

(This article is dedicated to my mom who has experienced the death of her son, among many others whom she loved deeply and grieved for to soon.)

In the Silence of our Hearts: Moving from Darkness to Light

It is so dark in here; so very quiet. Can I handle this? I feel so alone, so isolated in my despair. I feel like I'm going crazy. Wait, is the world moving while I stand still? Am I in a womb or a coffin? Am I in a cocoon or enveloped in an avalanche of snow? From where does this darkness come? It comes in the silence of my own heart.

For those who have suffered or struggled, moving from darkness to light can be a lonely, agonizing part of processing any painful event. For some, the processing takes longer than for others. Longer or shorter, it does not matter, what matters is there's hope.

In her book *Little Pieces of Light . . . Darkness & Personal Growth*, Joyce Rupp explains how we need light for our life's journey, and we also need darkness. Darkness is an "essential element of growth." In it we can find hope with the "little pieces of light" that penetrate the dark to ease the painful process.

Winter finds many of us in darkness, figuratively and literally. It is a womb-like time, a time to go inward. It is here in the silence of our hearts that we lament and struggle. Equally, it is an opportune time for healing and transformation.

What comes out of the "womb of darkness?"

Clear awareness of strengths and weaknesses

- Acute sense of the presence of God
- Awareness of Truth
- Ego transcendence
- Peace
- Resilience of Spirit

Our hearts are intricately connected to our souls where silence lies and where wisdom begins. It is along this narrow and oddly twisting path from heart to soul where stillness lays. When you find yourself in darkness allow yourself to dwell there knowing that the dark offers "little pieces of light."

Listen to and feel your silent heart and allow the healing process to take place. Should you stop the process, the darkness will linger. When you choose to continue the process, the "little pieces of light" shine in and give hope. Venture into your silent heart fearlessly and spiritually grow.

(Longer Version can be found in Liturgy and Ministry Magazine. August 2007 issue)

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