



# Diane Babcock

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## Divine Inspiration Reconnects Teenage Sweetheart Bond After 43 Years To Kick Carcinogenic Cat

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### The Takeaway

How divine inspiration by any other name can be a valuable instrument in today's world when one's mind is open to receive that kind of guidance, along with the understanding it is just another facet of our expansive human potential for grander and broader knowledge. How moments of decisive fortitude in this Life & Death ordeal extraordinaire reveal the basic truth that life unto itself truly is a gift to be celebrated and our choice to evolve our consciousness toward that awareness is ultimately our own.

### The Introduction



Figure 1 - Rocky Cave 1972

Imagine me and my first high school boyfriend forty-five years later about to reunite in person, but with a beautifully bizarre twist of fate that renewed a special bond to inspire a phenomenal faith when death seemed the only outcome.

I learned a thing or two about trusting my hunches over the years, but when a song in a movie triggered a nostalgic sentiment that brought a vital message for my high school boyfriend after 43 years apart I thought my brain back-flipped into the twilight zone. I sensed I needed to phone and 'make sure he was okay', but then wondered not only whether to act, but how not to sound like a crazy person in the face of a possible closed mind. There's no way I could have known about his

fateful struggle with a cancerous brain tumor that was further complicated by multiple surgery delays any more than I knew of his previous lung cancer that almost took his life five years earlier.

As it turned out calling him was the best decision I made for both of us and the fact he was so happy I did was an incredibly huge relief for me. The very next day he got his long-awaited surgery that he says never would have happened had we not spoken and that I gave him the faith to move forward. He said he wouldn't have answered that call from the hospital to inform him the sky was clear for flying, because he had truly given up all hope by then. Thankfully, he did answer the phone, but unfortunately this 'carcinogenic cat' as I call it had more lives than just two in it for him when another tumor appeared on his lung only a couple of months after that brain surgery.



Figure 2 - Diane Babcock 1972

Over the past eighteen months we've spent much phone time catching up, exchanging philosophies and discussing alternative medicines, which led me to experiment by making my own topical canna-balm for muscle and joint pain. In my saga with Rocky, I share my observations, feelings and actions in doing my very best to inspire and support his choices throughout every gruelling gauntlet imposed on him by the medical system. When he couldn't take it any more and moved away to do life differently I noted his active enthusiasm in pursuing the quality of his life, quantity unknown.

There is a myriad of interconnected stories that created this story and to this day Rocky credits me for saving his life with that single phone call, which is a surreal notion in my mind since my part was to act on a strong hunch. I know he played a huge part himself by being on the same wavelength in wanting to live and all those subsequent death-defying doctoral decisions were all his. Today we exist in mutual states of euphoric anticipation for the day when that seemingly timeless bond we forged as teenagers will have reconnected itself fully with a physical embrace of our ever virtuous love.

## **The Story**

It is ordinarily agreed most people are comfortable with the concept of happy coincidences and get the gist of synchronicity in chance encounters. Some folks even revel in a bit of déjà vu now and then without being too spooked about it. But, there's a big shying away when it comes to any phenomena beyond those and which might resemble 'divine inspiration' in every day life without the religious context. I've certainly had my share of unexplainable fortuitous happenstance and keep my metaphysical mind open to what some would call woo-woo, but this beautifully bizarre experience was off the chart even for me.

This amazement story begins during one of my favourite evening pastimes where after finishing a busy work project I treat myself to dinner and a movie, or more specifically Spaghetti Puttanesca, Merlot and Netflix. As usual, the hardest part of this 'me' time is choosing which movie to watch, and as usual, I go with what jumps out in my searches. My picks are mostly in the action and adventure genres where I can let my brain cells settle into the wine glass while my body settles into the futon and I can be thoroughly entertained. This August evening in 2017 started out just like any other treat night when Pulp Fiction appeared on my radar. I figured since I hadn't seen it in many years, it was time to revisit my decades-younger action heroes and heroines bringing Quentin Tarantino's cult classic to life. At one point about halfway through the movie Uma Thurman arrives home with John Travolta and in continuing her dance craze she rewinds the reel-to-reel to Urge Overkill's rendition of Neil Diamond's 1967 song, 'Girl, You'll be a Woman Soon'.

