

Friends of Silence

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



Dear Friends ~ In autumn, the golden glow of tawny hues signals the waning of the chlorophyll that has been transforming sunlight into food. Trees let go of their leaves, plants their flowers, and we let go of bird song and water play and butterflies on the wing. Fall is the season of letting go. In the inner landscape of our hearts perhaps it is a time for forgiveness, the letting go of past hurts and misunderstandings, of anger and resentment. Perhaps it is a time for letting go of our expectations—maybe of what we thought we needed or what we thought we ought to have or the way we intended something to be done—so that we can embrace with gratitude what is. We often think of spring as a time for new beginnings, yet beginnings need space and time and endings and clearing away and incubation in order to emerge. So perhaps autumn is actually a fitting moment to embark on our own “beginning anew ceremony” by taking the first step and letting go.



Life is not hurrying on to a receding future, nor hankering after an imagined past. It is the turning aside like Moses to the miracle of the lit bush, to a brightness that seemed as transitory as your youth once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

~ “The Bright Field” by R. S. Thomas

...it is not the thing itself...that is the problem; but it is our clinging to the thing even when it causes us, ourselves, and others mental or physical pain, which blinds us to a bigger view and snowballs into more suffering. Ultimately, the challenge of letting go becomes a spiritual act in some way: in many spiritual traditions, surrender is the backbone, as Mohammed says in the Qur’an, “True religion is surrender.” And so as we grasp at the beautiful red leaf, we just might let it spin again in the autumn wind, delighting in that tiny leaf-filled and empty moment.

~ from *HAIKU MIND: 108 POEMS TO CULTIVATE AWARENESS & OPEN YOUR HEART* by Patricia Donegan

| catch
the maple leaf then let
it go

~ John Willis

I wonder if gratefulness is the bridge from sorrow to joy, spanning the chasm of our anxious striving. Freed from the burden of unbridled desires, we can enjoy what we have, celebrate what we’ve attained, and appreciate the familiar. For if we can’t be happy *now*, we’ll likely not be happy *when*.

~ Philip Gulley



Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin...be not therefore anxious for the morrow for the morrow will be anxious for itself.

~ Matt 6: 28, 34

Longing for our idealized images of life separates us from our true selves and from our true callings.

~ Stephen Cope

The cosmos is filled with precious gems.
I want to offer a handful of them to you this morning.

Each moment you are alive is a gem,
shining through and containing Earth and sky,
Water and clouds.

It needs you to breathe gently
for the miracles to be displayed.
Suddenly you hear the birds singing,
the pines chanting...

You, the richest person on Earth,
who have been going around begging,
stop being the destitute child.
Come back and claim your heritage.
Enjoy your happiness
and offer it to everyone.
Cherish this very moment.
Let go of the stream of distress
and embrace life fully in your arms.

~ from "Our True Heritage" by Thich Nhat Hanh



When I started the practice of "no preference," a special quality of mind began to grow—a unique understanding and affirmation of the way things are—and I discovered something extraordinary: the heart of stillness sits perfectly balanced in the middle of chaos. This is the true dwelling place of the soul.

~ from ENDURING THE SACRED MOUNTAIN by David A. Cooper



If the heart has forgiven and excused,
Offenses will not be remembered. They are remembered only in the attic, the memory,
Without the heart's participation.

~from CHRIST THE ETERNAL TAO by Damascene

Forgiveness is a complex experience that changes an offended person's

spiritual feelings, emotions, thoughts, actions, and self-confidence level. I believe learning to forgive the hurts and grudges of our life may be an important step for us to feel more hopeful and spiritually connected and less depressed.

~from FORGIVE FOR GOOD by Fred Luskin

Each day that passes,
the sage discards
another useless weight.
Finally all the accumulated burden
of a life spent seeking something
is gone.
In its place is a lightness of being
and a clarity of seeing
that makes a heaven
of each moment.

~ from "What Will Be Left is Life Itself" in THE SAGE'S TAO TE CHING by William Martin

O sacred season of Autumn, be my teacher,
for I wish to learn the virtue of contentment....
I live in a society that is ever-restless,
always eager for more mountains to climb,
seeking happiness through more and more possessions...

Teach me to take stock of what I have given and received,
may I know that it's enough,
that my striving can cease
in the abundance of God's grace...

As you, O Autumn, take pleasure in your great bounty,
let me also take delight
in the abundance of the simple things in life
which are the true source of joy.

With the golden glow of peaceful contentment
may I truly appreciate this autumn day.

~ Edward Hays in EARTHPRAYERS
ed. by Elizabeth Roberts & Elias Amidon

