



SILENCE

By Wayne Visser

~ All sound begins and ends in silence ~

How much silence do you have in your life?
Do you relish the quiet moments when you get them?

We live in a noisy world.
From the instant we open our eyes, we are battered by sound – the roar of traffic, the baby crying, the radio banter, the children shouting, the television blaring.

And yet much of this noise is a choice.
We choose to live in cities, drive cars and have the radio and TV switched on.
It's almost as if we feel threatened by silence.

Silence has become an alien presence in our lives, which, consciously or unconsciously, we prefer to avoid.
When there is a pause in conversation, we refer to it as an awkward silence.

So what is it about silence that we find so uncomfortable?
Could it be that silence forces us to confront ourselves?
And, strange as it may seem, many of us are frightened of the prospect of seeing ourselves in the uncompromising light of silence, undistorted by the shadows of noise.

Silence is the portal to introspection, the mirror in which we see our selves reflected.
Conversely, noise is the distraction we seek to keep us from focusing on our true nature.
The spiritual traditions of the world have long understood this – be still and know thyself.
A silent night is a holy night.
Only in silence can we hear the "still small voice", our inner wisdom, the sound of God.

Silence is the attitude we adopt when we are listening.
And in a world of incessant speaking, listening has become a rare activity.
Yet listening is a skill practised by all the great masters – great leaders listen to their followers, great artists listen to their muses, great mystics listen to their spirit guides.
Even the truly great speakers are students of silence, acutely aware of the power of the pause.
Master orators know that silence speaks volumes.

All silence is pregnant, for out of silence all creation is born.
Silence is the fertile bed in which seeds of inspiration germinate, the dark humus which feeds new life.
Silence is always full, never empty.
Yet we have to empty our minds of the litter of noisy thoughts in order to uncover silence.

Silence is the precious space in the midst of the vast clutter of noise-junk in our world.
Silence represents the ultimate potential, the unlimited creative source, the place where ideas are conceived and revelations are born.

And yet silence is an elusive presence. Like a phantom, we know it exists, but can never quite see it, never quite grasp it.





The harder we pursue silence, the faster it seems to flee.
The more intently we hunt stillness, the more skittish the prey becomes.

Yet silence is not an enemy to be stalked, but a friend to be discovered.
Silence will sneak up on us and surprise us when we least expect it.
Silence will happily play tag for hours.
But capturing silence is never the goal.
Silence cannot be imprisoned, for it is a free spirit who visits whoever it pleases whenever it pleases.

Admittedly, silence is more likely to tap you on the shoulder if you are not so wrapped up in your noisy life that you would fail to register her gentle touch.

Silence is an air-sprite that demands our respect.
She oversees the transition of our souls from this world to the next.
Not surprisingly, we often feel her presence most strongly at funerals – when we take a moment of silence, with sincerity in our hearts.

But silence is also the guardian of joy.
For the deepest joy can never be expressed in words, and the biggest celebration is beyond noise.

Do not worry if the space for silence is in your life seems limited.
For time and silence are co-conspirators, and the briefest moment of silence can seem like an eternity of respite from the noise.

And do not panic if you don't know where to find silence, for she often rides on the gentle breeze of your breath.
In fact, if you listen carefully, that may just be her now, wanting to play.



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