

## Daily Meditation 09-14-22

### A Thank You to Queen Elizabeth

Good morning.

Today we are remembering Queen Elizabeth. And in the context in which we'd been meditating on the topic of work and spirituality and work now for a week or so including Barbara Ehrenreich's works and with EF Schumacher and others.

And today we reflected on Queen Elizabeth's work, and I do think that she did inner work to sustain her outer work, because, well, she couldn't survive 70 years, doing what she does, and being in the spotlight, and as I would say, having to account for a pretty dysfunctional family in the process, but also carrying out her duties in a responsible, and I would say generous and grounded way, and she had, I think, a spiritual basis to accomplish her job...a job pretty unlike most of us.

There was a fine article in The New York Times after she died by Maya Jasanoff, Professor of History at Harvard, who's written three books on the British Empire. And the title of the article is, I think, significant. She says "Mourn the Queen, Not Her Empire."

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And she does speak, right at the beginning of her article, about the issue of the Queen's dedication to her work, because she begins by saying

*'The end of an era' will become a refrain, as commentators assess the record-setting reign of Queen Elizabeth the Second. Like all monarchs she was both an individual and an institution. She had a different birthday for each role, the actual anniversary of her birth in April, and an official one in June. And though she retained her her personal name as monarch, held different titles depending on where in her domains she stood.*

And she points out that she kept her opinions to herself, which is part of the job.

But she makes a rather brutal comment when she says that "Of her inner life, we learned little, beyond her love of horses and dogs," which fed into the TV shows about her nicely.

But I don't think that's fair. I think you can look at her work through the years and her persistence at it. And she had to have an inner life. Furthermore, that dogs and horses and the outdoors were important to her, fed that inner life; that's part of what creation spirituality acknowledges.

But she does say this, and this is where she's complimenting the Queen's work ethic:

*The Queen embodied a profound, sincere commitment to her duties. Her final public act was to appoint her 15th Prime Minister --*

That's right, and that happened, I think, a day or two before she died.

*...and for her unflagging performance of them she will be rightly mourned. She has been a fixture of stability. And her death in already turbulent times will send ripples of sadness around the world.*

*But we should not romanticize her era. The queen was also an image, the face of a nation that during the course of her reign, witnessed the dissolution of nearly the entire British empire into some 50 independent states and of course significantly reduced global influence.*

So I do think that her acknowledgement that she performed her role in life, her work very generously, and effectively, I think that's an important dimension to remembering Queen Elizabeth, and to asking all of us: how are we handling our work lives?

How is our inner life and our values being reflected in our everyday work? And how does our everyday work require of us a deepening of our inner self?

That, I think, is at the heart of all of our work, whether we be a singular Queen, or whatever jobs, the rest of us hold, and whatever work we give back to the world.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.