It may have been the wine, the words, the music or all three, but that song stirred me to my core when it triggered a powerful nostalgia that put me into some kind of energetic stasis throughout the rest of the movie. Afterward I did what I always do when a song affects me so profoundly and clicked on over to the Youtube channel in search of the original version so I could listen to it over and again. It seemed the more I replayed it the more my entire energy field shifted back to a time in my high school youth when I was innocent and naive, and of course loved Neil Diamond. For sure my throwback virginity was a nice space to be in, but while I was basking in my adolescence I got a strong sense of concern for my very first boyfriend from high school. Along with this sudden concern I got an equally strong impression to call him for no other reason than 'to make sure he was okay' in spite of the 400 miles and 43 years distance between us.

It is true I often get hunches from my sense of inner guidance and always follow through, but this was different and I did some earnest waffling over the idea for half an hour while searching the white pages

online for the phone number of a Rocky Cave in Quesnel. I wondered if this notion was maybe some new form of wistful thinking I was experiencing and what could I possibly say to him that would make sense of this sudden contact after more than four decades. I had no idea if he still lived in that city or inkling of his marital status, or even if he was alive, but for sure there was some urgency in this intervention into my otherwise quiet evening. The only certainty I had to go on was the clearly resounding statement of the message I was to relay to him in that 'I needed to make sure he was okay'. It was because the impression was so strong I realized I had no choice but to call, so I justified my apparent absurdity by reminding myself Rocky can do whatever he wants with the information just as long as he gets it.

So, I succumbed to the fantastic notion and nervously called the number I found, only to leave a message on his answering machine along the lines of, "Hi, Rocky. This is Diane Babcock and I don't know how you will take this after over 40 years, but the reason I called was to make sure you are okay. So, I hope you have a happy life. Bye." Surprising, he called back right away without even hearing the message, as he had just walked in the door when the phone stopped ringing and after a few moments connected the 'D' in the call display to Diane with my last name that hadn't changed since high school. In astonishment, I didn't recognize him mainly from the haggard tone in his voice, but since I had already rehearsed it so many times in my head I basically repeated what the message said and that is when his response astounded me. Rocky said he was so grateful and in awe, because he had been going through some awful stuff and he figured I must have read his troubled thoughts.

The facts of Rocky's matter were such that he was struggling with a cancerous brain tumor where for the past week he had been restricted to the hospital grounds anxiously awaiting to fly 400 miles to Vancouver for the necessary surgery. He was grievously fed up with having his hopes crushed repeatedly by continuously cancelled flight plans caused by the forest fires. Feeling defeated, he couldn't take any more disappointment on top of the imminent threat of another seizure that could kill him, so he discharged himself and went home with all hope lost for living. Then his tone evened a bit and in spite of his distress he said he was shocked, but also very happy that I called because it had been the worst day of his life with what he'd been going through. I found myself cringing when he explained the painful horrors of his debilitating health that resulted in seizures and paralysis, as well as the side effects from the prescriptions drugs that left him unable to eat or sleep well. I became so filled with consternation and compassion that I wanted to jump on a plane myself and be at his side to comfort him through his ordeal, but the most I could do was care.

Then, the next morning something seemingly miraculous happened when Rocky again got the go ahead for surgery and this time without delay as he was whisked by ambulance from his home down to the airport. I must not have heard the phone ring, because I found his message in voice mail later that day telling me of his hasty departure and to expect his phone call should he survive the surgery. I deduced by the time I heard the message he would already be in the skilled hands of the brain surgeon for the risky operation that would leave him incapacitated for several days of his life and determine the quality of the remainder. It was a week later when he phoned me on his return home to thank me again for my call and say he was still amazed at how it lifted him up and gave him the strength to go forward into that scary place. He also reported that he woke up from surgery with a new sense of life and living – and 'I' helped him get there. Imagine that! So you can bet I'll never doubt those kinds of hunches again.

