



rediscover Ancient Wisdom - restore Inner Peace - reclaim Freedom

## Finding your courage to shine again

(A Personal Story by Nigel B. Patterson – March 2013)

Once upon a time there was a lighthouse. It was a beautiful lighthouse having been meticulously crafted from the finest materials known to the Universe. It stood in a prominent position on the edge of a cliff overlooking the vast ocean. The surf leapt up in joy to greet it just as the seagulls swooped down with their shrieks of delight.

Its creator lit its flame with pride. The flame danced and leapt around the lens so happy that it was now part of the world of lighthouses. In its enthusiasm it even wanted to run up and down the beach shouting to all the mariners how wonderful it was and that it should be noticed. Not for one minute did it consider the ridiculousness of this idea, nor the dangers this would bring those who needed to be guided by its light.

Then one stormy evening, shortly before darkness fell, two evil and ignorant men walked past and looking up at the lighthouse said "Who would build such an ugly thing here! It does not belong here!" Suddenly the lighthouse froze. "What are they saying?" it wondered. "Am I not a magnificent and worthy lighthouse?" As the shadow of doubt crept over the lighthouse, so too did its light slowly become dimmer. It began to question its own magnificence. The voice of self-doubt rang louder with each passing day. "Am I really that ugly?" Year after year the lighthouse became increasingly derelict. Pieces started to fall off and its lens cracked. Weeds began to grow over its base as a dark creeper reached up entwined itself around the once bright light. Till one day the lighthouse tried to extinguish its flame altogether.

Then one fine evening a lighthouse keeper happened to walk by and notice that the light from the broken lighthouse was very dim. He saw that its structure had fallen into disrepair and that others had scrawled graffiti all over the outside. However, he could recognize the true beauty that lay within the lighthouse. Not only was its structure made of the most wonderful materials, but so too was the light it housed. However, its flame had become so weak that it was barely visible. He concluded that all that the lighthouse needed was for someone to show it love again.

So slowly the gentle and kind man restored the lighthouse back to its former glory, scraping away the layers that had built up over the years and polishing its once-magnificent lens back to a renewed brilliance. At the end of each day he would admire the flame and lovingly close the

door behind him. In time, he thought, the lighthouse will once again shine its beautiful guiding light out to those who passed by.

Initially the lighthouse was afraid of being noticed as it did not want to attract too much attention and was thus reluctant to shine. The memory of those nasty people was still fresh in its mind. However, with the encouragement and tenderness of the lighthouse keeper, the lighthouse slowly found the courage to shine its light a little brighter each evening till one day it was shining once again at full strength. By now it knew that it did not have to attract attention to itself in order to be of service; that those whom needed its guiding light would be drawn to it and find the reassurance they required for their own journey.

Passing ships were delighted that the lighthouse was shining its beam strongly once more. Whilst they had their modern navigation aids on board, it was always a huge relief when they came into view of the lighthouse. They knew they were on the right course and felt safe. Its steady beat brought them reassurance.

The other lighthouses along the same shore too were delighted that their companion lighthouse had once again come into its full glory. The entire route was now safe. As for the men that had initially extinguished the glory of the lighthouse, well, they too were relieved as it now meant that they would no longer have to carry the burden of guilt for those sailors who had floundered on the nearby rocks due their folly.

And so today, when travellers stop to admire the lighthouse they read on its plaque “Here stands the most magnificent lighthouse, which having journeyed through its own darkness, now stands strong in its glory as a beacon of light for all who wish to be guided by its radiance.”

The end.

