

Sustainability Sunday Fact Sheet # 8: Remember the humming bird.

One of the first Sunday's we did, I focused on water and to relate to it I told a Japanese proverb about a hummingbird named Dukdukdiya. I have since had a couple of the faces here tonight point out to me the moral of that proverb to make me chin up, I was sick this week and didn't get a chance to dive into any research so I'd like to revisit this story because I think it offers something so basic and needed you can come to it again and again:

This is the story of a great forest that caught on fire:

The terrible fire raged and burned. All of the animals were afraid and fled from their homes. The elephant and the tiger, the beaver and the bear all ran, and above them the birds flew in a panic. They huddled at the edge of the forest and watched. All of the creatures except one. Only Dukdukdiya, the little hummingbird, would not abandon the forest. Dukdukdiya flew quickly to the stream. She picked up a single drop of water in her beak. Dukdukdiya flew back and dropped the water on the fire. Again she flew to the stream and brought back another drop, and so she continued-back and forth, back and forth. The other animals watched Dukdukdiya's tiny body fly against the enormous fire, and they were frightened. They called out to the little hummingbird, warning her of the smoke and the heat. "What can I do?" sobbed the rabbit. "This fire is much too hot." "There is too much smoke!" howled the wolf. "My wings will burn! My beak is too small!" cried the owl. But the hummingbird persisted. She flew to and from picking up more water and dropping it, bead by bead, onto the burning forest. Finally, the big bear said, "Little Dukdukdiya, what are you doing?"

Without stopping, Dukdukdiya looked down at all the animals. She said, "I am doing what I can."

Sustainability can be a lot of things, from business models to grass roots campaigns to change lives, to a simple hello because like war, or art it's just a word, only related to when applied to a context. At its core sustainable energy is simply a person learning to become aware of where they fit in the world and how they interact with it. I realized something when asked to describe what a world might look like if we were all conscious of our impact on it. You can idealize and glorify and create theories of how this or that would work or function or operate or be built or on and on, but in this we miss the point. The point is that to build and restructure ourselves into functioning healthy systems or just to maintain the ones we already have we must first be healthy ourselves. How do we choose to interact with our own thoughts, and those of others? How do we face adversity, and confusion? How and when do we decide to shoulder our own burdens so that we might make room for those of our loved ones? To choose right action, and to understand that you must attain balance, to act selfishly and selflessly simultaneously to attain goals yet be able to use what you gain to help others, and only then have enough of a foundation to truly respect the world around you. So this week I just want to say thank you for all the old faces

that have stuck it out with me so far, and the news ones who have been generous enough to give me some of your time to ramble on like this.

What I do know, is that you matter; as individuals, as family member and friends, as communities. I have sometimes wondered what makes us worthy to be here at all, in a world that sometimes feels like it's going crazy. And then I see those faced with hardship and tragedy suck it up, work through it and choose to embrace the beauty in life and the potential to take joy and ability and create out of them something greater. There will never be a drop of water or an action small or large that does not have weight, meaning, or impact. Thank you for your time, Dane.