

What Truly Matters

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Meditation is a way to mature human relationships, relationships that enable us to really rejoice in the being of another, with no wish to possess or control them, but simply to know the other as he or she is, and to delight in that knowing. And it is the same with God. We don't set out to harass or bombard God with words, to demand notice or revelation on our own terms. In the simplicity of our meditation, in the simplicity of our humble repetition of the mantra, we seek solely to be with and for God. . . .

As we say our mantra, we let go of our thoughts and plans and ideas and imaginings; we learn the value of renunciation, of non-possessiveness. We let go of our own images of self. We let go of our desires. We let go of our fears and of our own self-consciousness. This enables us to enter into communion with the other, and with others, at the deepest level of reality.

After meditation: "Two Arab Men" by Kim Stafford in *HEALING THE DIVIDE: Poems of Kindness and Connection*, ed. James Crews (Brattleboro, VT: Green Writers Press, 2019), p. 85.

Two Arab Men

Up out of the metro at Clignancourt

we weave through the seething throng
of old men holding a clutch of sunglasses,
the man with a forearm of ten watches,
another with a festoon of leather purses
in green, purple, brown and crimson
all crying their wares in voices
bereft of hope—then the gauntlet
of stalls with jeans artistically ripped,
shirts fluttering their flags of fashion,
African masks, digital gizmos,
many offers, few sales, but then
the heart of peace appears when
two men step into the bright halo
of friendship, lean in to touch
head to head, right, then left, then
forehead to forehead, the close ritual
of what truly matters, deep economy
where the only currency is kinship.

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