

# The Voice of Agreement

**Sanford Baran:** Do you ever hear the voice of spirit? I do.

Indeed, spirit does speak to us—a lot! It's heard as there is sufficient attentiveness and substance to be aware of it, and intentionality is critical. The voice of spirit can be easily drowned out by mental chatter, stuff rattling around in consciousness, which can muffle and obscure our connection to this profound reality that speaks to us all the time.

A few days ago I was driving to a meeting; I had the radio tuned to the Denver classical station. Aaron Copland's stirring *Fanfare for the Common Man* started playing. I didn't think too much about it at first—just simply took it in and remembered how much I appreciated its simplicity and heroic grandeur. The previous evening I had started looking for music for today's gathering but hadn't found anything that seemed to fit. But there, in the car, listening to Copland's *Fanfare*, it became immediately clear: "That's it! Here's our music."

So here was the voice of spirit coming right to me, in this case playing on the radio. Spirit speaks in many voices and makes itself known, often in intriguing ways. These days I figure it's best to simply be prepared for it, to expect it, and not be blasé and carelessly indifferent about what's coming my way. There's incredible richness in our worlds; it's definitely good to pay attention!

Let's listen to this piece, *Fanfare for the Common Man*. [Click here to listen](#)

Quite powerful! Aaron Copland composed this in 1942, during World War II. It was commissioned as one of a series of fanfares to boost American morale during the war. The title was suggested by conductor Eugene Goossens in honor of the common man's role in the war effort, inspired by a speech by then Vice President Henry A. Wallace. Patriotism aside, I think the common man is a useful image: that everyone, regardless of their rank, role, or position, rich or poor, has a part to play in the greater whole, and that there is collective power as individuals freely offer their all in service to a higher cause.

Listening to the piece today I still appreciate its original intent, but my feeling now is that something much larger, more sweeping and encompassing is really going on. To my ears what is portrayed is the magnificence and grandeur of creation itself—the awe-inspiring raw power and sheer magnitude of the forces at work throughout the cosmos, here expressed through thundering percussion and crashing symbols. Coming through all the pyrotechnics and musical drama we hear what is back of it all: the tone, that crystal clear vibration represented by the fanfare's main theme, first presenting itself as a single, lone trumpet. Although this is but a single instrument, its clarity and purity of tone resonates far and wide, inspiring everything within earshot to come into

vibrational alignment and evoking an experience of fusion, of being and form. In this unity of heaven and earth—the action of *being incorporated*—is the essence and origin of true agreement. We should note that if such agreement is not a reality in ourselves, we don't have much to bring to the table when working with others.

As agreement is present within individuals, it then sets the stage for collective agreement to occur. In the fanfare, following the playing of the solo trumpet, we hear the main theme now taken up by the full brass ensemble, symbolizing agreement and harmony between instruments. The piece continues to build in intensity and finally reaches a powerful climax with all instruments playing *fortissimo* in a conjoined collective outpouring, resulting in a powerful release of unified radiation.

Agreement doesn't occur from the bottom up. It's not about a bunch of folks coming together, smoothing over their differences, hoping they'll get along and somehow something creative will come of it. No, it's actually the reverse—collective creative action occurs *top down*. In other words, we first come into alignment with that which emanates from above, allowing a factual state of internal agreement to be present at the level of the individual. As this is done, we then are in position to work together as friends and collaborators in all manner of creative activity. We are co-creators, after all, and thus are instruments ourselves—conduits through which spirit speaks in ways most creative and beyond imagination.

It's been quite fun working together with Larry this past week in preparation for this morning. We've known each other for many years, and it's lovely to have this opportunity to share genuine agreement together as men. Larry, what say the voice of spirit through you?

**Larry Krantz:** Sanford is a man I have known for many years and for whom I have great respect. Today, as two men in agreement, we are providing an initial focus for our time together. Disagreement is commonplace in the world; we see it in Congress, or at a homeowners' meeting, or with fellow employees in business. People bring personal agendas and viewpoints, often skewed by politics and religion; egos are bruised, bullies try to dominate. Disagreements lead to cross currents and very little gets done. It has been this way for millennia. Rigid, selfish views lead to anger and conflict, and sometimes to war.

