

Silence, the Most Important Sound

Are you a noise junkie? Many of us in the Western world are addicted to sound. How many people do you know always have an ipod, or similar device, plugged into their ears? Or are constantly talking on the cell phone or always have the radio or TV on at home? How many people do you know can't stand a moment of silence within a conversation and will say anything to fill that space? Do you know one of these people intimately?

Why do we feel such a need to fill every moment with sound? What is it about silence that makes us uncomfortable? Why are we distracting ourselves with all this noise and busyness? Why are we so afraid to face ourselves in silence?

One of the most profound moments of my life is one of silence. A few years ago, my husband and I spent a weekend in April in Kananaskis, a beautiful area in the Canadian Rockies. The weather was clear and warm, at least for April in the Rockies, and we decided to visit Barrier Lake.

When we arrived, there were no other people around, no wind in the trees, no waves on the lake and no birds singing in the trees. As we stood gazing at the lake, I was overcome with the profound stillness and silence. The air felt heavy and vibrantly alive with a tangible, magnificent presence that touched the depths of my soul. It is one thing to be awed by the beauty of nature, it is another thing to feel this presence within it. To me, it was a physical experience of divinity.

It completely changed my perception of my world. I understood that this presence is always there, in and around everything. It supports me, surrounds me and is within me even when I ignore it in all my busyness. That day at Barrier Lake, I actually paid attention to it.

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November 2007

