

**Daily Meditation 10/06/2021**  
**The Spiritual Side of Men: A Young Man's Testimony**

Good morning.

Today we're asking in our meditation about the spiritual side of men. And I offer a testimony from a young man who talks about how his field was science and business, and he was really out of touch with his mystical side until he started to read Thomas Berry. And even then he found it difficult, because he was so out of touch with his spiritual side.

Of course I raised the question: why men are so hidden from their own spirituality? And that's really what the title of my book on the sacred masculine is about: the hidden spirituality of men. Why are men out of touch, very often, with our spirituality?

And of course our education has a lot to do with it, and religion has a lot to do with it, insofar as religion is not always welcoming to the mystics or to the deeper meanings of spirituality. It can get all caught up in its own rules about itself: there is such a thing as ego in religion, and there's such a thing as narcissism in religion. And I think our times call for pulling out of both.

But I do offer several ways to understand why men have often had to hide their spirituality.

A dualistic and patriarchal culture values thinking over feeling, material wealth over spiritual, scientific fact over intuitive knowledge.

It puts men over women and heterosexuals over homosexuals.

Men are often mocked for openly expressing their deepest feelings of joy, of sensitivity, of pain, of compassion.

Many men carry wounds inside that they would rather forget, or put aside, than admit are there. Especially true of men who have been in war.

Of course our modern religions have been out of touch with their mystical traditions.

Men are not supposed to cry, and so they learn lessons of hiding their grief, as well as their joy.

Some men sometimes confuse religion and spirituality, and in the process run from their own journeys with spirit. Religion and spirituality are not necessarily the same thing.

The psychologist Marion Woodman observes that most young men in our culture have no spiritual heritage into which their elders are going to welcome them. So the absence of elders, and the absence of elders who are in touch with spirituality: that is a price that young people pay.

Often in our society men are more rewarded for an extrovert personality than an introvert one.

Then again, there is a certain hiddenness about all spirituality: what is deep inside the spiritual journey that explores the unnamable aspects of divinity and of our own souls in the Godhead.

These necessarily call for silence, although Thomas Aquinas has an amazing teaching. He says there are various kinds of silences: that of dullness, that of security, that of patience, and that of a quiet heart. Of course it is a last kind, the quiet heart, that is important to contemplation, into getting in touch with one's deeper being and with spirit.

But I do appreciate the Quran's naming that there are many excuses for keeping secrets. One is dullness (that's so true), another is security (that is certainly true), another is patience, but another is the quiet heart. And it is a quiet heart that gets addressed in spirituality.

I find that many men are mystics, but they lack the vocabulary to name the deep experiences they have, again because religion and education has left us illiterate about mysticism.

Robert Bly said "that men learn only through ritual"...men learn only through ritual... "the deep things in life come only through ritual, but substantive rituals and alive rituals are often lacking in our modern cultures."

And of course many men want to hide their shame and aggression, or at least to hide from them, and so we cover it up...we cover it up with layers of blankets to silence ourselves.

So I think these are some of the reasons why there is a hidden spirituality of men. But now is the time to bring it out out of the closet, make it open and accessible.

Thank you; we'll see you tomorrow.