

Mature Relationships

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An excerpt from “Mature Relationships” by John Main OSB in *The Hunger for Depth and Meaning*, ed. Peter Ng (Singapore: Medio Media, 2007), pp. 141-2.

[M]editation is a way to mature human relationships, relationships that enable us to rejoice in the being of another, with no wish to possess or control, but simply to know the other as he or she is, and to delight in that knowing. [. . .] In the journey of meditation, . . . 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 images of self; we let go of our desires; we let go of our fears and of our self-consciousness. This renunciation enables us to enter into communion with the other, and with others, at the deepest level of reality.

The solitude of our meditation is the foundation stone on which we build all communion, true communion with ourselves, with others and with God. It's in the silence of our own heart that we enter into the deep harmony that reveals our oneness with all. Listen to St Paul writing to the Colossians:

Put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. Be forbearing with one another and forgiving where any has cause for complaint: you must forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these things, put on love, to bind all together and complete the whole. Let Christ's peace rule in your hearts, for to peace you were all called as members of a single body.

After meditation: “To My Mother” by Wendell Berry in NEW COLLECTED POEMS (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2012), p. 319.

To My Mother

I was your rebellious son,
do you remember? Sometimes
I wonder if you do remember,
so complete has your forgiveness been.

So complete has your forgiveness been
I wonder sometimes if it did not
precede my wrong, and I erred,
safe found, within your love,

prepared ahead of me, the way home,
or my bed at night, so that almost
I should forgive you, who perhaps
foresaw the worst that I might do,

and forgave before I could act,
causing me to smile now, looking back,
to see how paltry was my worst,
compared to your forgiveness of it

already given. And this, then,
is the vision of that Heaven of which
we have heard, where those who love
each other have forgiven each other,

where, for that, the leaves are green,
the light a music in the air,
and all is unentangled,
and all is undismayed.

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