

Daily Meditation 05-26-23

Rank and Rich on Moving from Pessimism to Creativity

Good morning.

We're continuing our meditation today on pessimism as part of the philosophy of pessimism, part of fear, and creating an atmosphere of fear.

And we're learning from Otto Rank and Adrienne Rich some insights about how to combat this part of fear. And creativity is one way to combat it. There's a wonderful contribution in the comments page yesterday morning, about how art as meditation, what we call art as meditation, painting one's experiences and feelings, especially in nature, really helped this individual to heal.

And I've seen that happen for over 45 years in our programs, because of our art as meditation program, that when we focus on the beauty of the world, it brings up energy and feelings that heal, and that render us more hopeful or optimistic, less pessimistic.

And of course, this is included in the call to bring the Divine Feminine alive. Birthing and creativity can have that kind of effect on us, whether we be men or women.

Now Otto Rank tells us that we have to learn to love ourselves better, that self hatred is the basis of so much pessimism. But it's interesting that Reinhold Niebuhr, the Protestant theologian, says that anxiety is a breeding ground for sin; it's an internal precondition for sin. And that, of course, anxiety is a kind of fear. But it's not a fear of an object, it's more a state of being in fear, the state of being terrified.

And Gerald May, the brother of Rollo May, as a theologian says that anxiety replaced acedia in the Protestant canon of sins. That is, it seems that anxiety came in in a big way, into western culture in the 17th century, when science and religion split. And so the whole feeling about our relationship to the universe changed.

And Albert Einstein's question, when he was asked, "What's the most important question you can ask in life?" he said, "Is the universe a friendly place or not?"

So there is that connection between our hearts and fear versus our hearts and love, when it comes to our relationship to the universe.

So, this may suggest, I think, that when it comes to self love, self love does not mean to love ourselves in every aspect as an individual, you know, that you love your nose, you love your ears, you love your shape, you love your accomplishments.

It seems a lot of the anxiety may be the rise of individualism. Now, this is a mixed bag, because the dignity of the individual is very important. And the uniqueness of each individual is very important. But when that's set apart

from our relationship to the whole community, and community includes our kinship with other animals and other beings and our kinship with the universe and the Milky Way and 13.8 billion years of our journey -- all that cosmology is part of kinship.

And therefore, this has something to do with healing our pessimism too, not only because wonder, is included, and as we learned yesterday, Aquinas says wonder brings joy, but also because belonging brings joy. And instead of focusing too much on judging ourselves as individuals, we're invited to enter into this playful, celebrative, amazing drama that we call the universe, we call the earth and we call the human species, that we call the mammals and other beings who share the earth with us. And in this way cosmology itself becomes a healing instrument, along with our powers of creativity and self love. Self love becomes easier to recognize and appreciate and fall into.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.