

# Friends of Silence

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

Greetings dear friends! Having recently returned from a trip to Israel and Istanbul, I find myself pondering how we nurture compassion within ourselves? What makes one choose gracious hospitality and open gestures of the heart? Bedouin camel herder, Palestinian shopkeeper, Hassidic father, Israeli soldier, Kurdish innkeeper —such a tapestry of religions, beliefs, ways of life, hopes, and fears. Whether we interact through simple kindness and respect or fear and antagonism depends on what we see in the other. Do we look with eyes of the heart to find our common humanity? Do we put relationships in the context of I-Thou or do we build walls and establish divides of right and wrong? Do we allow our eyes to meet and spark a connection or do we turn away? What inner work will help ignite the fire of love?



Compassion takes practice to flow freely from the heart.

~ from LUMEN CHRISTI...HOLY WISDOM by Nan Merrill

It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love others. The more solitary I am, the more affection I have for them. It is pure affection, and filled with reverence for the solitude of others. Solitude and silence teach me to love others for what they are, not for what they say.  
~Thomas Merton

We can do no great things , only small things with great love.

~Mother Teresa

This is what our love is —a sacred pattern of unbroken unity sewn flawlessly invisible inside all other images, thoughts, smells, and sounds.

~Aberjhani



++Many thanks, dear friends, for your spiritual and material support, your encouraging notes, ++ your prayers and good wishes for FOS .

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There is no need for temples, no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple: The philosophy is kindness.  
~H. H. the Dalai Lama (from Liz)

Compassion is not a social facade. Compassion is not a sham designed to mask our essential self-centeredness. Compassion is the emotion that links us to those outside ourselves. It is the capacity for outreach. It enables us, it drives us, to go beyond ourselves to the beating pulse of the rest of the world. Compassion, then, is a dimension of what it means to be fully human.  
~Joan Chittister

Some day, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we shall harness the energies of love. Then, for a second time in the history of the world, we will have discovered fire.

~Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (from Kathleen Roy)

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Friends of Silence

People are too heavy for you? Do not carry them on your shoulders, hold them in your heart. ~Dom Helder Camara

If you want to be a rebel, be kind.

~Pancho Ramos Stierle, from Bernie Siegel

The heart is like a garden. It can grow compassion or fear, resentment or love.

What seeds will you plant there?

~from BUDDHA'S LITTLE INSTRUCTION BOOK by Jack Kornfield



It has been well observed that though nations may differ from nations, communities from communities, and people from people, human nature is the same everywhere. As there is but one sun that warms and gives light to the earth, there is but one God who teaches us to love one another and care for each other.

~Sundar Singh

### It Felt Love

How  
Did the rose  
Ever open its heart

Maybe the purpose of being here, wherever we are, is to increase the durability and the occasions of love among and between peoples. Love, as the concentration of tender caring and tender excitement, or love as the reason for joy.

~June Jordan

And give to this world  
All its  
Beauty?

There is only one breath. All are made of the same clay. The light within all is the same.

~ Guru Granth Sahib

It felt the encouragement of light  
Against its  
Being.

This rock has seen many storms. Here it stands exposed to the elements, covered with the scars of its past. But one thing that always gave me comfort in coming here—it has not crumbled. It is still standing at the water's edge, facing the wind and the sea and whatever the future will bring...Our hearts are like this rock. They will not crumble as long as we live and as long as we love.

~Hafiz ~from ALL THAT MATTERS by Jan Goldstein

Otherwise,  
We all remain

Too  
Frightened.

The insight at the heart of nonviolence is that we live in a tragic gap—a gap between the way things are and the way we know they might be. ..If we want to live nonviolent lives, we must learn to stand in the tragic gap, faithfully holding the tension between reality and possibility in hopes of being opened to a third way...[of breaking our] collective hearts open to justice, truth, and love.

There is an old Hasidic tale that tells us how such things happen. The pupil comes to the rebbe and asks, "Why does Torah tell us to 'place these words upon your hearts'? Why does it not tell us to place these holy words in our hearts?" The rebbe answers, "It is because as we are, our hearts are closed, and we cannot place the holy words in our hearts. So we place them on top of our hearts. And there they stay until, one day, the heart breaks, and the words fall in."

~Parker J. Palmer in A HIDDEN WHOLENESS

Your heart is a seed. Go, plant it in the world! -Sue Monk Kidd (from Kathleen Roy)

In spiritual maturity, the opposite of injustice is not justice, but compassion. Not me against you, not me straightening out the present ill, fighting to gain a just result for myself and others, but compassion, a life that goes against nothing and fulfills everything.

~from NOTHING SPECIAL by Charlotte Joko Beck

To love another is to see the face of the Beloved  
mirroring your own.

~ from LUMEN CHRISTI...HOLY WISDOM  
by Nan Merrill

Please call me by my true names,  
so I can hear all my cries and  
laughter at once,  
so I see that my joy and pain are  
one.

Please call me by my true names,  
so I can wake up  
and the door of my heart  
can be left open,  
the door of compassion.

~Thich Nhat Hanh

