

Daily Meditation 01-12-26

Keeping Our Hearts & Souls Alive, Fresh, Young, Green & Inspired amidst Dark Times

Good morning.

In today's meditation, we are emphasizing the daily practices that are ours to meditate on, to keep us grounded and rooted, and green and fresh of soul, even in the midst of darkness and very bad news about democracy, about our treatment of Mother Earth and of the young, and so much more.

We have to find this balance between the truth and reality of the shadow of human history, and of the history we are currently undergoing — and our love of life, our special gift as Homo sapiens, who have arrived at this time in human and planetary and cosmic history, where we do have the means, the gifts, the intelligence, the creativity, and the spirituality to appreciate that we are here at all. That we are here at all, the original blessing, therefore, that existence is.

And of course, we know as humans that we are very, very dependent on the weather, on so many factors, the soil, forests, the air, the water, the other animals, the trees, the fruit trees, the food chain. We are so interdependent in what Hildegard of Bingen calls this web of creation. So many things had to come out right for us to be here, and for us to have survived this long.

Now, this week, as I was writing some of the meditations on the Via Positiva, Negativa and Creativa, such as today's meditation deals with, I received a letter from a person who had worked with me previously with the book on *Selected Writings of Creation Spirituality*. And she wrote me this letter:

We worked together to promote your book, Essential Writings on Creation Spirituality, a few years ago. One of the most important things in life, which I learned from you, is expressing gratitude and incorporating it into my prayers and meditation, as well as to

always acknowledge others' acts of kindness. So she's zeroing in on the Via Positiva and the importance of the practice of gratitude. She goes on:

I think of you every day when I express gratitude to: divine spirit, guides, angels, parents, family, friends and all beings, nature, and so many other gifts, including good health, safety, pets, coffee, technology, and so forth. I've always felt that I was someone who appreciated the life I've been given and all that I have. But it wasn't until I started expressing gratitude in my prayers throughout the day that I understood the significance. It's precious beyond words. I wanted you to know how much I appreciate your teachings and bringing awareness to this most important practice.

So I share this, this letter with you, because in many ways, I think it blesses and underscores what we've been talking about this past week, and certainly in today's meditation, that the Via Positiva cannot be ignored. As I have written elsewhere, we have to be like camels, who stop at oases to fill up their big backs, their big humps with water, especially when they're going across the desert.

And so we are involved in a lot of Via Negativa today. The news is filled with it every day because there are crazy people running things at this time in our history. And there's the extra shadow of the media being swallowed up by billionaires, not all of whom have a conscience, saying nothing of a perspective on life that focuses, for example, on a government of the people, by the people and for the people — or that focuses on gratitude, or our common existence, or that focuses on community and the common good.

So this practice of gratitude, think of it again, as being camels filling up with the Via Positiva as we go through the other dimensions of our spiritual journey, and carry on resistance and develop moral imagination in creative ways, and work with and for community.

Another correspondence I received this week said this: *There is a bright spot in the news. Wow, do we need it!* (Exclamation point.) *I watched the ladies' figure skating final of the national championships, and not only were the top three really on their game, they are so supportive of each other, no jealousy or backstabbing attitudes at all. They're going to the Olympics as the strongest team the USA has had in 20 years.*

So let's just pause for a second, and this is a fine example of a natural ecstasy, sport, and of a Via Positiva experience that many of us are able to take part in, vicariously through television and the Olympics and so forth. But I love that this person recognizes the beauty and the skill in sports.

Of course, like everything humans do, there's a shadow side, if sports becomes only about competition, only about winning. But part of the genius behind sport, I believe, is that it is playing with our reptilian brains. The reptilian brain, our oldest brain, wants to dominate and be number one all the time. And humans have come up with sport. And all traditions we know, all tribes we know, develop some kind of sport. And I think it's very intelligent on our part, because instead of allowing this compulsion, this instinct to be number one to take over, we play with it. We make rules, parameters for fields in which to play basketball or football or any other sport, ice skating, and we have umpires and referees and so forth.

But the bottom line is that then people are able to compete, to be as good as they can, to be as excellent as they can, to be as beautiful as they can. And those of us who can watch it derive great satisfaction from that, great joy. We may have played sports in our youth, and we may have never gotten to the Olympics or anything else. And even if you did, you do, as you get older, become a watcher more than a doer of sport.

But that there is this aesthetic to it. Again, beauty is so present to us as a species. Our paintings, our sculptures, our stories, our movies, our music, our dance, our ritual, our dining, our cuisine. All of it has this beauty to us and to it, and this Via Positiva is present. So again, this is an affirmation of our capacity for the Via Positiva and the Via Creativa or creativity. And of course, the hard work, the sweat, the tears, the practice, getting up early in the morning, etc., that a good figure skater or a good athlete has to undergo.

But all this is, once again, an affirmation, and an example and a practice, of how we keep our souls green and alive and joyful, even in the midst of dark news and a dark time in history.

Thank you. We'll see you next week.