Subsequent phone calls over the next several weeks revealed this was not Rocky's first kick at the carcinogenic cat and that he overcame lung cancer five years prior using experimental drugs in a group setting along with radiation and chemo therapy. "Oh my gosh!" is all I could think or say during those calls where he was given one year to live, had to give up his job, dissolve his properties, move in with

his son and almost died from the treatment. On the lighter side we got each other caught up on our respective major life events along with some reminiscing about the 'good old days' and our current perspectives about life in general. It seems we both have an affinity for naturopathic remedies and prefer our spirituality on the metaphysical side with him being a big fan of Art Bell and myself enamoured with Stuart Wilde. Within a few days he got busy writing letters as a way to help organize his thoughts better and sent me one in a decorative cookie tin that included his very own crock pot recipe for Chaga Tea and some of his own hand-picked Chaga Mushrooms.

By the time October came around one would expect this 'Big C' story to happily continue with Rocky settling in to his resurgence during the recovery process of such a dangerous operation as brain surgery, but no! Although it did start that way when all the painkillers, anti-seizure meds and other regulating prescriptions were in place and his health seemed to be progressing to where he was looking forward to visiting me. But then, whammo! Just two months after he was back home from brain surgery he was informed that another cancerous tumor was found on his lung, and this one was pressing on his spinal cord. As if that kind of unbelievably devastating news wasn't enough, the prescribed treatment was the lethal radiation/chemo combo that almost killed him when he was healthy, but by this time he had lost too much weight to withstand the process that only offered a 50/50 chance of a cure.

With this outrageous turn of events and because Rocky was a troglodyte when it came to computers I offered to actively search the internet for alternative cancer treatments and also mailed him the book my doctor wrote on the subject. It didn't take long for me to realize this was a 'true to life' project for more than the original purpose when I noticed how important prevention is when it comes to these diseases. I felt like I was helping not only Rocky, but also myself and my family, as well as the rest of the world with my research, because I am one of those people who shares good ideas on my social networks. I must interject here that there was one very prominent naturopathic remedy and cure for multitudes of very ill patients suffering with everything from autism to cancer to psoriasis and beyond: cannabinoids. That knowledge prompted me to experiment with my own growing and concocting skills to see just how easy it is for anyone to be more medically self-sufficient by making cannabis infusions for topical salves from one of nature's most versatile and prolific weeds. And, it really was so very easy!

In the meanwhile Rocky spent his days mulling and agonizing at times over his decision about whether to take the prescribed treatment or take his chances 'au naturel' so to speak, because the odds were 50/50 no matter what path he took. At the same time, he was keenly aware of yet another great hindrance that deterred him from the radical chemical solution and it was the fact that he had no one to look after him through the gruesome side effects. Even so, he often thanked me for listening without judging or demanding one choice over another while he shared his very real concerns. I sensed only he knew the right answer to this heartbreaking question and the most I could do is listen, offer insight and support his choice – whatever choice that may be.

Over time with our phone calls I noticed how truly despondent Rocky sounded when he mentioned his doctoring visits and how depressing it was to be talking about sickness all of the time and be around sick people so much of the time. On the flip side, his voice always perked up when he talked about how much he looked forward to visiting his kids and grandkids in Kamloops, and one day visiting me in Nanaimo before anything worse happened health-wise. I found myself appreciating his openness and candor in our conversations that came from a man who had virtually nothing left to lose or hide, egotistically and emotionally speaking. He said he found much truth about what was truly important when he faced the prospect of dying as told to him by his oncologist, and at the heart of it all some things once coveted simply got filed away as unimportant in his mind. He laughed when I mentioned to

him that many healthy people spend many hours in meditation trying to get to that very same place of living from what is truly important in life and they call it enlightenment. We both laughed even more when I told him I was one of those people!

Back on the decision track, Rocky was at first quite adamant about not submitting to the doctors' demands for their prescribed 'rinse and repeat' approach to cancer treatment and all the ensuing rigmarole, but eventually he came to a compromise within himself. He decided he would move forward with the radiation stage of the treatment and then be tentative with the chemo therapy, taking it one step at a time depending on how much his health could bear. By March of the following year and seven months after the brain surgery he was back home from the week-long hospital stay for radiation 75 miles away in Prince George to battle his second bout with lung cancer. Seriously, I could not even imagine what he was going through, but I promised him and myself that I would do my utmost to prevent this scenario from playing out in my own life and also to the best of my ability anyone else's. I also vowed to help him to find more health-friendly painkilling alternatives than the heavy-duty and heavily-controlled pharmaceuticals prescribed by his doctor.

