

# Friends of Silence

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

Greetings dear friends ~ In a little corner of my garden, I noticed bright green slender crocus leaves pushing their way up through the crusted brown earth. They steadfastly emerged still capped with dry clods of dirt and endured the unsettling vagaries of freezing nights and late season snowfall—a wintery spring after a spring-like winter. Our spirits, too, need lifting—need to emerge, become unbound, push up toward the light. We need to nurture a sense of wonder for if we stay buried in gloom we chance missing opportunities for awakening and for gratitude. Sometimes I find myself so immersed in worry for what might be lost, undone, unraveled that I fail to understand and appreciate what is here right now in front of me. To live with an open heart, to live with a sense of awe, doesn't mean we are blind to suffering or pain or fear, only that we also see the blessings all around us—the sacred gifts of life, love, and beauty.



At our birth we emerge from the root mystery of the cosmos, a deep and silent mystery into which we will one day be reabsorbed. Our own lives are a spiral pattern of creative unfolding, death, and regeneration. Fashioned out of the creative power of starlight and the fecund body of the Earth, we are the children of Earth and starry heaven caught up in the timeless rhythms of the celestial dance.

~ from “Luminous Alignments” by David Fideler, *Parabola* 5/’07

To wonder is to stand in awe of the ultimate mystery of life and to understand that mystery exists not merely in the ecstatic but in the ordinary daily life. Eliot Deutsch observed that wonder, unlike curiosity, does not try to figure out, or to explain. We do not wonder “at,” “about,” or “why” —we wonder with.

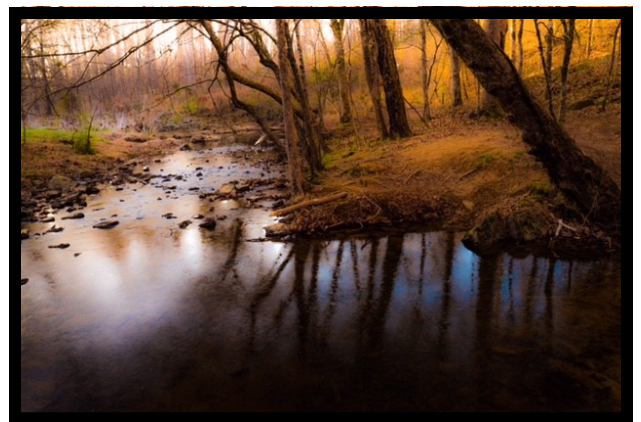
~ Rob Lehman quoted in *SEEDS OF AWAKENING*

An increased capacity to wonder is the hallmark of maturity.

~ Bernard J. Boelen

There are times when life can't help itself and, as the Psalmist wrote, “Deep calls unto deep.” Then the mass of the world dances on the pinhead of our wonderment, and our breath so carefully cultivated carries us, like the wind, whithersoever it will.

~ from *ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE*, by Marv and Nancy Hiles

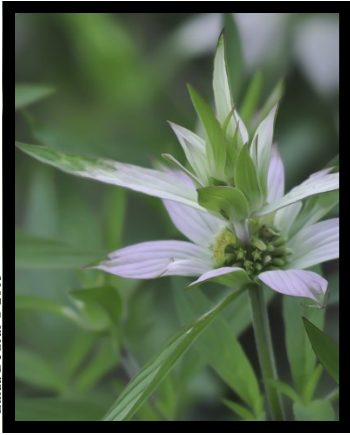


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This, then, is the extravagant landscape of the world, given, given with pizzazz, given in good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

~ Annie Dillard in *PILGRIM AT TINKER CREEK*

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If I had influence with the good angel who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world would be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life as an unfailing antidote against boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.

~ from *THE SENSE OF WONDER* by Rachel Carson



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Children live in a world of dreams and imagination, a world of aliveness... There is a voice of wonder and amazement inside of all of us; but we grow to realize we can no longer hear it, and we live in

silence. It isn't that God stopped speaking; it is that our lives became louder.

~ Mike Yaconelli in *DANGEROUS WONDER: THE ADVENTURE OF CHILDLIKE FAITH*

Every bush is a Burning Bush and the world is crowded with God.

~ C. S. Lewis

Remain in wonder if you want the mysteries to open up for you. Mysteries never open up for those who go on questioning.

Questioners sooner or later end up in a library. Questioners sooner

or later end up with scriptures, because scriptures are full of answers.— And answers are dangerous, they kill your wonder.

~ Osho

To be a contemplative is to be a watch in the night for the approach of Mystery. And it is a readiness to be transformed in an engagement with that Mystery.

~ Fr. Iain Matthew in *DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL*, newly translated by Mirabai Starr

The root of the word “educate” means “to care”—a caring that flows naturally from a deep feeling for the world. This kind of care seems to embody a type of wisdom that has nothing to do with information or knowledge in its restricted sense. Our connection to the world is not through information about it, but through a sense of wonder. How long since the cry of insects and the sight of the setting sun brought us deeply into ourselves?

~ (John Wilson) aka Paramananda in *REFLECTIONS ON EVERYDAY LIFE*

Wonder is a searching attitude of simultaneously knowing and not-knowing, of finding pattern and breaking apart, [it] goes against the grain of our organizing mind, but is intrinsic to the creativity of introspection, art, and empathy.

~ Alfred Margulies in *THE EMPATHIC IMAGINATION*

Years wrinkle the skin—  
but to give up WONDER  
wrinkles the soul.

~ Reginald Stewart

Silence enables us to see the sacredness of all life...”to see life steady and to see it whole.” In an age that has lost all sense of the sacred, of awe and wonder at the Divine penetration throughout the physical, human plane, how much we need the recovery of silence. Without some sense of awe, there is little basis for meaning.

~ from *THE MYSTERY OF SILENCE* by Ann W. Young

God does not die on the day when we cease to believe in a personal deity, but we die on the day when our lives cease to be illuminated by the steady radiance, renewed daily, of a wonder, the source of which is beyond all reason.

~ Dag Hammarskjöld



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Wonder is the basis of worship.

~ Thomas Carlyle

We are held in a great light,  
larger, more gracious than us.

I am grateful.

We are borne in a river of grace  
that leaves nothing untouched by blessing.

I am grateful.

~ Steve Garnass-Holmes at [www.unfoldinglight.net](http://www.unfoldinglight.net)