

THE SACRED CENTER

Jasper Young Bear

In my tradition, our story of creation is one that takes four days to tell.

Often people think this is a quaint little story, but it's not. It's a sacred truth, and at its center is this most crucial concept: that you are the universe, that everything the creator went through, you've gone through, too.

Most people struggle with this. Most aren't ready to accept that they are the sacred center. But it's an important shift to what's called whole-to-part thinking, where all the dichotomies of the universe are cast aside. Where there is no male and female, no black and white, no political divide.

When you use whole-to-part thinking, the sense of self is much deeper, more expansive. In our sacred ceremonies, we play this out starting as a baby, when we get an Indian name. In this ceremony, they put us in the center of the universe and have us turn to face all directions. When we get named, we are the light. We are the beginning. We are one with time and space. We go forth, and we vibrate with our names, attracting what others have instilled, attracting what is already inside of us.

Right now, people feel trapped by the systems. The current political system. The distribution of land. People don't feel like they have enough. They don't get to see a rolling river; they can't go pick juncherries, plums, or chokecherries, which all grow wild here where I live, or go fishing in Lake Sakakawea. There's nowhere they're told how nature and community can be in harmony.

But we can create a new world—we must create a new world. All it takes is a mustard seed of faith. We must believe that we are not separate, we are not John or Amy or Ken. I am not Jasper Young Bear. I am the creator, and believing that I am the creator is the only way I can do this work. It's the only way I have the strength to say, "How dare you hurt the earth? How dare you hurt my people? How dare you hurt each other?"

If there is any time that God is listening, if there is any time to pray, it's now.

THIS IS YOUR PROMPT:

Imagine you are the center of the universe. Imagine that you are the creator. Imagine that your power and your prayers have no limit. Imagine all things moving and in motion and all things static and sitting are affected by your prayer. What would you change? What is your prayer?