It was shortly after that point Rocky did an about-face and decided to take a month off from doctors who were hounding him to follow up with chemo therapy, but he had still not regained much health or appetite and knew his body couldn't handle such poison at that time. I could only listen with a degree of empathy, as I remembered my sister's unsuccessful battle with lung cancer where they absolutely bombarded her system with chemo therapy because it had been misdiagnosed as COPD and then metastasized so aggressively. I also knew only too well the hot searing flashes of pain shooting down my legs and blasting out of my ankles from a herniated disk pressing on my spinal cord ten years earlier. I recalled the pain being so bad one time after I suffered my own doctoral disappointments with cancelled surgery on 'the day of' and ended up in emergency where I was prescribed oxycodone. It was so horrible that I ended up throwing it in the trash and that was when I totally threw myself into meditation in a wildly desperate attempt to stop the pain.

I knew Rocky was going through a very rough time on every level of being and I also know the tricks pain can play on the mind to distort one's senses in chronic pain situations, but this went beyond that and into the domain of Life or Death situation. Then there was the incessant badgering from the specialists and how they hounded him for tests to find out why he was still alive as the only remaining survivor of the experimental drug group. The most I could do was reaffirm that I was there for him to bounce ideas off as a way to try and put the pieces of his jumbled thoughts together for something that resembled hope for a better life. After a couple of months I was getting concerned that I hadn't heard from him, but he finally called and had made a major life decision in which he moved 250 miles away to Kamloops and out of the doctors' reach entirely. He knew he needed to get his health back somehow and it wasn't happening there, so he went the distance to be close to his other children and get his own little place where the doctors don't have his number.

Since his drastic move away from the pathogenic overload, Rocky has been enjoying his life as much as he can because now he is focused on quality of life, not knowing the quantity he has left. I can tell by the verve in his voice that he is so much happier since taking a strong stand in his choice and he laughs a whole lot more, too. He now enjoys going for walks to the shops, parks and thrift stores for books, as he is an avid learner and darn near a walking encyclopaedia, especially when it comes to historical British Columbia. He even went to a John Mellencamp concert in November that for him was an ultimate thrill. At times I wonder who is inspiring who in this extraordinary relationship, because my life has become much richer and I have become much more appreciative just through this renewed camaraderie with Rocky.

These days my conversations with Rocky are focused on what 'he' wants to do next in his own life with his minimized bucket list where I'm near the top of that very short list. One thing that lights up his spirit is when I talk about the infinite world of information known as the internet and his brain bubbles over readied with endless questions about absolutely everything. There were a few details to address before he could travel at leisure, like getting new teeth because chemo caused his own to disintegrate and returning to his former doctor for his pain prescription renewal because of the restrictions. It certainly doesn't help that our Greyhound bus service is no longer available and he had to be opportunistic about catching a ride with friends on Christmas Day and then family on the way back for a three-month supply.

Speaking of my prestigious place on Rocky's bucket list, it is now Feb 2019 and eighteen arduous months later that the time has finally arrived and all preparations being made for his flight to my home turf, which will be quite the adventure since we have not seen each other for 45 years – not even in a photo. We both have one picture of each other from 1972 at sixteen, so our reunion will be quite the curious wonder indeed to see how much or little we've changed since we dated oh so long ago. At that time we were more than just boyfriend and girlfriend; we were best buds who joyfully regaled in our adventures until my parents forbade our relationship because of his choice in chums. Just the thought of seeing Rocky again brings a sense of peace to a special little corner of my heart and whatever this mysterious mind-meld is for us we are facing it from a place of wonderment and ultimate friendship. Without feeling the need to explain, it is what it is and there are two people in this world who are extremely grateful we actually did communicate on this level – and I reckon others can and do, too.

One thing for certain is that my eyes, my heart and my mind have all been opened wider than ever before in beholding the power of the human spirit Rocky has exemplified in his incredible will to live so far beyond expectation. I feel very lucky to have a friend in someone who appreciates their life with such spirit as he does and I love being part of the stream for the trickle-down effect of such a high-minded perspective. Now I must get some new city maps, since I will be playing chauffeur while Rocky is visiting Nanaimo and he wants to hit every single park, beach, and anything new I can find to do in this most beautiful and artistic city of mine filled my wonderful family and friends.