

Daily Meditations 06-18-22

Ways to Develop the Healthy Masculine

Good morning.

We're talking today about the important archetype of the spiritual warrior for recovering healthy masculinity. And in the essay, I bring some practices and some questions about how we can awaken and practice the sacred masculine.

But I also want to share some more insights from this chapter on the spiritual warrior in my book, *The Hidden Spirituality of Men: Ten Metaphors to Awaken the Sacred Masculine*.

So I tell the story on page 78, of a man named Broken Walk, a Vietnam veteran who went to war at 17. And this is how he described his experience after the war.

There's a difference between being a soldier and being a warrior. This is an important distinction. Don't ever get these confused.

He says,

When I was in the army, or was a soldier, I was a puppet doing whatever anybody told me to do. Even if it meant going against what my heart told me was right. I didn't know nothing about being a warrior until I hit the streets and marched alongside my brothers for something I really believed in. When I found something I believed in, a higher power found me.

That's it. That's the story. So Broken Walk quit being a soldier and became a warrior when he followed his soul's orders, not his officers'. And this meant protesting war and even going to jail for it. Chogyam Trungpa talks about the "sad and tender heart of the warrior"... the sad and tender heart.

And this is very real: the warrior is in touch with his or her heart. The joy in it, the sadness in it, the expansiveness of it, and the moral outrage in it.

Now Hafiz, a great Sufi mystic, also distinguishes between soldier and warrior when he says that soldiers were "dying all around him in excruciating pain." That's what a soldier does, delivers death or wounds others or receives excruciating pain.

Then he ends his poem about soldier and warrior this way: he says,

You can become a horse person carrying your heart through the world like a life giving sun, but only if you and God become sweet lovers.

So the warrior is a mystic, the warrior is in touch with his or her deepest feelings. And that's a different project from what a soldier is about.

So being a spiritual warrior is developing the strength, the inner strength to say no. But that no is born out of a deep Yes, a deep love, of caring and being in touch with one's feelings and convictions and working out of them, even when it's dangerous, even when it calls for great courage and sacrifice and generosity.

All this is healthy masculinity.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.