

full tilt living newsletter

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I don't know if it was just the kids in our neighborhood or if it was what happened everywhere. I'm talking about the whistlers. How we'd start with getting something out by scrunching our tongues up against the roof of our mouths. Making a few high pitched notes. Maybe using it to call the dog. Then when we got things more refined, we could whistle tunes through our lips. We were real whistlers then. If you kept working at it, the possibility of appearing on one of the TV talent shows wasn't out of the question. And if you couldn't carry much of a tune, you could still get out a pretty respectable wolf whistle.

Two-finger whistles were some kids' specialty. They could blow out eardrums a block away. And if they had a horse, it would toss it's mane, prick up it's ears and come running. At least in the movies. We were a little short on horses in the burbs.

Whistling was mostly an outdoor sport. For reasons still unknown to me, whistling in the house was almost as bad as chewing with your mouth open. And everybody did it. The whistling, not the chomping like a cow.

I'm not hearing the whistlers these days. Maybe it's the Ipods. Who needs whistling when you've got a gazillion tunes on your earphones? Or the braces. I had to learn to whistle all over again when I got mine off. Being lame at whistling once you're past the accepted learning age is darned embarrassing. Maybe most people just let it go.

This is coming to mind because the birds around here have been singing with crazed intensity lately. Each with their signature song. It gets pretty raucous in a friendly, my chirp's louder than your chirp sort of way. And it reminds me of kids whistling in the street. Those sweetly spontaneous bursts. Little sparks of soul riding on their notes. Lusciously untamed. Audience of one. No applause necessary.

And if it's not the Ipods or the braces it could be the world we've moved into might still be intrigued with self-expression of the whistling form, but it's not so sure there's room any longer for, shall we say, self as sound. I have to admit that the kid playing a game on his cell phone while on my crowded commute train had me wanting to yank his chosen form of self expression right out of his grubby mitts and do a little self-

expressive stomp of my own. So maybe giving up on the expression of self as sound is simply the better part of wisdom.

What then? How do we go about sounding our note with no notes to sound?

Come and play the Spark Game with me and I'll show you how.

The Spark Game

You know about sparks, right? Those bright flashes, those seconds of combustion that erupt in small, intense bursts. And can be coaxed into flames if you're wanting to get a fire going.

So now play along, if you will, with the possibility that you have such a spark. Only yours is enduring--never flashes out. Has a signature color belonging only to you. Is seated in the center of your chest, like a bright ember in a hearth. If you are the tuning-in type and you tune in to it, you might hear a clear note sounding.

Look inside now with your inner imagining eyes and see if you see that spark. Or feel it in what could be a vibrating, pulsing way. Or hear it's subtle, pure sound.

This is an exploration game. You want to have time to explore. It may take some moments to find it. It may be many layers in.

Once you've got it, you've got it good. It'll be easy to zone in on your spark any time.

A very good thing, because now you can play and begin to notice your spark's incredible usefulness. Confusion, fear, doubt don't stand a chance when you tune into your spark. And it only stays small if that's the size you'd like it. You can let it get big with just a thought. Then you can bask in it, like your own personal inner sun. It rejuvenates. It calms. In an instant. And anywhere.

Resounding, sounding soul sound. Sparking, brightening, being our light.

And know that I'm behind you all the way.