

# Friends of Silence

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"Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?"

Dear Friends ~ As a person who carries a lot of anxiety, I often find comfort in the amorphous, gray, quiet moments at dawn. Passing out of sleep's depths and just before rejoining the clamor of everyday life, my senses are clear and heightened. At the threshold of the day, I feel more courage to notice the world around me and more ready to engage in the present moment.

I've come to appreciate how our inner lives tend to mirror the physical cycle of morning into day into night and back into morning; when the soul emerges from periods of rest and dormancy to revel in those threshold moments that usher us into new energy and vibrancy: Awakening.

The author Kate DiCamillo recently shared a story on social media about an interaction with a young reader that roused her in this interior sense: *This morning I woke up thinking about a fifth-grade boy who came through a signing line at a bookstore... He said, "My teacher said fifth grade is the year of asking questions... Every day we're supposed to ask someone different a good question and listen really good and then write down the answer when they're done talking... My question is how do you get all that hope into your stories?"*

*"That's not a good question," I said. "That's a great question ... I guess that writing the story is an act of hope, and so even when I don't feel hopeful, writing the story can lead me to hope. Does that make sense?"*

*"Yeah," he said... "It's kind of a long answer. But I can write it all out. Thanks." He walked away -- writing in his notebook... Why did I wake up this morning and think of this child? Maybe because this is a time to start asking good questions, a time to write down the answers, a time to listen to each other really well. I'm going to get myself a little spiral bound notebook. I'm going to listen and hope.*

Here at the cusp of spring-- the dawn of the year-- we can wake from winter's depths with sharper vision and renewed energy. We can carry the gifts we received from dark rest into the light of day. We can remember to listen. We can remember to hope. ~ Joy



... God said, 'There will be dreams from the night that will need the light of the morning.' And so God put wisdom in the early hours.

... God said: 'Let there be a certain kind of light that can only be seen in the morning.' And God created gold, and dew, and horizons, and hills in the distance, and faces that look different in the light of the morning, and things that look different in the light of the morning...

And God said that it was Good.

~ Pdraig O'Tuama from "A Liturgy of the Morning" in  
*DAILY PRAYERS WITH THE CORRYMEELA COMMUNITY*

**Put your ear down close to your soul and listen hard.**

~ Anne Sexton

**Awakeness is found in our pleasure and our pain, our confusion and our wisdom, available in each moment of our weird, unfathomable, ordinary, everyday lives.**

~ Pema Chodron from *WHEN THINGS FALL APART*



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I'm going to be sorry when I retire, because I enjoy — if it's one thing that I definitely enjoy, it's my 8:00 class. My 8:00 class, they come to me, 8:00 a.m., they come to me from their dreams, and I come to them from mine... I like the freshness that they bring. And the other word would be, I like the love that we have for each other as we come into that class.

~ Nikki Giovanni from "We Go Forward with a Sanity and Love" On Being podcast

The breezes at dawn have secrets to tell you  
 Don't go back to sleep!  
 You must ask for what you really want.  
 Don't go back to sleep!  
 People are going back and forth  
 across the doorsill where the two worlds touch,  
 The door is round and open  
 Don't go back to sleep!

~ Rumi from "A Great Wagon" in *THE ESSENTIAL RUMI*, translated by Coleman Barks



Uphold the Light that your inner light  
 may illumine fear-filled hearts...  
 Light comes with each new dawn.  
 yield to the Light within;  
 become a chalice of light  
 for the world!

~ Nan Merrill from  
*LUMEN CHRISTI... HOLY WISDOM*

freedom always came nibbling my thought,  
 just as--often, in light, on the open hills--  
 you can pass an antelope and not know  
 and look back, and then—even before you see—  
 there is something wrong about the grass.  
 And then you see.

That's the way everything in the world is waiting.  
 ~ William E. Stafford from "A Message from the Wanderer"  
 in *THE WAY IT IS*

may the tide  
 that is entering even now  
 the lip of our understanding  
 carry you out  
 beyond the face of fear  
 may you kiss  
 the wind then turn from it  
 certain that it will  
 love your back may you  
 open your eyes to water  
 water waving forever  
 and may you in your innocence  
 sail through this to that

~ Lucille Clifton from  
 "Blessing the Boats (at St. Mary's)"  
 in *QUILTING*



Watercolor by Julie Gabrielli

Hello, sun in my face.  
 Hello, you who make the morning  
 and spread it over the fields  
 and into the faces of the tulips  
 and the nodding morning glories,  
 and into the windows of, even, the  
 miserable and crotchety—

best preacher that ever was,  
 dear star, that just happens  
 to be where you are in the universe  
 to keep us from ever-darkness,  
 to ease us with warm touching,  
 to hold us in the great hands of light—  
 good morning, good morning, good morning.  
 Watch, now, how I start the day  
 in happiness, in kindness.

~ Mary Oliver from "Why I Wake Early"  
 in *WHY I WAKE EARLY*



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Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of  
 strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something  
 infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that  
 dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.

~ Rachel Carson from *SILENT SPRING*

**Help us to be ever faithful gardeners of spirit, who know that without  
 darkness nothing comes to birth, and without light nothing flowers.**

~ May Sarton

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning  
 Born of the one light, Eden saw play  
 Praise with elation, praise every morning  
 God's recreation of the new day

Morning has broken like the first morning  
 Blackbird has spoken like the first bird  
 Praise for the singing, praise for the morning  
 Praise for them springing fresh from the world  
 ~ Eleanor Farjeon from "Morning has Broken"