



Time is a Season, by David Whyte

Most traditional human cultures have seen the hours of the days in the same way as they have encountered the seasons of the year: not as clear lines drawn across our experience, but as an advancing quality, a presence, a visitation, and an emergence of something growing inside us as much as it is growing in the outer world. A season or an hour of the day is a visitation whose return is not always assured. Every spring following a long winter feels as miraculous as if we are seeing it for the first time. Out of the dead garden rises abundance beyond a winter eye's comprehension.

The hours and the seasons are sometimes a flowering, sometimes a disappearance, and often an indistinguishable transience between the two, but all the hours of the day and the seasons of the year enunciate some quality in the world that has its own time and place. To make friends with the hours is to come to know all the hidden correspondences inside our own bodies that match the richness and movement of life we see around us. The tragedy of constant scheduling in our work is its mechanical effect on the hours, and subsequently on our bodies, reducing the spectrum of our individual character and color to a gray sameness. Every hour left to itself has its mood and difference, a quality that should change us and re-create us according to its effect upon us.

In many traditional cultures, a particular hour of the day is seen to have a personal, almost angelic presence, something that might be named - though only in hushed tones, and only in ways that reinforce its unknowingness. The Benedictine, Brother David Steindl-Rast, defines an angel as the eternal breaking into time, each particular breakthrough of the numinous utterly extraordinary and utterly itself. Time and each hour of time is a season, almost a personality, with its own annunciation, its own song, its whispering of what is to be born in us. Its appearance like a new conversation in which we are privileged to overhear ourselves participating.

To escape from the prison of time is to grant the hours their own life; to uncurl the iron grip of our hand on any given moment while at the same time finding the ability to be more present, more robust, more open to our own self-evident absurdities, while continuing the conversation.Â