

Daily Meditation 1/02/2022

A New Year Prayer

Good morning.

I offer a new year prayer in today's meditation that we humans continue to do our inner work that can lead to a far healthier outer work.

And I say Thomas Merton, who raises the question, really: "What is the most important of all voyages of discovery, that without it, the rest are not only useless, but disastrous?"

What is the most important of all voyages of discovery? And then he says: It is this inner journey where we connect to our centers, to our essence as human beings. And with this, we can make peace with ourselves and with one another, and with the Earth and the other creatures.

So, for me, a very valuable tool for that inner journey is, of course, the Four Paths: the Via Positiva of joy and wonder and awe and gratitude.

As I said, in yesterday's meditation video, I could see the Webb telescope as embarking on a new level, a new horizon of the Via Positiva, of the wonder and the awe.

Awe is bigger than we are.

Of our origins in light, when the first light burst forth, and the first galaxies, cooking of the atoms in the original fireball that literally make up our bodies today, along with other atoms, birthed in supernova explosions about 5 billion years ago.

And of course, there is the inner work of Via Negativa.

Part of it is about silence and contemplation, taking in the mystery, being present to the mystery, letting the mystery of the universe speak to us--just as we let any sacred text speak to us and move our hearts, move us to generosity, into gratitude and possibility.

And then the other part of Via Negativa is the suffering, to be present, to be vulnerable to the changes and the chaos, really, that climate change is already bringing upon all of us.

Think of the people in the Boulder area, who in January 1st and the end of December are experiencing fire. Not snow, but fire, because the earth is warming up so much.

I have a friend who was told to pack all her things and get out of her house, because in 20 minutes the fire was going to rage through her house. And the wind shifted at the last minute, and she was spared. But she and her cat went through that kind of convulsion.

And as human beings being aware of our capacity for empathy, we can realize that other human beings are going through these kinds of crises today around the globe. And it's going to get worse, not better. So being able to empathize and understand this suffering that we're all vulnerable to, is part of the inner work.

And next comes Via Creativa. Out of this suffering and out of the silence, the contemplation, and out of the joy and the gratitude, there emerges our desire to give back. And that's what our creativity does.

And there are some tremendously positive events happening today with scientists about creativity. The work on fusion, a new way of finding energy that could be cheap and safe for everybody would change the game entirely. But there are many other smart efforts being born today through Via Creativa, to find a better way to live on this planet. Of course, one of them is reinventing our diets, the way we eat.

And then the Via Transformativa is putting our creativity, and our silence, and our suffering, and our joy to work. Making things happen to transform, including a politics that is not in denial about climate change.

How can we be in denial about climate change today when one of the cities in Alaska was 69 degrees this week, breaking all records ever recorded about what goes on in Alaska? And just so many examples of the presence of climate change among us.

And it is perverse that some human beings in powerful positions, politicians, are employing their creativity, the Via Creativa, not to tell the truth, but to squelch it, to choose to go into denial. As Meister Eckhart says, "God is the denial of denial."

So, thank you. This is our invitation that we move into the inner work that will change our outer work as you begin a new year.

See you tomorrow.