

Rafting the Canyon by Kathie Brodie
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Memories are still percolating from the trip down the Grand Canyon so I know I'm still realigning and recalibrating. The scenery was beautiful and the people were fabulous. We really are one big family. It was clear the first night that we were meeting again for the first time. Many felt like family; siblings, parents, long lost cousins. It was interesting to once again realize that we are all one, whether we are from Hawaii or South Africa.

Fortunately all of us on the trip were healers of one form or another so we had a common theme, but beyond that we were there to honor the Canyon, our ancestors of lifetimes ago, and Gaia The Mother. We did drumming and chanting in the evenings and in the sacred spots. One night in particular I could hear the drumming reverberating off the walls while we watched the moon peek in and out, showing us beautiful, meaningful cloud images while splashes of light danced across the billion-year-old rocks which protected us.

There were many magical moments and many bonding experiences, not the least of which were the heat, the sand, the hikes, the group energy and the laughter. There were scrapes and bruises and sore muscles, fully enough to go around. We hiked what seemed like straight up the canyon walls, slid down waterfalls, soaked in the healing waters and slept under the stars. One of the healers "knew" that we had been there before in previous lifetimes and had been enslaved and shackled, and she entreated us to be extra careful of our hands and feet. There were unusual foot and ankle problems, which made perfect sense after her explanation.

When I returned, several of my friends asked me if I were afraid of the rapids. Frankly, I never thought of that. When Tyberonn suggested, almost two years ago, that he arrange a trip rafting down the Grand Canyon, I knew I needed to be there. When he sent out the email, I think I was one of the first to sign up. Afraid? That never occurred to me. We had challenging moments and some times that could have turned out differently, but Spirit took care of us. One of our group was tossed over the front of the raft at Hermit

Rapids, then at the next huge wave he flipped back in. Obviously it wasn't his time yet. When you come face to face with stark reality, it challenges you to go inward. It was a quiet night that night, fluctuating between relief and awe, wondering where I fit into the big plan. There was a time when we were going down that particular rapid that I felt like the hamburger in the bottom of the taco shell, with the bow coming up and the metal boxes in the stern crashing around, and everything headed for the middle where I was hanging on for dear life. We rode out the rapids, leveled out and counted noses. Fortunately it was the right number!

I think that night is the first night I had the inclination to really ponder. I was watching others and watching myself; it was as if I stepped outside myself and just observed. Once again I realized we are not separate, we are all one. Does it matter that someone has prettier clothes or what seemingly is a nicer body? Not a bit. Why should we waste our time comparing anyway? It is so much more important to see what is inside than what is outside. It's all trappings on the outside; makeup, perfume, clean clothes, fancy hairdos. The only part that matters is inside, the part you can't see.

This was the perfect playing field - totally level after the first day! We all had the same challenges: to find our way to the river at night and figure out a way to keep the sand out of openings (both physical and emotional) and share personal space when we laid out our cots and sleeping bags. And everyone measured up to the challenge. The last night I removed my sand-encrusted ear plugs because I wanted to enjoy the laughter of the others, which was so much more important than simply sleeping. Laying there under the stars and listening to the river rush by, watching the moon beams dance, knowing it was our last night together, felt somehow profound.

It was a growth time for me, and I continue to grow even now. My sense of self has changed but it is hard to define how. I just know that this trip was a very important experience for me, and experiences like this are so hard to put into words. It is a feeling, a knowingness, a sense that all is now right with the world and I am secure in who I am and what I am.



Kathie and Soul Brother Ken brave the Grand Canyon

