

## Soul Pickings

### *Insights from Prairie Grass*

By Sally Mahe, ITP Mastery teacher & ITP San Rafael member

I want to share a fragment of “soul pickings” from my journal. These are thoughts that come to me when I reflect and intentionally enter into conversation with my soul. I usually do this by sitting quietly in the mornings with my journal in hand. I often address the day’s entry by greeting my soul like this, “Dear Sally soul,”..... then, I begin to write whatever comes up.



How we understand and relate to our soul is exquisitely personal. I sense that what we receive from soul conversations accumulates over time and these insights add up. They are our own treasure, ready to be retrieved and renewed with meaning. I hope that this sample “soul picking” from my journal may be helpful to you. More importantly, I invite you to reflect on conversations you may have had with your soul and see what “soul pickings” are there for you. You might consider returning to your “soul pickings” to help you realign with your life journey and your soul’s destiny.

*“I loaf and invite my soul...at my ease observing a spear of summer grass...”*  
- Walt Whitman

For the past seven years I’ve walked the fields of the tall grass prairie in the Flint Hills of Kansas. My soul comes alive on the prairie – its horizons, its green swells, its intimacy with clouds and sky, its explosion of diverse prairie grasses and flowers.

A few months after one these prairie walk-about, I wrote a question in my journal, “What is my truest longing and source of fulfillment?” I was talking to my soul. A stalk of prairie grass immediately came to mind. I saw its roots digging deeper and deeper into dark soil. I tingled with expectation as I imagined that is what the tender- tipped root hairs feel with each advancing millimeter into dark nutrient. Inching downward in the dark made me feel excited but also afraid. I was afraid to be so invisible, so far from the light of day. Then, another image came into view. It was a field of glistening, abundantly diverse leaves of prairie grass. In that vision, I realized that I am neither just the grass-root nor the grass-top. The journey of my soul is reflected in the whole blade of grass. I am the grass seed, bursting to give more life; I am leaves gulping sunlight; I am the stalk swooshing in the wind. I am the roots digging deep. I am resilient, part of something bigger, and my presence pumps life into of the whole prairie ecosystem. I enrich the soil that I grow in and, even in

the face of calamity, I keep growing. Seeing myself as a blade of grass in the vast prairie gives me joy and meaning.

I've noticed that my soul speaks to me more about process than content. It guides me in how to go towards my destiny and gives clues to what to experience along the way. My soul has not spelled out a specific career, a central project, or as it likes to say, "I don't get involved with the details." From the prairie grass metaphor, I learn that to fulfill my soul's destiny takes spending time out of view, inside myself where the way may feel scary and unclear. My activities, work in the world, relationships, etc. that show up at the grass-tops must stay in balance with steady nurture at the grassroots - away from the action. I also see how my blade of grass fits in the whole, the magnificent prairie landscape. I play my part and participate in the give and take and in the unpredictability of life around me.

I notice that my soul voice is not linear or bossy. It speaks in meaningful images that I understand. I feel it comes to me with courtesy, patience and relentless love that meets me where I am. This image of a blade of grass in the prairie encourages me to keep growing, loaf a bit more in reverie, trust the value that I bring to the whole; and, most of all to keep inviting my soul to speak with me.