

11/November/A New Day  
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Word Count: 667

As a lover of music and a singer, sometimes a song gets in my head and sticks on “repeat.” It may be just the tune I hum over and over, the words having escaped me. But sometimes the words hold such deep meaning that they become my daily mantra. One such song is called ***You Are The New Day***. At this moment in history, it seems we need a song like this, a song for our time. Writer Anna Quindlen calls this a time when “... America turns out to be every bit as good as its hype.” I’m particularly drawn to the closing lyrics of ***You Are The New Day***:

*One more day when time is running out  
For everyone  
Like a breath I knew would come I reach for  
The new day.  
Hope is my philosophy  
Just needs days in which to be  
Love of life means hope for me  
borne on a new day.*

*You are the new day.*

We are the new day. Besides being a seminal moment in African-American history, the election of the first black president of the United States is a moment of living history. I’m thankful to be alive at such a moment, to see a new day dawn and feel the pride that comes from being part of a country that lives up to its principles. Regardless of how each of us voted in this month’s election, all of us want to see change. It’s hard to not be excited and filled with hope for what lies ahead in a new chapter of American history. According to the November 7th issue of ***USA Today***, a wave of optimism is sweeping the country after Barack Obama’s election by more than 53 percent of Americans. Perhaps that’s what’s been missing for so long and what we notice the most—optimism. One person said to me, “Can you feel it? The energy in the world is just a little bit different now—lighter, more hopeful, more connected.” We Americans have gone a long spell in this country feeling lost, powerless. We’ve been lead to believe we aren’t capable, aren’t needed and that government doesn’t want our help. The attitude has been “leave it to the “experts.” We see the results of where that got us. It reminds me of a quote I once heard: “The Titanic was built by experts; the ark was built by amateurs.”

These are difficult times. Each day brings more bad news. The ranks of the hungry grow, financial markets dip, automakers ask for a bailout, wars go on; important issues of energy, health care, and education remain to be solved. There is much to do. We can’t expect to place the woes of our country on the shoulders of one man. It’s up to us as well. We’ve made a good start simply by voting our conscience, by not taking the right to vote for granted. Our countywide turnout for the November election tied two previous record-setting years at 86 percent. We need only look around our small communities to

see where help is needed and pitch in. Opportunities abound everywhere in our towns where it's easy to make a difference and actually see the results. Living in small towns might even provide us our best chance to work for positive change in the world.

Our future and more importantly that of our children and grandchildren is still a chapter to be written. We have no guarantees, but we can face each day with hope and optimism. It is time to put the word united back in United States of America, to put away our differences, our judgment of right and wrong and work together for the transformational change we want to see in this world. Perhaps now is the best time to remember the words of Rumi, 13<sup>th</sup> century Persian poet:

***Out beyond our ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing, there is a field.  
I'll meet you there.***