



DOUBT

By Wayne Visser

~ Doubt is the shield we carry through the battlefields of life ~

What is the place of doubt in your life?
Do you question your abilities or potential?
Do you nurture insecurities about your desirability?
Are there lingering doubts about your relationships?
Or perhaps some niggling uncertainties about your beliefs?

Many see doubt as a disease, an unfortunate affliction that is best avoided, or if infection has already set in, a condition to be cured.
But doubt is a prerequisite for good health.
Like the friendly bacteria in yoghurt, doubt helps us to fight off life's more serious threats.

We all have doubts, because they are the by-products of living and learning.
When a child burns itself on the stove, it has doubts about what is safe to touch - and that is a good thing.
When we have been let down by friends, we think twice about relying completely on others again - and that is a worthwhile lesson.
When we have been hurt in love, we are more cautious in our choice of future partners - and that is a sensible approach.
When our religious beliefs have failed us, we question their infallibility - and that is a wise perspective.

Doubt is the path to awareness, while certainty is the road to naivety.
Doubt is like a mountaineer with a walking stick, which she uses to test the ground ahead before stepping into the unknown.
Certainty is like a blind man without a stick, stumbling forward in the misguided belief that all obstacles will be cleared from his path.

Without doubt, there can be no questioning.
And without questioning, there can be no discovery.
Without discovery, there can be no true knowledge.
And without true knowledge, there can be no progress.

And yet, when doubt turns to despair, it becomes our prison, rather than our sky.
When doubt overwhelms us, it keeps us in shackles, rather than giving us wings.
For the purpose of doubt is not to paralyse, but to catalyse.
Doubt should encourage us to test the water, not scare into a fear drowning.

Doubt and trust are partners in time.
To have trust without any doubt is to be foolish and to court disaster.
To have doubt without any trust is to be paranoid and to invite madness.
And yet, each moves opposite to the other, like tango dancers.
As trust increases, doubt recedes into the shadows.
But break the trust, and doubt returns stronger than before.

Doubt is not an absence of hope





And faith is not an absence of doubt.
In the same way as bravery is not an absence of fear
Hope is seeing the light in spite of the shadows
And faith is trusting the unknown despite the dangers.

So let us be bold in our hopes, but not foolish in our footsteps.
Let us be brave in our faith, but not blind in our beliefs.
Let us listen to our doubts, but not be deafened by their cries.
Let us be healthy doubters
Not stuck in the mire of fear and disbelief
But en route to the horizon of living and learning and loving



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