

The Stillness Newsletter

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Written by just me, Renee Baker.

Dallas, TX

Thanks for reading!



As It Is

M. Scott Peck wrote an immensely popular life-changing book called *The Road Less Traveled*. I read it about 15 years ago. I still have it. It rests in my lap right now. The most important lesson we can learn comes in the first sentence he wrote, but I'm going to make you wait to know what it is.

I want to delay telling it to you, because there is a pre-truth to be told. This pre-truth is that there is difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge is knowing something to be true because it is information we have been taught and we store it away. When that knowledge is presented to us again, we automatically agree with it. "Yes, yes. I know that," we say and we are ready to move on. Well, wisdom is deeper. It is something we both know intellectually and know emotionally. Wisdom is gained by experience. It involves all of our senses. It goes beyond the words as truth and has a deeper meaning than on the surface. We have sat with its truth and the feelings that comes with it. We simply feel wisdom in our bones.

So when I share this truth from Peck, it means something more than just a 'duh' response. The truth is a noble truth taught by the Buddha, interpreted by Peck. You may wish to dwell on it before moving on. It is simply stated thus: Life is difficult. Allow yourself to reflect on that. Peck says only when we truly know that life is difficult, truly understand and accept it, then we can transcend it and life becomes no longer difficult.

I remember the day this finally hit me, when the knowledge became my own personal wisdom. I was sitting in my living room thinking desperately about my growing list of problems. I was worrying to a point of panic. Exasperated, I finally said to myself, "What is the point! As soon as this problem is solved, there is just a long line of new ones to follow right behind. It never ends!" At that moment, I recognized the futility of worry.

Now, I would like to say that I learned my lesson once and for all. Alas, no, I still have oops moments. I still need to say the affirmation "Life is Difficult" to remind me that life need not be difficult when I can move into the acceptance that we will always be solving problems. The trick is to catch ourselves not accepting the problem we have in each and every moment. And that too is the trick, to stay here and now, with each moment.

The Prisoner

*The prisoner
once hunched in his cell
Quietly
sits....
his legs...crossed
Ears
Nose
and Eyes
all wide open
Accepting
without choice
Accepting
for as not to suffer
For this moment
is all there is
and ever
will be*

*Outside...the cell
the guard...paces
A restless anticipation
...she suffers
by her own unseen choice
and
wonders why
the prisoner
is no longer
hunched over
In his cell*

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I took all photos at the Heard Nature Center in September 2008.



Movie Therapy

I love movies and they can be so therapeutic. I watched the movie *Camp* yesterday and it gave me a good cry. I cried because it was a movie about learning to believe in people and believe in yourself. The setting is a theatre camp for youth who do not all necessarily fit well within mainstream schools. I volunteer at a youth center and I say all the time that we just simply have to let our youth simply be, to believe in them and they will automatically come into themselves.

As one of the camp counselors said in the movie regarding their youth, "They are a bunch of little freaks and the more normal we try and make 'em, the more lonely and isolated they're gonna feel." Well, how true is this! The more we try and shape another human being to be normal, the more rejected they will feel. The irony is they are less likely to become authentic and loving human beings. It takes the grace of at least one person, to make us real. Who will you allow to become real today?

Crash is another movie I saw. Again. Briefly it is a film about racism and how we are all connected as one. It is about our simple fear of touch and letting others into our lives, a fear that keeps us all crashing into one another, just so we can feel something. As a friend once told me, the whole world should be required to watch this film. Please do!



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