting, isolating, insecure world culture, my cup runneth over with surprising acts of kindness. Hugs from strangers—in the cup; unsolicited loving hands that helped me rise up from my yoga mat—in the cup; a strong arm that guided me across a very icy pavement—in the cup; an outstretched hand that held me on a very crowded train ride at DIA—in the cup; a charming wait staff eager to serve with genuine care—in the cup!

Naysayers may tell us that our country is becoming more racially divided than ever—because history was built on that backdrop. There is a broad brush that colors our canvas. It was there when Native American soil was reddened, when Poland was desecrated, when Jews were annihilated, Africans ransomed, and causes (real and created) called for wars. It's not going anywhere because it's part of the human condition.

Let's be careful not to forget about the undercurrent that shifts the sands beneath us. It paints a different picture. Gaze into human eyes, feel human touch, listen to human heartbeats, hear our voices, learn about our shared pain *and* victories. Do not forget about the human bond that holds us together. To allow evil to splinter our natural, mortal existence created by love is not wise; it is foolishness.

My uncle, an ordained minister, broke my heart when he tried to negate my calling to a God who pours God's spirit on everyone without exception. Many years later I proved him wrong, and I thought of him at my ordination, even though he had passed from labor to reward. To discourage young hope from saving people's futures, their lives, and their very souls, is not wise; it is foolishness.

My best friend in the ninth grade, Margie, got pregnant and was sent away to a birthing farm for nine months. She returned physically, but mentally and emotionally, she would never be the same. People called her an unwed mother. Unwed, yes; mother, no. To spend volatile time and billions of dollars regulating a woman's body—pro-choice or pro-life is not wise; it is foolishness.

Mo, Robert, Rodger, Ben, Ned and others, whose names I've now forgotten, are all in their late sixties or early seventies. They suffer with post traumatic syndrome disease, Agent Orange, or napalm. They were patriotic, good-looking, smart, masculine, and psychologically sound. Today, some are suicidal, others live on the edge, most have aged beyond their years, and all are traumatized. The national budget reflects the expense of war, but we cannot calculate the cost of human suffering. To casually design, ignite, and play war games with humanity as though we're checkers or chess pieces is not wise; it is foolishness.

I could write about more randomness in my world, but that would be foolish. Ironically, I'm grateful that in the midst of today's shifting, isolating, insecure world culture, my cup runneth over with surprising acts of kindness.