Namaste’

Once the storm is over, you won’t remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive…But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm, you won’t be the same person who walked in. That’s what this storm’s all about.

(Haruki Murakami)

Murakami is one of my favorite authors so when this quote came in my inbox this morning, I felt compelled to share it. Unfortunately, I have come across several teachers that promise that storms can be avoided, and suffering can be relieved. Or that there is pain but no suffering. Or that there is physical pain but no emotional pain.

Ask yourself, how long should pain last until it turns into suffering? One minute? Twenty minutes? If there is pain for twenty minutes does that mean, there is suffering? Is it about duration in time? Also ask yourself, what part of you suffers?

When the sense of personal doership falls away there is suffering. “Bones will still be broken, and hearts will still be broken” but, when the suffering ends you are transformed. You won’t be the same person. That is the point of any teaching, to be transformed. In truth a part of you has one foot in the material world and another foot dipped in eternity. As you survive the suffering, the connection to divinity gets stronger. We miss the mark if we use our energy to try to avoid suffering or fool ourselves into thinking that suffering doesn’t exist or that it can be relieved.

Give yourself permission to suffer. You are not a “bad” student if you do. It takes perseverance and courage to suffer. Finally, “you won’t remember how you made it through” the storm because divinity is carrying you the whole time. The gift on the other side of the storm is a deeper connection with God. God’s grace never turns her face from you.

With love,

Todd and Susan

Susan and I will be in Ojai, California December 15th- January 15th.

There will be Satsang on December 16th in Ojai and online 2pm PST/5pm EST.

Email [sucooney@yahoo.com](mailto:sucooney@yahoo.com) for the address or zoom link