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- *Growth is a natural process of spirit*

You are blessed in God's presence. You are given vision through God's light. You are covered with great love through our presence and the illumination of God's brilliance upon your life's journey.

Your conversations this evening related to our most recent message about change are indicative of growth taking place. You are correct, your spirit growth is not based one hundred percent on your conscious intentional effort. Your growth as a spirit light is not specifically improved because of a single decision that you make in life. There are many who feel the God-directed pathway of the spirit can only be guaranteed by specific choices and decisions that you make, with the assumption being that not making such choices prevents the natural growth of spirit. While such a belief in itself is not entirely valid, it serves an important function because it means in effect that you are deciding that opening the vision of your heart is something worthy of effort.

Yes, we say that growth of the spirit is not a consequence of effort specifically, but a commitment to a greater understanding of God's presence in your lives does have an impact on how your growth takes place. It is for that very reason that these opportunities you have to be open to your guides are so important. It is not a matter of you deciding to grow in faith or there is no growth, but rather knowing more about growth in one's faith assists in that growth. There is no condition of human existence where one can say that without a conscious decision to be open to growth, there is no growth, and therefore there is no heaven or there is no place for someone at that table of blessing. The growth takes place whether one is conscious of it or not, whether one chooses to learn more about such growth or not.

Growth is a natural process of spirit. It does not in itself belong to a specific set of beliefs that must be followed without fail. There is no one path that ensures the growth of spirit. All grow whether one believes in one kind of religious experience or another. Such growth occurs even among those who deny vehemently the existence of spirit. There is a persistence to the spirit. There is a kind of indomitable energy of spirit.

Light is a form of energy. The particles that make up light have motion and energy. There is no conscious decision by such particles to move, to change, to evolve. It is simply what they do. You can block light. You can bend light. You can increase and decrease intensity of light. You can change its colors. You can do many things to light, but the one thing that does not change about light is its movement. Light's particles move because that's what such particles do. You can enhance, you can impede, you can block in some way, but the actions of those particles remain.

It is the same with your soul. You can enhance, you can impede, you can block, you can deny its existence, but that does not change what the soul does, because growth

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of the soul *is* the soul. The soul and its property of growth are inseparable. There is a kind of persistence to the energy of the soul.

Why are we speaking of spiritual persistence? We explain this because such persistence of the soul becomes an energy, a strength, a forbearance of patience for human action and activity. You learn in your life not because someone said make sure you learn something. You learn in your life because learning is a part of being alive. The direction of the spirit is existing because that's what a spirit consists of, movement, direction. It is being drawn to God's presence. Sure, there are detours. There are detours in your life trajectory which bring about changes, those that are welcome, those that are not. But you keep persisting. You keep on going. You keep on learning, because that's what life is.

There is no one existing in human form without some degree of learning. A child who lives for a very short time experiences learning. It may be simply learning to breathe. It may be learning to move. It may be learning to see with the eyes or hear or speak. It may be learning what it means to smell, to touch, to be touched. Learning is taking place.

If you observe the activity of molecules under a microscope, you see movement. You see some kind of response to what surrounds it. Is this conscious response in terms of thinking? No, but it is a response. It is a reaction.

Plant life responds to light, sunlight, artificial light. There is no thinking, but there is response. There is movement. There is growth that occurs.

Your human lives, therefore, can always be characterized as an opportunity for growth, for learning, for expansion of awareness, growth in terms of being more loving, growth in being more receptive to the life of others, growth in one's willingness to persevere, growth in listening to what is asked, growth in responding to what is needed. There is growth, and since the natural progression of the spirit is to continue its growth, its persistence in becoming greater in its awareness, so, too, are each of you.

When you face personal challenges, it is easy to become discouraged. It is easy to consider giving up, but that is not the natural form of evolution, of progress, change. Regardless of how you feel about life around you, that which impacts you personally, that which you know of, you grow. You become deeper in your understanding. Your heart vision continues to evolve.

The speed of such growth is meaningless. The only reality is the evolving of spirit, the evolving of a sense of being loving, the evolving of what it means when one speaks of love as an entity, as a form of energy, as a reality described by us in terms of light, in terms of colors.

As you go through human life, it is important always to acknowledge that you are evolving. Your heart vision is expanding even when you don't recognize such growth. You persist because that is what spirit does, and because you do not live independently from spirit, the growth, the change, the development, the persistence of spirit all act in concert with one another to guide you on your pathway.

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There is nothing, as we say so often, that separates you from God's presence. Life is the process of increasing your vision of that presence. It is placing you closer to that sense of the sun rising, for you are always moving toward that rising sun, never away from it. You are always moving towards God's presence, not away from it. You are constantly moving toward a condition of becoming more loving. You are evolving in your understanding of what love is. You are gaining a greater understanding of how to apply what you know to life around you.

All of this is growth, whether you experience great sadness or swim in a sea of enormous joy. It makes no difference whether you acknowledge God's presence or reject God's presence or cease to fully embrace that presence. Wherever you stand on this globe of spiritual vision, the sun always rises before you. Regardless of where you stand, the earth is carrying you toward the sunlight. Your lives are in the process of being fulfilled in the most significant ways because of the persistence of your growth, the constancy of change, and your abilities to persist.

This strength of living through the actions and energy of spirit is not something magical and difficult to explain. All happens because that is what always occurs. There is no way to rationally describe the presence of growth, to fully comprehend the persistence of spirit. It is only really grasped in faith, but aren't your lives characterized in part by your search for what it means to have faith? Isn't it true that in each of your lives you've had experiences that shatter your current beliefs about faith? It is when those beliefs are broken down or challenged or questioned, doubted, rejected that you become aware at some level of the fact that perhaps what you have doubted and rejected does indeed exist.

If you reject God, that does not change the movement of spirit energy toward God, for such happens regardless. But if you explore opportunities for a greater understanding of the possibility of spiritual growth, you are enhancing that growth. You are responding like a magnifying glass to sunlight. You indeed serve to increase that energy. If you block that light, it is still streamed down, and if you refuse to see it with the heart, you will still find ways of being warmed by it even without ascribing such warmth to the light. You are warmed because the energy continues. It persists. It is always there.

Embrace the efforts that you make to turn your attention toward a loving presence. Accept the truth that there are no requirements for growth. There are only components that can assist or continue, but never deny or delete.

You are drawn to the light. You are drawn with no sense of a deadline. There is no race to be won. You are drawn to God's light as the drops of rain are drawn to the surface of the earth. The wind may blow, and the drops may fall sideways, but the drops fall. The energy of the rain may change from rain itself to a mist or fog or a level of humidity, as you describe it. But the moisture that is contained in the rain does not simply stop existing. The components of that moisture, the hydrogen, the oxygen, they change their

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proportions. They may change their connections, but they continue nevertheless to become.

Your lives, indeed all lives, have within them the inherit strength of continuation, of persistence, of evolving, of moving, becoming. Have faith that each human being has within them this permanent characteristic of movement, physical movement, movement of understanding, movement of adaptation, but always movement through love and becoming the love that envelops and embraces and creates all.

Amen.