

Greetings!

What a time we are living in. Moving into fall, with the crisp, dry, cool, air, gives me a sense of lightness or hope. I still feel these things, but I also have a sense of foreboding. The reality of the coronavirus still creeps among us, and it seems unlikely that we will escape from the ambiguity of the outcome any time soon. So, what are we to do when life feels uncertain at best, and out of control or painful at worst?

The Topic at Hand:

Maybe what we need is to find amidst the chaos is what I call the Holy, the thing, things or actions that create a sense of being whole, complete, and sound. Pre-Christian usage of the word translates “holy” in to the idea of being preserved intact or whole, and not capable of being violated or disturbed. In Old German, the root word of holy, “heil,” meant health and happiness. With these definitions, finding the Holy suggests that its discovery leads to a sense of feeling complete, healthy and whole, even in the face of chaos and conflict.

One word that comes to my mind to describe the sensation of encountering the Holy is “grounded.” Finding the Holy signifies finding solid ground, or grounding the body. This involves different things for different people. The process, discovering the Holy, is thus an individual affair.

At the risk of sounding clichéd, I suggest going into nature. I am not really the kind to sit and stare at the sunrise, but what does help me is uncovering ways of being awed by or connected to nature. Being recently enticed by an apple tree in the yard where I’ve been staying during COVID, I experienced this connectedness in profound way. I set out to collect what the deer had left behind, the highest fruits. Doing so filled me with a sense of accomplishment and internal peace. The world saved something for me in those apples, a sense of being part of a process much greater than myself.

An Image that I Love:



Scholar Looking at a Waterfall by Zhong Li from the late 15th Century.

This Chinese painting incorporates everything that calms me, that makes me feel whole and grounded: deep thinking, nature, and water. The sound of water always grounds me, enabling my best thinking.

You can see this painting on the [MET's](#) website. The museum has an audio interpretation of the piece [here](#). I recommend a listen if the painting entices you at all.

Just for Laughs:



Alternatively, lying on the ground and listening to music might do the trick!

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