

Friends of Silence

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 5

May 2025

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

Dear Friends ~ Over the past several months, I've been gathering these quotes and now offer them to you as nourishment for the journey. I hope they bring insight, encouragement, and moments of stillness along the way. ~ Bob



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Though we know one another's names and recognize one another's faces, we never know what destiny shapes each life. The script of individual destiny is secret; it is hidden behind and beneath the sequence of happenings that is continually unfolding for us. Each life is a mystery that is never finally available to the mind's light or questions. That we are here is a huge affirmation; somehow life needed us and wanted us to be.

To sense and trust this primeval acceptance can open a vast spring of trust within the heart. It can free us into a natural courage that casts out fear and opens up our lives to become voyages of discovery, creativity, and compassion. No threshold need be a threat, but rather an invitation and a promise. Whatever comes, the great sacrament of life will remain faithful to us, blessing us always with visible signs of invisible grace. We merely need to trust.

~ John O'Donohue in *TO BLESS THE SPACE BETWEEN US*

What is the difference
Between your experience of Existence
And that of a saint?
The saint knows
That the spiritual path
Is a sublime chess game with God
And that the Beloved
Has just made such a Fantastic Move
That the saint is now continually
Tripping over Joy
And bursting out in Laughter
And saying, 'I Surrender!'
Whereas, my dear,
I am afraid you still think
You have a thousand serious moves

~ Hafiz, "Tripping Over Joy," translated by Daniel Ladinsky

in *I HEARD GOD LAUGHING: POEMS OF HOPE AND JOY*

You have to allow disruption in your life. You have to take account of the parts of yourself you would throw out. You have to look in the places you look away from. And this is so the divine comes into birth. The divine wishes to come into birth in every moment.

True love and prayer are learned in the moment when prayer has become impossible, and the heart has turned to stone.

~ Thomas Merton in *NEW SEEDS OF CONTEMPLATION*

We see that it is not the task of Christianity to provide easy answers to every question, but to make us progressively aware of a mystery. God is not so much the object of our knowledge as the cause of our wonder.

~ Kallistos Ware in *THE LIVING GOD*

We change the world not by what we say or do but as a consequence of what we have become.

The truth of one's Self can be discovered in everyday life. To live with care and kindness is all that is necessary. The rest reveals itself in due time. The commonplace and God are not distinct.

~ David Hawkins in *POWER VS. FORCE*

**The outer work can never be small if the inner work is great. And
the outer work can never be great if the inner work is small.**

~ Meister Eckhart in *THE REINVENTION OF WORK*



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Sometimes a person wakes believing they are a storm. It is hard to deny it, what, with all the rain pouring out of the gutters of the mind, all the gusts blowing through, all the squalls, all the gray. But by afternoon, it seems obvious they are a garden about to sprout. By night, it is clear they are a moon—luminous, radiant, faithful. That's the danger, I suppose, of believing any frame. Let me believe, then, in curiosity, in wonder, in change. Let me trust how essential it is to stumble into the trough of the unknown, marvel how trough becomes wings becomes faith becomes math. Let me trust uncertainty is a sacred path.

~ Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer, "Never the Same," on her blog *A Hundred Falling Veils*

My heart is solitary now.
It finds no companionship anywhere
And no wish to find any.
My sole desire is You,
And You are always absent.
Can one love absence so intensely
That even your presence
Seems like an intrusion?
I move around in aimless circles.
Rituals and sacred symbols,
Once treasured symbols of relating to
You
Are meaningless to me now.
They communicate nothing of You,
Who are everything to me
But for whom and from whom I feel
no love,

~ Thomas Keating, "Twilight of the Self," in
THOMAS KEATING: THE MAKING OF A MODERN CHRISTIAN MYSTIC

Nor hope of fulfillment.
I am as one turned inside out,
And there is nothing there — not
You, not me.
If this is union, there is neither two
in One,
Nor One without another.
I long to relate to everyone,
Yet lack the capacity to relate to
anyone.
There is only your boundless
presence,
That treats me like a thing without a
heart,
Except perhaps a broken heart.
For the God I thought I knew
No longer exists

The Witness is that which can observe the flow of what is – without interfering with it, commenting on it, or in any way manipulating it. The Witness simply observes the stream of events both inside and outside the mind-body in a creatively detached fashion, since, in fact, the Witness is not exclusively identified with either. In other words, when you realize that your mind and your body can be perceived objectively, you spontaneously realize that they cannot constitute a real subjective self. As Huang Po put it, "Let me remind you, the perceived cannot perceive."

~ Ken Wilbur in *PSYCHOLOGIA PERENNIS*

Things falling apart is a kind of testing and also a kind of healing. We think the point is to pass the test or to overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don't really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and fall apart again. It's just like that. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy.

To stay with that shakiness—to stay with a broken heart, with a rumbling stomach, with the feelings of hopelessness and wanting to get revenge—that is the path of true awakening. Sticking with that uncertainty, getting the knack of relaxing in the midst of chaos, learning not to panic—this is the spiritual path. Getting the knack of catching ourselves, of gently and compassionately catching ourselves is the path of the warrior. We catch ourselves one zillion times as once again, whether we like it or not, we harden into resentment, into a sense of relief, a sense of inspiration.

~ Pema Chödrön in
WHEN THINGS FALL APART



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In addition to our monthly newsletter, you're warmly invited to sign up for a free daily quote from Friends of Silence – a gentle yet powerful way to begin your day with reflection and intention.

Sign up at <https://friendsofsilence.net/daily-quotes-signup>



We're also excited to host our very first Zoom gathering, **Saturday, May 31 at 12pm ET**. Bring your copy of the May newsletter, marked with words or phrases that spoke to you.

We'll spend time in silence, get to know one another a bit, and share together out of the silence about the Word waiting to be heard.

Join the May Friends of Silence Gathering on Zoom
<https://friendsofsilence.net/monthly-gathering>