Occasionally, a group of people work together for a greater purpose and put aside their differences, like citizens uniting to defend their country. Of course, that kind of agreement is superficial. Once the conflict is over, people tend to go back to their self-centered and opinionated ways. Last night I watched the Denver Nuggets play basketball against the Los Angeles Lakers, who have stars like LeBron James. Denver won; they also won the

championship last year, beating teams with clusters of superstars. Sports icons often have big egos and want the best stats. They may do well, but the team may not. This Denver team plays with remarkable unselfishness, which is nice to see. They have a natural flow and give the ball to whomever has the hot hand. Their best player could score more, but passes to other players to set them up. He has remained humble and draws everyone in. There is power in selfless agreement. This team's rare unity, of sensing where each other is on the court, leaves other teams shaking their heads.

Few people realize that humankind is One Team. Our world is divided up into competing countries and states and religions and languages. What would it be like if humankind let go of selfish interests, judgments and jealousies, and experienced deep agreement, oneness, and yielded to the One who leads us? The power and creative possibilities on that basis are beyond imagination. Perhaps our world would shine as brightly as the sun!

How do we make decisions? We receive input from our five senses, which gives us information about the world. If we see an obstacle in our path we can walk around it, or if food is left out too long, a foul odor warns us away. We use this data to decide what to do, what seems best for us. But that is a woefully incomplete approach and the results may be disastrous. Without spiritual understanding, our world is in trouble.

When I began my spiritual journey, I was told by those I respected that we have the ability to sense an atmosphere in a place or a person—something beyond the usual five senses. That sounded pretty cool. I wondered why we had never heard this from parents or teachers. Of course, while it had appeal, I was not having the experience. To do so, I needed to learn patience. At the time, I worked as a taxi driver in New York City. What a great place to learn patience! Especially when caught in a traffic jam and your passenger yells that he needs to get to the airport in twenty minutes or he'll miss his flight. Patience relates to the physical world. It accepts external things as they are. If traffic isn't moving, patience requires us to let go of expectations and frustrations, and to not demand externals suit us, no matter how long it takes.

Next, came tranquility. My thoughts were a jumble, anxious and flitting about—there is so much to be concerned about! Gradually, I learned to quiet worrisome thoughts and find a place of stillness. With serenity, I began to know peace at the mental level. With it came a sense of expansion and ease. My world quieted down inside, even if it was noisy and filled with distractions without.

Then, I was taught to be a blessing in my life, to not be so concerned with myself, but what I could do for others, to serve, to be humble. This required a shift; energy moving out, not held within, letting go of **my** needs and wants. These lessons took time to learn.

One day I felt an odd heaviness, a burdensome feeling. It was when someone had come to visit, and the uncomfortable feeling disappeared when he left. A lightbulb went off: I had felt someone's atmosphere. It is indeed a sixth sense and I understood why so few know about this: their minds and hearts are too jumbled to sense a subtle shift or difference. We need to have a kind of base pattern, an internal stillness, so that changes stand out.

Remarkably, the sensing of atmosphere is not affected by distance, much like in the quantum world. From that starting point, attunement opens up, where a person can help restore balance in others through their atmosphere, or to be able to sense something in the atmosphere that doesn't feel right. Amazing!

These are building blocks needed for spiritual maturity that many of us know well, and still refine. What percentage of factors in any moment can a human mind and heart accommodate? One percent is much too generous! It is said that a butterfly flapping its wings can affect the weather on the other side of the planet. Every action leads to other actions, or reactions; the linkages have unseen ramifications. A small act may set in motion significant changes and produce unintended consequences. If we see only a tiny part of the picture, how can we make correct choices? I suspect the results of our actions at times, even with the best of intentions, have caused great harm, unbeknownst to us.

