Daring Greatly (www.cecilpublishing.com)

I had a secret or two.

I started seeing a therapist in January 2015 because, as I mentioned, I had some secrets that I wanted to share. I needed someone who I deemed safe, someone who hopefully would not judge me and whom I not have to see in the normal course of my life. When we first met, I told her that I was seeking God.. She said that no one had come to her for that. I remember that I also brought her my books and a collection of poems titled Divinity.

She was very patient. I didn't confess right away. She thought I was wanting to resolve some type of trauma. She used EMDR and afterwards seemed to know that I wasn't there for that. She asked me to write what she called my truth. I have never been fond of the expression but I knewwhat she meant.

That writing became "The Message." I went to her one night and was extremely nervous. After I read it there was silence. The sun was coming in through her windows and I could hear the birds chirping and it was a special moment. And this therapist believed me and she said that she was honored to hear it. She may have been practicing unconditional positive regard, but she seemed sincere. We talked and I told her that I would like to share it with my parents. She asked me why.

I responded that this is who I am and that I feel like I'm living a lie by hiding. Ultimately, I wanted to share it with them because I thought that it was necessary for the Kingdom of God. She understood.

So, on a Saturday, told my parents that I wanted to meet with them. I met my mom in the morning and with my dad in the afternoon. Their response seemed guarded. But how are they or anyone supposed to act after hearing "The Message."

I had some poems and eventually put a manuscript together. I read and edited, read and edited. I decided to publish this work, titled *The Song of the Spirit.* I did not have much input from others into the content or editing of the book. When published I ordered some books and sent them to ministers throughout the country. I sent around 120 packages. I did not give them to family and friends right away. Time passed and I sent copies to close family. Daybe 10, no more than 15 people received *The Song of the Spirit.*

I'm well aware that the content of The Song of the Spirit paints me as someone in a serious mental health crisis. I knew that going in, that I would be viewed negatively when I sent those books. No one responded. The people closest to me said nothing. It was devastating. That period, which lasted about two months, was the most difficult in my recovery, aside from the first 6 months after getting sober.

I was so vulnerable. I changed some of the 12 step meetings that I was going to, to avoid people. There was one meeting that I went to and someone who I gave the book was there. I

left before the meeting ended. I avoided some family functions and withstood awkward moments when I felt shame for writing and believing what I wrote. Beside hiding, which I could only do for so long, I knew what I felt would pass. I also said I will do whatever it takes to overcome fear, even if that means hiding. There is no wrong way exiting hell.

Now, I prepare to go through something similar again by inviting a larger audience to my writings. By doing so I am opening myself up to be called delusional, to be gawked at. There is a very fine line for me to argue that I am sane, considering that I have bipolar. I'm not free from doubting myself and also concede that there is a chance that I am wrong. This has been in effort in faith… by defiy there are no certainties. I am risking my name and reputation, which by doing so lends credibility to what I am saying.

I'm willing to pay the cost. By sharing openly, by inviting people to my writings, I may lose my job or because of the tension that I would bring at work will have to quit. I will likely alienate myself from family. I'll be an outsider and will certainly need some distance for a little while. That's what's on the table.

You have to wonder why I am doing this, with so much to lose and gains unknown. Please also consider that I have been working for peace for 16 years and there has been little success in terms of book sales or speaking engagements. My primary measurement of success is the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God, which has not happened. So, my endeavors have hardly been successful.

I'm doing this because I believe. But more than that, because of my experiences with God, which help me endure the feelings of fear and uncertainty I experience. It is really that simple. And I believe that no matter what comes, will be for the best… for humanity. I believe in my union I've made with God and trust that nothing will touch me unless She allows it.

I might taste failure and alienation, but I will not die from the poison of regret. I will not look back on my life and question how I spent my time or where I gave my energy. I may not get the outcome I want, but it won't be because of lack of effort or will. My heart desires peace and I'll always be restless unless I do what I can to achieve this.

Wishing you the very best,

your faithful and obedient servant.

Eric Cecil