



KATE MCGARRY

Music, specifically singing, has been central to my life since I was born, and has been my way of expressing and sharing the most personal and universal feelings I have. I think of music as a Fed Ex system for spirit; a way to bring into form the unseen but very palpable energy that creates everything. It has the miraculous power to bypass the intellect and find its way to the core of each person. What strong medicine music is. In fact, in my family becoming a musician was always considered to be at least equal to if not better than becoming a doctor as we understood it to be one of the healing arts.

I come from a very large Irish-Catholic family. When I was around six years old, my baby sister became very ill with a high fever that did not abate for many days. The doctors were unable to help her, a priest even came to the house to give her blessings in case she died. We were all so sad and longing for her to recover. One afternoon, after about a week of this, my mother who was also a nurse, took all nine of us children up to her bedroom and placed my sister in the middle of the bed. We held hands in a circle around her and sang the rosary and other prayers for her. I watched her for a while, lying so still, barely breathing. Though I didn't understand how, I knew that we were using our collective energy through the songs and the words to reach out to her, to God, to the Whole, and send a message asking for help. Even at six, I knew this was an important moment and I felt my energy and love for her like a laser beam focusing on her. As we ended our prayers an hour later, I looked again at my sister lying in the afternoon light. I could see the beads of sweat all over her face and knew that our song and prayers had been heard. It registered very deeply, something listens to me, this universe is responsive to me, it hears my feelings, and it interacts with me. This is not a one way street. My spirit is powerful and our spirits combined are really powerful.

This was one of my first experiences of intention, community, and music coming together to uplift and change circumstances. I have the good fortune to experience this on a regular basis now as a singer. More and more frequently when I sing for people, energy fills my body and I feel the doors open and love flows back and forth between us with no conditions or attachments. We access the place where we are not separate; a place beyond the individual that also enjoys the individual. It's a place that is beyond form but loves form. It's a beautiful feeling and I'm grateful and astounded to have such a mysterious force as music alive in my life. I cannot understand it. Ahhh what a relief, I love that. Is there anything more spiritual?



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