Our human facilities were not designed to conduct our lives isolated from what is higher. If we are to be whole and complete, we need to know ourselves to be part of something larger. In the story of creation, it is said that God created a firmament between the waters above and the waters below. Water is symbolic of truth. Truth has design. This story speaks of a higher level of reality and an earthly realm. God named the firmament heaven; it connects what is above with what is below. The higher reality—whatever that is—has an overview of the earthly world in which we live. It permeates what is below, encompasses space and time from a vantage point our minds do not comprehend. Our human minds and hearts are not made to handle a level of vibrational intensity that is beyond the scope of our facilities.

We are connected to what is above by the substance of the firmament. Guidance from that higher level moves through the connecting substance to show us the way forward. It takes into account all possible factors and ramifications in each moment. Love moves through the connecting medium and emerges in a way that is comprehensible to us. If we pay attention, this flow from heaven lets us lead our lives in perfect harmony with all of creation, and offer a blessing beyond ourselves.

Human arrogance says, "I got this. I don't need any guidance from above." People pay lip service to God, but live in isolation from what is higher, confined by mental structures.

They clutch beliefs and opinions to justify how they act. Imagine someone fumbling with an electric circuit, wanting to put in a 220-volt charger for an electric car, not knowing what he is doing, sticking wires into live circuits, yet shunning the help and direction of a licensed electrician. That would be foolish and dangerous. Yet, that is what we do when we rely on human decisions cut off from heavenly guidance. This is what is meant by eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: making decisions based on the incomplete views of the human mind and heart. It is arrogance and self-deceit. The guidance of heaven is offered freely and in concert with the One who leads our human family. Why not let wisdom flow into our minds and hearts and lead inspired lives?

Sanford mentioned not finding music for today, and then hearing just the right piece play on the radio. Magic happens if we let it. A few weeks ago, Christina spoke of her concern for the financial stability where she worked but not finding a solution, yet it appeared the next day through others.

These are examples of how to function as part of a whole. Our abilities to think and feel are wonderful and necessary, but not meant to be used in isolation. Prayer could be seen as lifting up factors in our world without an agenda, being naked and innocent. In this way, something ascends in the firmament, and solutions will appear, although not necessarily in forms we anticipated or on a set timetable. If we are still and receptive, our minds and hearts will light up with heavenly magic. We know what to do in the context of a larger whole. It is foolish to cut ourselves off from the heavenly flow of divine input. Life should be easy; one step leads to another. No sweat, no fuss. No need to grind out decisions. Spirit is ingenious. It will find a way to move us forward, which is exciting and fun, and feels right. What emerges on this basis will be perfect and in harmony with what is moving everywhere.

We are so much more than these transient human forms; we are eternal beings, poised between what is above and what is below. The creation is one thing. We are the connecting link. In this way, we can bring forth the ordinances of heaven. What a magnificent time to be alive, in the midst of so much foolishness and trouble in the world. Let us be beacons of light, leading the way to understanding.

Joyce recently used a word to describe the true state: lighthearted. Yes, the way should be easy, even when circumstances are uncomfortable or challenging. If we are at center, trusting what is higher, we know peace. We *are* peace. Love never fails. Spirit shows the way; of this we may be assured. The word, *light*, has two meanings. It refers to not being heavy; it also means to dispel darkness, to illuminate. We are meant to be light-hearted, filled with light,

beings of light, the light of the world. That is how change comes—easily, and in agreement, for we are eternal friends.

### **Following Comments...**

**Sanford:** I was thinking about the word *common* in the title *Fanfare for the Common Man*. Another definition of *common* is “widespread.” As the true state of man becomes increasingly widespread, becomes more of a common everyday occurrence, this is cause for great rejoicing. And it’s tangibly felt—our hearts no longer are troubled, there is the experience of light-heartedness.

And best of all, the ongoing opportunity and privilege to actively work together in true agreement, as co-creators in these exciting days ahead.

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### **Pre-Service Music**

1. *Serenade for Strings in C, Op. 48: II. Walzer: Moderato (Tempo di valse)*

Composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and performed by the St Petersburg Philharmonic

2. *Violin Sonatina in G Major, Op. 100, B. 120: IV. Finale. Allegro*

Composed by Antonín Dvořák and performed by Randall Goosby & Zhu Wang

### **Concluding Music**

*Olympic Fanfare And Theme*

Composed by John Williams and performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic