



Living in Relational Wholeness

Coalesce Podcast

Episode 004 – Awe is the Beginning of Wisdom

Note, terms, scripture, practice



Creation is the primary and most perfect revelation of the Divine. –Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274)

[Genesis 1:9](#)

[Genesis 1:3-25](#)

[Ephesians 1:9](#)

[Romans 1:20](#)

[Colossians 1:15](#)

[Colossians 1:19-20](#)

[Romans 8:19-25](#)

[Romans 1:20](#)

Surrender is entering the present moment, and what is right in front of you, fully and without resistance or attempts at control.

[Daniel 3:74-81](#)

[Wisdom 13:1,5](#)

[Job 12:7-10](#)

...everything bears the divine fingerprint, footprint, and “similitude.”

God brought things into being in order that his [sic] goodness might be communicated to creatures, and be represented by them; and because his goodness could not be adequately represented by one creature alone, he produced many and diverse creatures, that what was wanting to one in the representation of the divine goodness might be supplied by another. For goodness, which in God is simple and uniform, in creatures is manifold and divided. –Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, I, 47, 1

“The world is created as a means of God’s self-revelation so that, like a mirror or footprint, it might lead us to love and praise the Creator. We are created to read the book of creation so that we may know the Author of Life. This book of creation is an expression of who God is and is meant to lead humans to what it signifies, namely, the eternal Trinity of dynamic, self-diffusive love” (Sister Ilia Delio, *Christ in Evolution*, p. 62).

“Anyone who truly knows creatures may be excused from listening to sermons, for every creature is full of God, and is a book.” (Meister Eckhart)

Practice: Wandering in Nature

Although creation may be “wordless,” we can still dialogue with it. Bill Plotkin suggests a practice of “talking across the species boundaries” in his book *Soulcraft: Crossing into the Mysteries of Nature and Psyche* (pp. 168-169):

Go wandering in nature. Bring your journal.... Wander aimlessly until you feel called by something that draws your attention, by way of an attraction, a curiosity, an allurements, a repulsion, a fear.... Whatever it is, sit and observe it closely for a good length of time. Interact with your senses, offer your full visual and aural attention to the Other. Record in your journal what you observe.

Then introduce yourself, out loud—yes, out loud.... Tell this being about yourself.... Tell the truth, your deepest, most intimate truth. In addition to ordinary human language, you might choose to speak with song, poetry ... movement, gesture, dance. Then, using the same speech options, tell that being everything about *it* you have noticed.... Keep communicating no matter what...until it interrupts you.

Then stop and listen. Listen with your ears, eyes, nose, skin, intuition, feeling, and imagination.... In your journal, record and/or draw what happens. Offer the Other your gratitude and a gift....a song, a dance, a lock of hair, praise...some water....

Enter your conversations with the Others with the intention of learning about them and developing a relationship, but don’t be surprised if you thereby discover more about yourself.” And, I would add, more about God who created them.

Practice: Awe

Rabbi Kushner points out, Abraham and others were asked to leave everything familiar to them behind and to go to a new land that God would show them ([Genesis 12:1](#)). Through this practice, we too are asked to leave behind our narrow field of vision, our preconceived notions and ideas, and open our eyes to see anew.

According to classical Hasidism, the power of the Creator resides within each created thing. Hasidism tells us that our only role is to live in awe, to become aware of the Divine in everything. Through the practice of awe, everyday experiences transform into mystical, spiritual experiences. To simply see things differently is to feel the presence of the Divine in everything. To feel close to Spirit right now, right here, and in the next moment and the next place as well.

No special time or place is needed for this practice. You are ready to engage in this practice in this moment or any moment of your choosing. There is one key to practicing awe: the conscious choice to go beyond the reality that meets the eye. To practice awe is to practice seeing God in everything to shift your perception to look more closely and discover the hidden layers of holiness and meaning beneath what is apparent to realize the connection between all things to understand our relatedness to each other and to God to melt the barriers of separation. When we see another person, we strive to see the Divine in them. When we are in nature, we look closer and see the presence of the Creator. But not only in the beauty of nature when we look at our computer, at a building, at the garbage, we look deeper to discover the presence of the Source there as well. We experience the Presence in all the events of our lives, knowing that everything that occurs can occur only within the Divine Plan.

When you come to a place that seems outside of God's realm, too coarse for light to enter, and you want to run away...

Know that there is no place outside of God, and rejoice in your task of uncovering Him there.

—Rebbe Menachem Schneerson