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## The Experience of Emptiness

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There is an experience of emptiness that many people have that is not the cosmic experience of plenitude and the absence of thought. That cosmic experience has to do with freedom from one's smaller self and an expansion into a larger reality. But the more common experience of emptiness is one of dismay, where it feels on the human level that nothing is happening, or that inside oneself there are no guidelines as to what direction to go in, how to move forward, what the next step might be. And accompanying emptiness can be a sense of loneliness as well. So, I want to say a little about this space that is created for many people in the course of their spiritual progression and unfoldment.

This space of emptiness needs to be seen as something positive, not as something fearful. As something in which God and light are working, and the conscious will, the conscious mind, have little to say about what's going on. So, there is another kind of emptiness that may have more to do with depression and a sense that life has no meaning, but still that emptiness is different from the emptiness that is a space in which light can move. The emptiness which is a space in which light can move often involves unknowing but not depression. It often involves a sense of uncertainty about how life will move forward. And in that space, God is cultivating trust. And your own inner being is holding, as best as you know how from your conscious self, holding to the understanding that your conscious will may no longer have anything to operate with, and that something that's deeper may be moving things in the direction of your unfoldment.

There are many periods of time in a spiritual journey and in a lifetime when emptiness needs to be faced. And of course we know that there are many distractions that we can each find in order to cover it over. But if one were trusting, there would be an allowance for the sense of emptiness. There would be a willingness to just be with it. To just trust that the Invisible is at work, and not feel as many people do feel, that there's something wrong, or that it needs to be corrected, or that one has to take action. In that place of non-action and non-doing, it is God that is doing something, not the ego, and not one's personal will. So, if one can be in a place of surrender and prayer, and if one can tolerate the sense of waiting without knowing what one is waiting for, then emptiness can become very productive. It may feel like it's the opposite of productive. It may feel that nothing is happening and that it is through one's own lack or limitation that nothing is happening. That one *should* be doing something. But it is in the very absence of doing that progress can be made. Because the inner means by which change can take place, that means does not always happen through action. In fact, it very often happens through non-action. The inner means through which change can take place has to do with an inner sense that's often absolutely invisible to the conscious mind. That you, in your deeper structure of embodiment are changing your relationship with God, you're changing your relationship with life, you're changing your view of yourself, and your heart is going through some transformation that may be completely unknown to your conscious mind.

So, when I say that "you are changing," you understand that I don't mean that *you* are doing anything, because I'm talking about 'not-doing.' *It* is being changed within you as you desire to move more in the direction of spiritual authenticity, and as you desire to trust more and to surrender more. Then, there is more capacity for God and light to have an input into your subconscious structure of thought and feeling so that things *can* change, not through your will, but through Divine will.

If you find in yourself a fear of emptiness, it is often because it's associated in the past or in the recent past with a sense of being lost, a sense of failure, a sense of things having gone wrong with one's life. And so these past associations can create an intolerance for that space that is so vital to the progression of a spiritual life. You may feel uncomfortable with it, or you may feel that you need to get away from it. But these are the associations that have the linking between emptiness or 'not-doing' and failure. And so if you can observe that in yourself and see that that association is being made, then you can do your best to let it go, and to understand that 'not-doing' involves an act of trust which invites Divine will and Divine intelligence into your inner life, and allows that stream of deeper knowing to have more authority in your decision making and in your life.

This is very different than the will being in charge. It's very different than deciding to activate certain goals in life, or deciding to take charge of your life - the latter being a very common psychological need, and for some an important action, when having authority or feeling centered in one's life has been clearly absent. But there's an action that comes from the ego-self taking charge of one's life, and there's an action that comes from strictly listening to, waiting for, surrendering to the Divine within you, and allowing *that* to take charge of life. You see, there's a big difference in terms of what part of you is taking charge of life. And many people get confused about that, because they feel they are meant to be co-creators of their life, and this is true. You are meant to be a co-creator of your life. You absolutely are. But with what part of yourself are you co-creating your life? With what part is the important question. And so the willingness to allow space to exist in which Divine will can enter, and in which for a period of time, longer or shorter, you may feel completely unknowing about which direction to take or how to be, where to go, how to think. *That* willingness is not an opposite of taking charge of your life. *That* willingness, to be in emptiness, is allowing the Divine in you to link with the larger Divine so that the most authentic part of you can take charge of your life.

So, if you can hear the conclusion of this, it is not that taking charge of your life and being active and being empty are opposites. These are not opposites. They're only opposites when 'taking charge' is viewed from the level of the conscious mind or the level of the personal will. But if you view the part of you that joins with the Divine to be what *you* wish to have take charge of your life, then you must, for whatever period of time it comes to you - and you don't have to create it because these things come to you - endure, embrace, tolerate period of emptiness where waiting for the Divine instrument of will to become conscious in you can be given space. This is the nature of spiritual growth. It's what maturing into spiritual adulthood can be about. And it is the foundation for developing and also manifesting trust in Divine will.

May all who fear to trust the Unknown and who fear to trust emptiness understand that the space that is created within themselves that allows the Invisible to enter is a space that nourishes all growth.

Thank you for joining me in this podcast, and I look forward to being with you again next time.

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