

## **Resting in the Silence of Your Heart**

It is the beginning of July already and the start of the summer holiday season. The good news I want to share with you this month is that you do not have to endure the awfulness of a Ryanair flight - or indeed any other budget airline flight - this summer in order to recharge your batteries. All you need to do is to give yourself an incredibly refreshing break from listening to that crazy voice inside your own head by bringing your awareness down from your head to your heart and simply rest there for a while.

Do you have any idea how much you deplete your own amazing energy system by listening all day long to a constant stream of egoic thinking and story making that your clever, but deluded brain keeps generating? For example, you wake up in the morning and straight away your brain is producing a stream of anxious thoughts such as: 'What time is it? I do hope I have not overslept again!' 'What is the weather going to do today? I really do not want to get wet on my way to work!' 'How is my knee/hip/eye doing this morning? That constant, nagging pain was driving me mad yesterday!'

Thoughts such as these are so familiar to us that we do not even realise that they are basically ruining our life. But I can assure you that 'What about me?' thoughts constantly disturb our peace of mind even when we are sleeping. Just last night for example, I had a nightmare in which Gloria was being horrible to me – something that never ever happens in all the time we spend together during our waking hours.

According to Bruce Davis, a wonderful Franciscan mystic and meditation teacher, all our thoughts that lie on the very surface of our awareness make up only about 5 percent of who we are. Yet most of us live our whole lives trapped in our thinking. This is a really awful way to live because our egoic thought system is so self-centred, negative, fearful and aggressive. Even the nicest of us tend to protect our own interests quite aggressively a lot of the time, if only with aggressive thoughts about our so-called enemies. Only the other day for example, I had a nasty thought about a lovely woman who just has a very different approach to health and safety rules to my own 'I could not care less' attitude.

In recent years, some of us have become fascinated by accounts of near death experiences in which individuals suddenly experience a massive expansion of their consciousness as their awareness expands way beyond their physical body and their thinking mind to merge into an infinite field of blissful, unconditional love and light.

However, we definitely do not have to have a near-death experience to come home to an infinite, miraculous reality that lies just beyond all our fearful, egoic thoughts. All we need to do is to commit to sitting still for maybe 30- 45 minutes each day so that we can begin to tune into the 'deep heart' inside each and every one of us.

We can all escape from being trapped inside an incredibly restricting and frustrating mental world by simply sitting quietly and practising letting go of each thought as it rises up into our conscious mind. We can also all learn to expand our awareness beyond the severe limitations of our everyday stories. We can all sit in contemplation or meditation for just a while each day as we set our intention to calm and open our mind so that we can begin to rest in our wise, silent heart.

If we learn to watch all our thoughts and feelings come and go without getting so lost in our usual stories about them, we can begin to come home to rest in the great silence of our own heart. This deep silence within even the most hyperactive of us is actually filled to the brim with love, peace and a joy beyond reason.

However, I do have to warn you at this point that when you first begin to practise taking that miraculous inner journey down from your head to your heart, you may well experience *more* rather than less inner agitation. What is happening here is that you are simply becoming much more aware of how many uninvited thoughts pour through your mind incessantly. At this stage in your journey home to love, I am afraid that you just have to persevere through all the discomfort that inevitably arises up in us as we begin to let go of our compulsive need to be constantly entertained by our over-active and crazily dramatic thinking mind.

As Pema Chodron, a fabulous modern day Buddhist master and teacher, has so wisely pointed out, the key instruction for meditating successfully is to keep sitting there whatever you may be experiencing. Keep sitting there even if for quite some time your inner experience is much more like almost drowning in stormy waves than floating serenely in the deep, still ocean of infinite awareness that lies beneath the superficial waves generated by your brain.

I still clearly recall the very first time I meditated after being dragged along to a meditation workshop in central Manchester in 1989. I really did not enjoy meditating at all, but fortunately, I sort of fell in love with the meditation teacher, Ken Mellor. So I went back the next year to see him again and got hooked on the whole experience, although it still took me a long, long time before I finally experienced

just a brief, tantalising moment or two of deep thought-less peace during one of Ken's powerful meditations.

We cannot be in too much of a hurry to transcend the all-pervasive egoic thought system that rules (ruins?) much of our life. But we can keep reassuring ourselves that on the other side of this temporary egoic prison lies our eternal freedom. We can all cultivate some perseverance and patience as we set our intention to find that infinite well of unconditional love peace and joy at the very heart of our being however long it takes us. We can also be determined to enjoy, or at the very least tolerate, every step along our inner path back home to love.

As all the great contemplative mystics have been trying to tell us for such a long, long time, once we escape the prison of our egoic thought system, we will find, to our great amazement, that our true-self is limitless and totally safe. Our true-self is constantly bathing in a bath of pure love, peace, light and joy that is always waiting for us just beyond the barrier created by our preoccupation with thinking and egoic story-telling.

But please do not just take my word on this. Let me conclude this July message by quoting Bruce Davis who definitely dwells for much of the time each and every day in a blissful, heart-centred meditative space:

*Each of us are pioneers traveling into the other side of our mental world, into the world of our hearts. Here there is no right or wrong, no judgement, there's just a great presence of love.*

*The light is very bright on the other side. The light is so bright in our own hearts. There is no need to put words to the journey. It's the journey itself that is important. The path gets bigger and bigger. We come deeper and deeper into the beauty of our own heart...We breathe and receive peace through the whole of our being and find that our awareness has no beginning and no ending. This is love's body. The body of who we really are.*

(Bruce Davis, *Unveiling the Heart of Awareness*.)

Bon Voyage!

Peggy Foster  
July 2025