

Daily Meditation 05/01/2022

Adrienne Rich, Jung, Eckhart on Motherhood & Creativity

Good morning.

We continue our meditations on motherhood, the upcoming Mother's Day, with the help of Adrienne Rich, who has so much to teach us about mothering from her powerful nonfiction book, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*.

One thing, one point she's making in today's essay is that motherhood is earned--first through an intense physical and psychic rite of passage: pregnancy and childbirth; then through learning to nurture, which does not come by instinct.

Just earlier today I was reading about a woman who says that it was when she became a mother that the deepest mystical experience of her life occurred, the radical deepness of feeling life being born in her.

She said, of course she had known beforehand how babies are born, and how mothers carry babies for nine months, but it was not until she experienced it that this profound connection to the whole universe fed her and woke her up, if you will.

And of course, that is what compassion is about: interconnectivity.

And I think that is why compassion plays such a big role in those spiritual teachers who have managed to keep the Divine Feminine alive, along with a healthy masculine. The feminine, after all, is behind the word "compassion" in Hebrew and in Arabic. The word for compassion comes from the word for womb.

So the mammal people, the womb people, mothers in the mammal world, undergo this profound experience of interconnectivity. What is more interconnected and interdependent than the fetus in the womb? And that nine-month experience of togetherness is, of course, broken when the baby enters the world.

It was Otto Rank, a great champion of Art and Artist--one of his great books had that title--who says that the original wound of the human is the leaving of the womb, leaving that security behind. The rest of life is really looking for an analogous experience of peace and togetherness that we once had in the womb.

And he says that the path to that recovery of fetus and mother is love or art. Love and art bring us to what he calls the *unio mystica*, the mystical union that we once had and that we all yearn for.

So that's a very profound statement on the nature of mysticism and its relationship to the Divine Feminine, to the mother.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.