

# Friends of Silence

Vol. XXVIII, No. 2

++++++

February 2015

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

Greetings dear friends. Yesterday as I sat listening to reflections at a memorial service for a woman with an incredibly generous and loving heart, it seemed to me that the value of a life well lived is not measured so much in accomplishments as in the way we treat each encounter with another person as an opportunity for welcoming hospitality. An invitation to know and be known, taking time for listening and being fully present lets the other person know that he or she is essentially good and whole and loveable. We need others to help us see who we really are, to walk with us on this journey, to know we are not alone. And the world needs our open hearts and warm hospitality to transform strangers into fellow human beings and friends.



When we have made ourselves fully available to our neighbor and to God, becoming emptied in the process, then at last we begin to live.

~from HAPPINESS THAT LASTS  
by Martin Israel

To belong to a community is to begin to be about more than myself...No work is enough to satisfy the human soul. Only the satisfaction of having touched another life and been touched by one ourselves can possibly suffice. Whatever we do, however noble, however small, must be done for the sake of the other. Otherwise, we ourselves have no claim on the human race.

~from LISTEN WITH THE HEART by Joan Chittister



FRIENDS OF SILENCE  
120 Jubilee Lane  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
www.friendsofsilence.net  
304-724-1069

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
QUINCY, IL 62301  
JK Creative



Many people will walk in and out of your life but  
only true friends will leave footprints in your heart.

~Eleanor Roosevelt



And in the sweetness of friendship  
let there be laughter  
and sharing of pleasures.  
For in the dew of little things  
the heart finds its morning  
and is refreshed.

~Kahlil Gibran~

Friends of Silence

Friendship requires leisure. This fine cultural form cannot survive without the time and leisure that are its lifeblood. I love the East Indian custom of standing next to someone in silence, probably just a step in back of him or her, if you wish to make friends.

Silence, waiting, time, respect for another's space—these are the elements of friendship.

~from LYING WITH THE HEAVENLY WOMAN by Robert A Johnson

“Read me LEAVES OF GRASS,” Harold pleaded -

And she began,

“I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,

And I know that the Spirit of God is the brother of my own,

And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and

the women my sisters...”

She looked at him, his eyes dewy, hugging himself, as if he were being filled to bursting. He was too different to be accepted by anyone but another living oddity. She had to put her love somewhere, or it would dry up. Maybe that's what love is—walking willingly into the unknown for the sake of the other. The sheen in his eyes told her he absorbed it like a thirsty desert.

~ from THE FOREST LOVER by Susan Vreeland

Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.

~from THE DIARY OF ANAIS NIN

The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, not the kindly smile, not the joy of companionship; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when you discover that someone else believes in you and is willing to trust you with a friendship.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sometimes compassion compels us to confront, sometimes to cajole, sometimes

to be silent and wait, sometimes to do or say what it would never occur to our egocentric self to do or say, for we can never say for certain in advance just how compassionate love may prompt us to act, to see, and accept within ourselves and others. Yet, in our willingness to recognize and go forth to identify with the preciousness of ourselves and others in our collective frailty, we discover our contemplative community in the intimate texture of our daily interactions with one another.

~from THE CONTEMPLATIVE HEART by James Finley

Sheltering. That's a wonderful word. Very strong. I remember a wonderful little phrase that says a faithful friend is a sturdy shelter. We need shelters in life. We need sheltering from our parents when we are young. We need the shelter of good friends. I feel as if that's something we're really called to be for one another — is shelter.

~Marjorie Thompson from *New Morning Treasury*



Teilhard de Chardin says that the universe will be “unified only through personal relations.” It will become one only under the influence of love. Teilhard calls this the “amortization” of the universe, the healing of the world by loving. Only love has the capacity to transform the individual parts of our lives and world into a living *cum-unus*. Nothing else can do it. . . “Love,” says Teilhard, “is the most universal, the most tremendous and

the most mysterious of the cosmic forces.” How much truth and energy are we losing, he asks, by neglecting our “incredible power to love”?

~ from A NEW HARMONY by John Philip Newell

The secret of creating peace is that when you listen to other people you have only one purpose: to offer them an opportunity to open their hearts. If you can keep that awareness and compassion alive in you, then you can sit and listen for an hour even if the other person expresses wrong perceptions, condemnation, and bitterness. You can continue to listen because you are protected by the nectar of compassion in your own heart. Keeping your awareness keeps you safe in your own peace.

~Thich Nhat Hanh

Love depends upon the capacity to reach beneath the surface of persons, to feel and touch the seed of life that is hidden there. And love becomes a power when it is capable of evoking that seed and drawing it forth from its hiding place.

~from THE SYMBOLIC AND THE REAL by Ira Progoff

It is such a privilege to have people who continue each day to bless us with their love and prayer. These inner friends of the heart confer on us inestimable gifts. In these times of greed and externality, there is such unusual beauty in having friends who practice profound faithfulness to us, praying for us each day without our ever knowing or remembering it. There are often lonesome frontiers we could never endure or cross without the inner sheltering of these friends. It is hard to live a true life that endeavors to be faithful to its own calling and not become haunted by the ghosts of negativity, therefore, it is not a luxury to have such friends; it is necessary.

~ from TO BLESS THE SPACE BETWEEN US by John O'Donohue

Time, ferry me down the river  
Friends carry me safely over  
Life, tend me on my journey  
Love call me home.

~song lyrics by Peggy Seeger