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We Create Stories, Art Through Living

By Don Miguel Ruiz

Many people believe that the greatest fear humans have is that of dying. I know that death is certainly a great fear, but I think for many people it is much more frightening to be alive. There is a fear of going out into the world and expressing ourselves and asking for what we want. Many have a fear of taking a risk in life to reach their goals. I believe that to be alive and to enjoy our life is the greatest way to say, "Thank you, God, for life."

Today, my heart is full of gratitude for just being alive, just being here. Being alive is the greatest opportunity for creation, and only an artist can create. I consider every human an artist. We are always creating. Even if you haven't noticed, your whole life has been your creation. The way you live your life, everything that you believe about yourself and your world is your creation. Your family, your business, your job and your relationships are your creations. And that makes you an artist.

There are two ways to be an artist: One is with awareness, knowing that we are artists and knowing that the expression of our life is our art; the other way is without awareness. That is when we don't even notice that what we have created in our life is art. Whether you have drama or happiness, your life is still art and it is your creation. We create this art because it is our nature.

I will share with you how I have created my art, my own life. I can say that my whole life has been just a story, a story that I have created, and that story has been about me. I play the main role in this story. Of course, everything is about me, because this is the only point of view that I have. I cannot have the point of view of my children, my mother or my beloved. If I speak for somebody else, I'm just making an assumption about their point of view.

In the beginning, I was without awareness and I didn't know that I was creating a story! Whatever happened around me, whatever I did, whatever interactions I had, I always made up a story. When I tried to explain or to justify whatever happened, I was making a story, and that story was the only truth for me. It could not be truth for anyone else.

We all perceive exactly the same way, but each one of us creates our own story about that perception. In your interactions with your family, your beloved, your children, you have your own story. But each one of them will have a completely different point of view. They will create their own story about whatever happened between you and them, with different explanations and different justifications.

Your truth will be truth only for you. It will not necessarily be truth in the point of view of your children, your parents, or your beloved.

When we understand this, it's easier to improve the relationships we have with everyone, including with ourselves. When we know this, we no longer can claim that we have the truth and that anybody else is wrong. It's no longer about being right or wrong. It's just about how you create your personal story.

I think this is beautiful. The story that you create about yourself is art! It is the expression of your spirit.