



Anjali DeGraf © 2017, age 5

Friends of Silence

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

Dear Friends ~ Last month pondering soul transformation led toward contemplating the universality of the cosmic dance. Though inner work is deeply individual, it also confirms our interdependence and the connectedness at the heart of the universe. Sixty people trying to move in the unfamiliar patterns of Gurdjieff’s movements with awareness in mind, body, and heart brings one face to face with one’s own personal journey. Yet it also confirms the truth that being human means being part of a collective—a complex set of dynamic interactions—a consciousness beyond ourselves. Stepping into that kind of experience is both humbling and liberating—I am neither more nor less than a part of this whole. Whether one calls this the communion of saints or a beehive-like synergy of Gaia or participation in the Body of Christ, it bespeaks a belonging, a mystery of simultaneous differentiation and union.



Deep within us, amid our differentiations as individuals and nations and species, is the desire for oneness. This holy longing is found not only in the human soul but in



Azim, Gini Fabrikasi, Kutahya

the soul of the universe, at the heart of everything that has being. We are not an exception to the universe. We are an expression of the universe. Our longings are a unique manifestation of the universe’s longings. In listening to the depths of life, within our lives and within every life, we will hear the longings of the One that are deeper than the fears that divide us...There is no such thing as ultimate separation between one part of the universe and another, between the well-being of the human species and earth’s other species, between the life of one nation and the rest of the world. We and all people, we and those who have gone

before us, we and all creatures, we and the universe are traveling together in one river of life. We carry each other within us. And the universe carries us within itself.

~ from *A NEW HARMONY* by John Philip Newell

It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

We all have moments in which we are jolted out of our habitual anxiety, when we surrender control and let go of self-conscious judgments. In those moments we can just “be.” We can feel refreshingly open, clear, and complete. Our mental clutter and confusions fall away, and we remember with great joy our oneness with all that is. At such moments the whole universe dances inside us!

~ from *THE PATH OF BLESSING* by Marcia Prager

A great tenderness for myself and the world opens inside me, and I know I belong to this time, to these people, to this earth, and to something that is both within and larger than all of it, something that sustains and holds us all. I do not want to be anywhere else. I am filled with commitment...and compassion.

~ Oriah Mountain Dreamer



The wild goose is a Celtic symbol of the Holy Spirit. Geese in a flock have greater range and fly faster than single geese as they benefit from the lift of their wings. When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into formation and another flies at the point position. We fly in sacred community, interdependent with one another.

~ from the *Jona Community*

Observing the rhythms of nature and recurring cycles of the year, Henry Beston describes what he calls the “pilgrimages of the sun” across the sky, and at night, strolling the beach, “the dust of the stars” that fill “the night sky in all its divinity of beauty.” For a moment of night, we have a glimpse of ourselves and of our world islanded in its stream of stars—pilgrims of mortality voyaging between horizons across eternal seas of space and time. Nature is a part of our humanity and without some awareness and experience of that divine mystery we cease to be human.

~ from *PILGRIMAGE* by Edward C. Sellner

Of all the world’s errors, Dr. Paul felt the most fundamental was the “erasing” of people, “the hiding away” of suffering. “My big struggle is how people can not care, not remember.” I had wondered if there was room in his philosophy for anyone but the world’s poor and people who campaigned on behalf of the poor...Embracing a continuity and interconnectedness that excluded no one seemed like another of Farmer’s peculiar liberties. It came with a lot of burdens, yet it also freed him from the efforts that many people make to find refuge and distinction from their pasts, and from the mass of other human beings.

~ from *MOUNTAINS BEYOND MOUNTAINS* by Tracy Kidder

The mind thinks of the self as separate, the heart knows better. As one great Indian master, Sri Nisargatta, put it, “The mind creates the abyss, and the heart crosses it.”

~ from *APATH WITH HEART*
by Jack Kornfield

Only as we begin to open to others in love can our isolated ego be transformed. An awareness of our interdependence with other human beings and with all of life provides the environment in which the seed of our souls can flourish.

~ from *LIVING PRESENCE* by Kabir Edmund Helminski

We are part of the earth and it is part of us. We love this earth as a newborn loves its mother’s heartbeat.

~ Chief Seattle

It is my hope that all the children, the children of the deer and the wolf, the whale and other marine forms of life; the children of the osprey and the bluebird and the butterfly; the children of the oak and the pine and the

dogwood; the children all together with the human children will go into the future in oneness “as a single sacred community.” ... The human is less a being on the earth or in the universe than a dimension of the earth and indeed of the universe itself. We cannot discover ourselves without first discovering the universe, the earth, and the imperatives of our own being. Each of these has a creative power and a vision far beyond any rational thought or cultural creation of which we are capable. Nor do we think of these as isolated from our own individual being or from the human community. We have no existence except within the earth and within the universe.

~ from *CREATIVE ENERGY* by Thomas Berry

I will tell you one thing that will make you rich for life. There are two struggles: an Inner-world struggle and an Outer-world struggle...you must make an intentional contact between these two worlds; then you can crystallize data for the Third World, the World of the Soul.

~ G. I. Gurdjieff

The greatest reassurance—and I admit, frankly, *surprise*—came for me in our times of spiritual practice and in a Sunday morning Eucharist which palpably exploded with the presence of the risen Christ...While the courses of action that emerge from each one of us may differ, what was eminently clear to each of us was that this protective field of tenderness and responsive concern to our planetary anguish is alive and well, and that we can and **MUST** turn to it...daily, hourly, with every beat. In the best of Wisdom fashion, our hope shifted *away* from outcome and back to source.

~ Cynthia Bourgeault

