

# Friends of Silence

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“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”

Dear Friends, In the frenzy of life how do we learn to calm our minds and hearts long enough to embrace silence and open ourselves to encounters of the Spirit? We may think of meditation in relation to a particular religion or spiritual path. But it seems to me that we have much to learn when we embark on a practice of meditation regardless of the nature of our beliefs. We are all seekers of wisdom who long for the touch of the Sacred in our lives. Whether meditation is a gateway into centering prayer or a balm for healing or a threshold into Mystery, it is perhaps worth exploring as part of our unfolding spirituality.



Sit in meditation, but do not think. Look only at your mind. You will see thoughts coming into it. Before they can enter, throw these away from your mind until your mind is capable of entire silence.

~Bhaskar Lele

Mindfulness is an ancient form of meditation in which one pays attention to the present moment and all that’s unfolding in that moment, both within and around one. It’s known also as conscious living because the person practicing it is forming an aware and intimate relationship with each moment.

When practicing mindful meditation we aren’t striving to do anything, we aren’t grasping, struggling, thinking, expecting, or wanting but simply letting whatever is there be there and paying attention to it in a non-judgmental way. We come to terms with reality as it is, bringing all our awareness to it, breathing with it, attending it.

~from THE DANCE OF THE DISSIDENT DAUGHTER by Sue Monk Kidd

\*My apologies for the lateness of this month’s newsletter. I had a death in my family and have just now been able to get back to this project. ~Linda



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Meditate deeply . . . reach the depths of the source. Branching streams cannot compare to this source! Sitting alone in a great silence, even though the heavens turn and the earth is upset, you will not even wink.

~ Nyogen Senzaki, as quoted in 365 PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE SOUL by Dr. Bernie S. Siegel

Friends of Silence

Our meditation should begin with the realization of our NOTHINGNESS AND HELPLESSNESS in the presence of God... "Finding our heart" and recovering this awareness of our inmost identity implies the recognition that our external, everyday self is to a great extent a mask and a fabrication. It is not our true self. And, indeed, our true self is not easy to find. IT IS HIDDEN IN OBSCURITY AND "NOTHINGNESS" at the center where we are in direct dependence on God.

~from CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER by Thomas Merton

If compassion never ceases to flow, then that is meditation. Meditation is not just sitting in the lotus position with eyes closed. Real meditation exists in the midst of the dynamic activity of life.

~Dae Haeng Se Nim

in between  
the woodpecker's tat tats...  
silence

~Tom Clausen

The primary act in sacrament as well as in meditation is that of reception, listening to what is said and intended and opening ourselves to its divine dimensions. Meditative listening requires silence...Never to meditate on God's self-giving without recalling this self-giving to all ("the least of you") is the precondition for avoiding a cleft between my meditation and my daily work in this world.

~Hans Urs von Balthasar

Walking mindfully on the Earth can restore our peace and harmony, and it can restore the Earth's peace and harmony as well. We are children of the Earth. We rely on her for our happiness, and she relies on us also. When we practice walking meditation beautifully, we massage the Earth with our feet and plant seeds of joy and happiness with each step.

~from THE LONG ROAD TURNS TO JOY  
by Thich Nhat Hanh

We need to sit still, let our emptiness remain empty, and wait patiently. If we fill the foreground with busy questions, reasons or proposed actions, we will miss the God who is the silent, yet ever present horizon of the world.

~from *All the Days of My Life* by Marv and Nancy Hiles



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There is no such thing as an experienced meditator. Every breath must be as if it is the first, every step a fresh event. A beginner's mind leads to a sense of gratitude for everything, whether or not the desires of my ego have been granted or life is going smoothly. A grateful heart for the rushing currents as well as for the still pools puts the ego in its place. This attitude that grows out of increased awareness does not come easily in the face of difficulties, but it is worth cultivating over a lifetime.



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~from SITTING STILL by Patricia Hart Clifford

The way of meditation is open to everyone because everyone is graced by this spirit of wholeness. Every human being is equal on the path of meditation and every human being is called to completeness.

~from SELFLESS SELF by Laurence Freeman

Today many people are incapable of living intensely in the present, of feeling what they experience. The old monks developed a method of living completely in the present...a method of meditation they called ruminatio...to chew over. So they took words from scripture into their mouth and kept chewing them over.

They repeated them in their hearts, considered and reconsidered them, looked at the word from all sides. The word became flesh in them. It changed them. It gave them something to hold onto in their spiritual unrest and the noisy world. It enabled them to live completely for the moment.

~from ANGELS OF GRACE by Anselm Gruen

firs through a quarter-mile mist  
as if bliss is all that stands  
between us

~William Michaelian

To meet everything and everyone through stillness instead of mental noise is the greatest gift you can offer to the universe.

~ from STILLNESS SPEAKS by Eckhart Tolle