



Thousand Branches, Million Plums, by Satish Kumar

As a seed is capable of becoming a tree, all human beings are also capable of realizing their own full potential. In order for the seed to become a tree it must be planted in the soil – underground, in the dark, and almost forgotten. In relationship with the earth, the seed surrenders its separateness, its identity, its individuality, its ego. In fact, the seed allows itself to become one with the earth, only then its hidden energy bursts open and we see the green shoots emerging like a miracle. In the same way we human beings have to let go of our pride, our separateness, and not bother about our individual identity. If we immerse ourselves in the process of life, and trust the process of the universe, and identify ourselves with others, we can become the tree of a thousand branches and a million plums. You do need a sense of the self, there is a place for it. Individuality and wholeness are complementary, not contradictory – like the seeds need the shell. Without the shell the seed is incapable of forming itself as a seed. Similarly, we humans have our identity giving us a sense of separateness, but a time comes when the seed needs to grow into a tree. That is a point of transformation. As the seed goes through transformation and realizes itself as a tree, the shell is no longer necessary, and has to disintegrate in order for the seed to integrate with the other elements. --Satish Kumar