

## Wednesday Night Study Series – “Stillness Speaks”

**Prayer of Surrender:** Spirit of Truth, CARRY ME where you will; BRING TO ME what You will; TAKE FROM ME what You will; AWAKEN IN ME what You will. The Christ MAN is around me. The Christ MIND is in me. The Christ POWER flows through me. And, the Christ MYSTERY exists as me. I believe it. I perceive it. And, now I receive it! I am surrendered. Amen. And, so it is!

### Relationships Part II

True listening is another way of bringing stillness into a relationship. When you truly listen to someone, the dimension of stillness arises and becomes an essential part of the relationship. But true listening is a rare skill. Usually, the greater part of a person’s attention is taken up by their thinking. At best, they may be evaluating your words or preparing the next thing to say. Or they may not be listening at all, lost in their own thoughts.

True listening goes far beyond auditory perception. It is the arising of alert attention, a space of presence in which the words are being received. The words now become secondary. They may be meaningful or they may not make sense. Far more important than what you are listening to is the act of listening itself, the space of conscious presence that arises as you listen. That space is a unifying field of awareness in which you meet the other person without the barriers of separation created by conceptual thinking. And now the other person is no longer “other.” In that space, you are joined together as one awareness, one consciousness.

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Do you experience frequent and repetitive drama in your close relationships? Do relatively insignificant disagreements often trigger violent arguments and emotional pain?

At the root of such experiences lie the basic egoic patterns: the need to be right, and, of course, for someone else to be wrong; that is to say, identification with mental positions. There is also the ego’s need to be periodically in conflict with something or someone in order to strengthen its sense of separation between “me” and the “other” without which it cannot survive.

In addition, there is the accumulated emotional pain from the past that you and each human being carries within, both from your personal past as well as the collective pain of humanity that goes back a long, long time. This “pain-body” is an energy field within you that sporadically takes you over because it needs to experience more emotional pain for it to feed on and replenish itself. It will try to control your thinking and make it deeply negative. It loves your negative thoughts, since it resonates with their frequency and can feed on them. It will also

provoke negative emotional reactions in people close to you, especially your partner, in order to feed on the ensuing drama and emotional pain.

How can you free yourself from this deep-seated unconscious identification with pain that creates so much misery in your life?

Become aware of it. Realize that it is not who you are, and recognize it for what it is: past pain. Witness it as it happens in your partner or in yourself. When your unconscious identification with it is broken, when you are able to observe it within yourself, you don't feed it anymore, and it will gradually lose its energy charge.

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Human interaction can be hell. Or it can be a great spiritual practice.

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Whenever you meet anyone, no matter how briefly, do you acknowledge their being by giving them your full attention? Or are you reducing them to a means to an end, a mere function or role?

What is the quality of your relationship with the cashier at the supermarket, the parking attendant, the repairman, the "customer?"

A moment of attention is enough. As you look at them or listen to them, there is an alert stillness – perhaps only two or three seconds, perhaps longer. That is enough for something more real to emerge than the roles we usually play and identify with. All roles are part of the conditioned consciousness that is the human mind. That which emerges through the act of attention is the unconditioned – who you are in your essence, underneath your name and form. You are no longer acting out a script; you become real. When that dimension emerges from within you, it also draws it forth from within the other person.

Ultimately, of course, there is no other, and you are always meeting yourself.

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**Affirmation:** I am in the world, but not of it. I am the awareness of thought, not thought. I am awake to the truth that I 'Inter-Be' with all that exists. I am not separate from God, my neighbor or myself. This week I will be aware of my awareness. I AM that I AM.