

Friends of Silence

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

Dear Friends ~ Honoring fathers, parents, nurturers all, we find ourselves ushered into the month of graduations and weddings. Times of celebration! Perhaps as children, you, like me, could not wait for summer and the freedom it promised. Yet, amidst the joys of the summer season, we are cognizant this June of the struggles of war, devastation in places around the world, wildfires, floods, illness and loss. Lest we despair, look up into June’s bright, azure sky, and deep into its starry nights alive with fireflies. Look to the light, burn candles for peace, huddle with loved ones, yes, even strangers, and persevere, dear friends. ~ Mary Ann



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Fall seven times and stand up eight.

~ Japanese Proverb

To wrestle with, and for, the light, for some meaning in life, is always a way of being in the presence of God.

~ Ted Loder in *WRESTLING THE LIGHT*

Peace is a day-to-day problem, the product of a multitude of events and judgements. Peace is not an ‘is’ it is a ‘becoming.’

~ Haile Selassie

A voice from the dark called out,
‘The poets must give us
imagination of peace, to oust the intense,
familiar
imagination of disaster. Peace, not only
the absence of war.’
But peace, like a poem,
is not there ahead of itself,
can’t be imagined before it is made,
can’t be known except
in the words of its making,
grammar of justice,
syntax of mutual aid.
A feeling towards it,
dimly sensing a rhythm, is all we have
until we begin to utter its metaphors,

learning them as we speak.
A line of peace might appear
if we restructured the sentence our lives are making,
revoked its reaffirmation of profit and power,
questioned our needs, allowed
long pauses . . .
A cadence of peace might balance its weight
on that different fulcrum; peace, a presence,
an energy field more intense than war,
might pulse then,
stanza by stanza into the world,
each act of living
one of its words, each word
a vibration of light—facets
of the forming crystal.

~ Denise Levertov, “Making Peace”, in *BREATHING THE WATER*

It does seem a strange thing to count suffering as joy, yet there’s a truth here in that suffering helps to build one’s character. Some of the most beautiful people I know are those who have passed through the flames and come out strengthened. If it happens to clay, why shouldn’t it happen to us.

~ Macrina Wiederkehr in *OPEN WIDE MY HEART*

Pour forth your strength into my heart
That I might stand strong!
Encircle with healing love those
Who persecute me through fear!
And say to my soul,
“I am with you always.”

~ Nan Merrill, Psalm 35, in *PSALMS FOR PRAYING*



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It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt from 1951 “Voice of America” broadcast

Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.

~ Mahatma Gandhi in *NON-VIOLENCE IN PEACE AND WAR*

The Master always left you to grow at your own pace. He was never known to “push.” He explained this with the following parable:

“A man once saw a butterfly struggling to emerge from its cocoon, too slowly for his taste, so he began to blow on it gently. The warmth of his breath speeded up the process all right. But what emerged was not a butterfly but a creature with mangled wings.

“In growth,” the Master concluded, “you cannot speed the process up. All you can do is abort it.”

~ Anthony de Mello from “Miracles” in *ONE MINUTE WISDOM*



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A man traversed land and sea to check for himself the Master’s extraordinary fame. “What miracles has your Master worked?” he said to a disciple. “Well, there are miracles and miracles. In your land it is regarded as a miracle if God does someone’s will. In our country it is regarded as a miracle if someone does the will of God.”

~ Anthony de Mello from “Miracles” in *ONE MINUTE WISDOM*

It always seems impossible until it's done.

~ Often attributed to Nelson Mandela, origins with Pliny the Elder

Courage doesn't always roar.

~ Mary Anne Radmacher

God is with those who persevere.

~ The Qur'an

Not to give up under any circumstances should be the motto of our life: I shall try again and again, and I am bound to succeed. There will be obstacles, but I have to defy the obstacles.

~ Sri Chinmoy in *BEYOND WITHIN*

Great works are perseverance.

~ Samuel Johnson

Love is what we long for and were created for—in fact love is what we are as an outpouring from God—but suffering often seems to be our opening to that need, that desire, and that identity. Love and suffering are the main portals that open up the mind space and the heart space (either can come first), breaking us into breadth, and depth and communion.

~ Richard Rohr in *THE NAKED NOW*

We carried our grief
to the ocean's edge,
sat quiet in the sand;
the sorrows softened
as the waves washed
over them and the
brilliance of the
morning sun upon
the shimmering waters
filled our hearts
with wonder.

~ Robert Soley, “Held”,
in *MOVING DAY*

**When children know their differences will be supported
by you saying you will never stop trying ways to help them find their very best voice, their fears rest.**

~ Peyton Goddard in *I AM INTELLIGENT: FROM HEARTBREAK TO HEALING*

There seemed no end to the lilies. Day after day from all those miles and leagues of flowers there rose a smell which Lucy found it very hard to describe; sweet—yes, but not at all sleepy or overpowering, a fresh, wild, lonely smell that seemed to get into your brain and make you feel that you could go up mountains at a run or wrestle with an elephant. She and Caspian said to one another, “I feel that I can’t stand much more of this, yet I don’t want it to stop”.

~ C.S. Lewis in *VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER*

We become better at something in ourselves—more skilled, more creative, more effective—when we work. We discover that, indeed, we are good for something. Good work is, at the time, its own kind of asceticism. It needs no symbolic rituals or contrived penances.

The very act of continuing something until we succeed at it is soul-searing, life-changing enough...

It makes us equal partners with the rest of the human race in this one common endeavor to grow the globe to wholeness. Good work is our gift to the future. It is what we leave behind—our persistence, our precision, our commitment, our fidelity to the smallest and meanest of tasks that will change the mind of generations to come about our sacred obligation to bear our share of the holy-making enterprise that is work.

~ Joan Chittister in *THE MONASTERY OF THE HEART*



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