

March 10, 2009

Dear Ethan Nichtern and The Interdependence Project,

Please find my enclosed donation to The Interdependence Project. I know that this is relatively a very small fraction of the support you need, but I want to show my gratitude for all that The ID Project does. In a very real way The ID Project helped me rebuild my life.

In July of 2007 a semi-truck smashed directly into the driver's side of my car. I should have died. I was in a coma for a week, and spent ten days on life support. I had three surgeries in four days. I had eleven broken bones, countless wounds, and multiple brain contusions. My lung was deflated, my liver lacerated, and my spleen was in a million pieces. The doctors didn't know why I was alive. Usually when someone's neck breaks where mine was broken, they die instantaneously. I didn't.

I got out of the hospital the same week that *One City* came out. A friend of mine brought me my latest copy of "Shambhala Sun" to read while I recovered. With my brain injury, it took me almost an entire month to read it. But when I saw the review of *One City* in that month's edition, I asked my mother to order it for me right away. I read *One City* slowly over the next six weeks while I recovered. Then, I started listening to the podcasts regularly.

I am not sure that all of this will make sense to you, or to anyone really, but *One City* and the podcasts helped me heal emotionally and mentally as my body healed physically. I live in rural Missouri. I am the only person from my small town who studies Buddhism, or consciously acknowledges the real significance of interdependence. As I am sure you can imagine, after my accident I was in a really weird place. Reading *One City* and then listening to the podcasts gave me a sense of community and helped ground me in mindfulness and awareness as I rebuilt my life. Of course I went to counseling and did a lot of other things, but the book and the podcasts addressed a lot my struggles in a Buddhist inspired framework that I very much needed. After I "died" (that's how I refer to my accident to try to be less serious sounding ☺) I had to face a lot of things I only thought about before abstractly: death, impermanence, fear, ego, emotions, grief, patience, intention, and even my practice. It was one of those Pema Chodron "when things fall apart" kind of times, and *One City* and the ID Project helped me help myself.

Since that fall, I have recovered remarkably. I will be graduating from college this May and heading to graduate school this fall. I am the first person in my entire family to go to college, and now despite the doctor's doubts, I will be the first person to earn a degree. Even with all the problems I still face, I have never been more centered or content, and I can even drive next to a semi truck without freaking out!

I know this isn't a lot of money, but it's a lot of money to a poor college student in Missouri. I think what you all are doing is great. Seriously, wonderful work that is making an amazing difference. You are making a difference in the world, and often I think in ways you don't even imagine. Without knowing it, you helped a girl all the way in Missouri put the pieces of her life back together, one thought at a time. I hope this little donation helps you continue to help other people like me, but also reminds that you already have.

Sincerely,



Angela Carter

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