

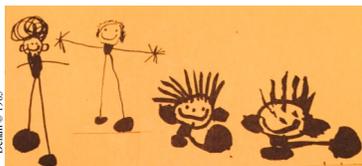
Friends of Silence

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



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Dear Friends ~ Having just watched the documentary on Mr. Rogers, entitled “*Won’t You Be My Neighbor?*” it struck me that he possessed, like the Dalai Lama, that quality of presence that held each and every one within his perfectly still and attentive gaze, wrapping them in heartfelt reassurance of their worth. He seems to have spent his life telling each person he met —whether child, prisoner, or co-worker— that they are loved just the way they are. Yet how many ways do we try to change ourselves or others? How many qualifiers or conditions do we put on a person’s value or worthiness to be loved? And what does it mean to be our best selves? We need to reach for growth and change while knowing also that, at our core, who we are is just right. Sometimes the hardest one to believe that about is ourselves. Perennial plants in my garden have turned from greens to tawny browns and yellows, some withering on their now-brittle stems. Yet they will return in spring, their newly greening leaves and buds another version of their same selves, because encoded deep within their roots they know who they are meant to be. With people it’s harder to see the core because we cannot separate who a person is from what he or she does. Yet I cannot teach a child to change if the message is “you are bad” but I can teach a child that they are good even when a particular action or behavior is not. Perhaps if more children had ingrained in them at an early age the sense that they are inexhaustibly good and lovable for who they are deep inside, they would be able to act in ways that reflected their true selves. The child of God inside each one of us, no matter how old, still needs to hear that message of unconditional love.



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Love isn’t a state of perfect caring. It is an active noun like “struggle”. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now. ~ Mr. Fred Rogers

Evolutionarily, we’re always concerned with what’s not right. That’s what makes gratefulness delightfully subversive.

~ Dale Biron

Within each one of us there is a pearl of great value. It is solely our own and cannot be found in anyone else. If we are to claim our prized uniqueness, without knowing exactly what we

Nobody else can live the life you live. And even though no human being is perfect, we always have the chance to bring what’s unique about us to live in a redeeming way.

~ Mr. Fred Rogers

are looking for, we must search our souls for directions, and listen for what our hearts have to tell us about how to find this hidden treasure. This precious pearl that is our own individual worth can only be found when we are willing to stand alone.

~ Sheldon Kopp

When I say it's you I like, I'm talking about that part of you that knows that life is far more than anything you can ever see or hear or touch. That deep part of you that allows you to stand for those things without which humankind cannot survive. Love that conquers hate, peace that rises triumphant over war, and justice that proves more powerful than greed. ~ Mr. Fred Rogers

We human beings are in search of meaning, in search of our selves. Very little of what we already are and already have brings us deeper meaning or happiness. We are born for meaning, not pleasure, unless it is pleasure that is steeped in meaning. And we are born as well for suffering, not the suffering that leads to madness but the suffering that leads to joy: the struggle with ourselves and our illusions. We are born to overcome ourselves, and through that overcoming to find an inner condition of great harmony and being. We are born for that—we are not yet that. We are searchers; that is the essence of our present humanness. ~ from *A LITTLE BOOK ON LOVE* by Jacob Needleman

I want to believe that the imperfections are nothing—that the light is everything—that it is more than the sum of each flawed blossom rising and fading. And I do. ~ from "The Ponds" by Mary Oliver

As the threads of fabric are woven into a pattern, so the Self as the living garment of divinity is woven out of the many decisions and crises by which we are affected in the course of our lives. Whether or not they lead to a manifestation of the Self depends solely on our response. Many of us have

observed that children, even small children, when faced with some difficulty, possess an attitude which many adults could only envy. That "something," the lack of which we experience as soullessness, is a "someone" who takes a position, who is accountable and who feels committed. Where this higher, responsible ego is lacking there can be no Self.

~ from *THE GRAIL LEGEND* by Emma Jung

Each of us is born with an inner acorn encoded with our destiny. That acorn already knows; all we need to do is allow it to guide our growth and we will become as majestic as the oak. Experience convinces me that saying yes to your intuition (your inner voice) is saying yes to your greatness, whatever form that might take. And your greatness is not just a gift for yourself; it graces everyone that loves you, the community you live in, and the larger world that surrounds you. You, the real you, is the gift.

~ Blake More in "Intuition," April 1999

We are healed to the extent that we love ourselves as we are right now—blemishes, vulnerabilities, and all—not as we wish we will be at some time in the distant future. ~ Marsha Sinetar

The hardest thing in life may be to learn to truly trust that there is something noble and generative in ourselves. This is a greater sense of the notion of believing in our self; to truly believe in oneself means to uncover the inner core of imagination and authenticity that can also be called the genius within us. When we connect to the inner resident of the soul, we also learn how we are woven to the Soul of the World.

~ from *THE GENIUS MYTH* by Michael Meade

True prayer is finding out who we are in God, finding the spacious place of the soul where we and God feel most at home. ~ Richard Rohr

I don't think anyone can grow unless [he's] loved exactly as [he] is now, appreciated for what [he] is rather than what [he] will be. ~ Mr. Fred Rogers



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