

Silence: Cultivating the Heart's Wisdom

by Emily Laurel

Do people keep telling you you're going too fast? Need to relax more? Never stop to smell the roses? With such busy lives and so much to do, establishing a meditation or prayer practice may seem like an impossibility. For some of us the very thought of being alone with ourselves might be upsetting or even terrifying to consider.

Why? It is in the silence that we confront our demons, our shadow side. Perhaps for this very reason, many of us are mortally afraid of silence and solitude. When we remove ourselves for a time from the noise of the world and from our own persistent inner mind chatter, we begin to glimpse the shadow in our lower selves, which may not be a welcome sight! Yet, by facing those darker aspects of our nature and giving them over to the light of Spirit to dissolve, we can then cross the bridge of the heart- that inner place of love, compassion, and forgiveness- and enter another realm: the realm of the Wise Heart.

The Realm of the Wise Heart is a place within us where we have reached our center, our point of equilibrium; it is the place of heart coherence (as discussed in "Science and the Heart's Wisdom," August issue of Indigo Sun).

Dr. Ron Roth writes of this in his most recent book, *Prayer and the Five Stages of Healing*. Ron devotes an entire chapter of his book to silence and solitude. He says,

We might compare our state before entering the place of solitude to a patient preparing for a heart transplant. Our human heart, which has been weakened through the years by the negative energy of jealousy, resentment, bitterness, and a reluctance to forgive, and our vital arteries, which have been clogged with selfishness, loneliness, and grief, are about to be replaced by a new heart and arteries cleansed by the fire of the Holy Spirit. When we face our own demons and encounter God in the silence and solitude, our heart is strengthened and infused with the compassion of God. We are then better able to help others, to read their hearts and become one with them in their grief and sorrow; as a result we can offer them comfort and consolation.

We all have others that we want to help, but for those of us who serve as healers and teachers to the community, it is especially important that we serve from the Wisdom and Power of the Heart. It is through the silence and solitude that we make that inner connection that gives us strength and deep compassion.

It is often difficult for me to stop everything I am doing for a period of silence and solitude. And I am beginning to recognize what I am doing when I don't stop after feeling the inner promptings to be quiet and still for a time: I am succumbing to **temptation**.

Temptation is a part of everyone's spiritual path. When we begin to withdraw our attention from the things of the world, even briefly and temporarily, our ego immediately throws up roadblocks and tries to call us back to our old ways. Yet it is only in silence and solitude that we have the strength to overcome these "temptations" of ego and negativity, because silence is our communion time with God.

Without being silent, one cannot know God - and there is a difference between knowing God and knowing about God. In stillness, we begin to experience the Presence even if we may not be able to explain or understand it. Power emanates from the silence to uplift and heal the spirit, and the silence itself can heal and elevate our spirits.

According to Dr. Roth, "Silence helps us reduce and neutralize the constant humming of the mind and allows us to penetrate more deeply into the heart of prayer. When we speak of the heart in this particular matter, we mean that source of all physical, emotional, intellectual, volitional, and moral energies. From a spiritual viewpoint, we could say that the heart is the central organ for our unique personal life."

To pray in silence, Dr. Roth suggests beginning with the prayer of Cardinal Newman, who came from a British family with evangelical sympathies. His prayer is now said daily by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. In this prayer is a clear evocation of the Christ as light-energy that shines through us as we make ourselves yielded vessels for God's work. You may wish to personalize the prayer by substituting the singular pronoun for the plural, and recall that Jesus, like all enlightened masters, is for everyone. You may want to substitute God, Goddess, All That Is, or some other term for Jesus. You need not follow the Christian religion to say these prayers.

Dear Jesus, help us(me) to spread your fragrance everywhere we(I) go. Flood our souls with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly that our lives may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through us, and be so in us, that every soul we come in contact with may feel your presence in our soul. Let them look up and see no longer us but only Jesus! Stay with us, and then we shall begin to shine as you shine; so to share as to be a light to others; the light, O Jesus, will be all from you, none of it will be ours; it will be you, shining on others through us. Let us preach you without preaching, not by words but by our example, by

the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do. The evident fullness of the love our hearts bear to you.

After saying this prayer, lapse into silence and follow your breathing. You do not need to exaggerate the sound of your breathing, but inhale and exhale so that it is inaudible. When you are comfortable, begin with heart prayers silently.

Heart prayers are those that you can bring into your heart with ease. They are brief phrases that activate Spirit within us and make God's presence visible wherever we go and to whomever we speak. Some examples are:

Spirit, help.

Mercy, Lord.

Let me feel your love, O God.

God, come to my assistance.

Be still, and know that I AM

As you inhale, say mentally the first phrase of the heart prayer; and as you exhale, say the last phrase. Actually breathe the words into your heart on the inhale, and send them out into the universe on the exhale, as if you were filtering the prayer through your heart. Imagine your heart being filled with the white light of Divine love as you breathe your prayer.

If you encounter "temptations," simply set them aside and allow yourself to move into the deep joy of the silence and the solitude. It's as simple as that.

*Emily Laurel will be presenting **Your Heart's Wisdom and Knowledge** on October 17, 1999 at the Sheraton Brookhollow Hotel at the conference on **How to Reclaim your Spiritual Power through the Dynamics of Divine Dialogue**, along with four other Connecting Spirit presenters. Ron Roth, Ph.D., the featured presenter, will speak on October 16. Teachings will include ways to enter the silence and the solitude. She is co-owner of Connecting Spirit, a company dedicated to bringing speakers, teachers, healers, and artists to our area that contribute to the healing of community. Emily has studied with many teachers of spiritual, touch, and energy healing and has been a Reiki Master Teacher since 1994. She works with essential oils in her energy healing practice to facilitate mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual healing. She may be reached at 281/493-0054 or by e-mail at Etlaurel@aol.com. Website addresses are <http://www.connectingspirit.com> and <http://www.reikilife.com>.*