

Scripture

Psalms 46:10

¹⁰ Be still and know that I am God

Silence

Meditation Our guided meditation this evening is on **Perspective** -- A Self-Distancing Practice found on pages 329-330 in *The Book of Joy*.

Archbishop Tutu refers us to "God's-eye" perspective when we are able to see what serves all of God's children. This ability to go beyond our own self-interest is essential. The Dalai Lama calls it getting a "wider perspective" -- stepping back from our situation to see the bigger picture. Some call this "self-distancing." Something that the Father in the Prodigal Son Parable does quite well. Fundamentally, the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu are encouraging us to shift our perspective from focusing on the "I and me and mine" to "we and us and ours." Think about where you are suffering in your life and then think about all the people who are going through a similar situation. This perhaps is quite literally the birth of compassion, which means "suffering with."

1. **Think of a problem or situation that you are facing**
2. **Envision your problem as if it were happening to someone else, envision your problem as if telling someone about it** -- use your name rather than the words I, me or mine
3. **Imagine this problem from the perspective of a week, a year or even a decade from now.** Will this issue or event still have an impact on you? Will you even remember it? What will you have learned from the experience?
4. **Witness your life from a God's-eye, or universal, perspective.** See your fears and your frustrations from this point-of-view. Now, see all of the other people who are involved as having equal value and being worthy of love and respect. Then ask yourself: What will serve the whole.

After our closing prayer, we will listen to departing music, and depart in silence.

Prayer

By Thomas Merton in *Thoughts in Solitude* (page 79)

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Departing Music

“The Angel of Night”

(Please leave in silence.)

Resources used in preparing tonight’s spiritual practice

Joy Practices

Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu, and Douglas Abrams, *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World* (New York: Avery, 2016), 307-348.

Prayer

Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* (New York, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux Publishing Company, 1958), 79.

Music

Macrina Wiederkehr (lyrics) and Velma Frye (composer and performer) from the CD *Seven Sacred Pauses* (Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2008). The words were from a book of the same name by Macrina Wiederkehr.

Velma Frye, “Dona Nobis Pacem,” track 12; “The Angel of Night,” track 1; “Keeping Vigil with the Mystery,” track 3 – from *Seven Sacred Pauses CD*.

www.velmafryemusic.com

www.cdbaby.com/cd/velmafrye

Book: www.amazon.com/Seven-Sacred-Pauses-Mindfully-Through/dp/1933495243

www.avemariapress.com/product/1-933495-24-3/Seven-Sacred-Pauses/