

Faith & Inner Struggle

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FAITH: *A form of knowing.
A subtle, non-intellectual spiritual knowing of
non-intellectual spiritual realities.*

Much more than a belief system.

Note the use of the word KNOWING as opposed to KNOWLEDGE. The word Knowledge implies an internal conceptualisation of authenticated experiences. That is, an experience becomes reduced to concepts and words, proven to be reliable and repeatable for all people in all situations. Knowledge then becomes sources or points of reference for us to function in the world. Many books are full of knowledge, facts and figures. But sometimes, "sometimes"! Knowledge can bring about resistance to counter our efforts in the development of faith.

People are knowledgeable about the skills they are proficient in, but Knowing is an experience detained in the present moment. It is consciousness being active and pregnant with awareness. Also, we can say that the word knowing implies a form of knowledge but without questions, associations, or the requirement of validation. Thus, "knowing" is non-intellectual and devoid of qualification. *This is fortunate, for the experience which brings about this 'knowing' is linked to spiritual realities which are essentially unable to be proven or validated by the usual human process. Normally, the process of validation of worldly experiences is done through the 5 human senses, but we are not equipped with a biological 'Sense' capable of evaluating the non-physical.*

This is where we begin to enter the realm of the higher faculties of Mind related to our development in terms of Spiritual Consciousness. Intuition is often referred to as the ability to sense, perceive, or discern the subtle.

Spiritual realities are not able to be validated beyond the individual who experiences them, (though the spiritual maturity of another may allow an understanding of it). For example, I will never be able to prove to you my connection to God. I may be able to assist you in the personal search, but I cannot prove to you what is valid for me. I can't give you my personal knowledge or 'knowing' of my experience.

Consider this old saying.

*For those who believe, no proof is necessary,
For those who do not believe, no proof is possible.*

The human process of validation and authentication of experiences that lead to knowledge pertains only to worldly realities. The purity and power of the personal experience will NEVER go beyond the individual.

THIS IS WHERE WE NEED TO CULTIVATE A HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS.

HOW DO I DO THAT ??

I hear you ask!

Just as any other discipline, our faith NEEDS to be cultivated and nurtured through practices which exercise and elevate our consciousness. For myself, the 3 most vital things were:

- **PRAYER**
- **MEDITATION**
- **CONTEMPLATION**

Prayer

By regular prayer, I petitioned God for grace to flow to me in a bid to release me from worldly and mundane thinking. I sought the compassion that would help me to truly 'grow up' for I saw true maturity as spiritual maturity.

Looking back over many years, I now consider my mind and the way I thought to have had no real depth, and as such, I would easily fall victim to the ways of the world. This is a good description of Spiritual Immaturity, and upon reflection I can see that it is most easily identified by a lack of discernment. *(The use of the word Victim is not necessarily meant to describe circumstances abounding in suffering, but is used to highlight the effect of ignorance. Slavery and perhaps bondage to worldliness might also be employed in describing the propensity of those who have no spiritual inclinations. Such bondage to worldliness can cause people to perceive either the world and/or people as difficult, hard, confusing, without compassion.*

There are many such variations when one's thinking only stays on a surface level)

Prayer should always be a personal and intimate communication.

Just as one might engage in conversation with a trusted friend, so should you allow and sustain a sense of confidence that your words and thoughts are unequivocally heard, received and even contemplated. This will exercise and nurture a tender infant faith and bring it to maturity steeped in confidence.

Another strategy I used in developing my faith was to end each prayer with the words. "Thank you for listening to my prayer, for I know that you always listen to my prayer". These words of Jesus appear in the New Testament after He prayed to His Father (your Father to!), to raise Lazarus from the dead. My regular and unflinching repetition of these words eventually led to a breaking through of the intellectual thought processes which try to assert doubt of the reality of my prayers being heard.

The mental resistance we so often encounter when dealing with aspects of spirit, is simply the conditioned behavioural response brought about by years of HUMAN observation and rationalization. This is quite natural and 'important' for functioning in the world, but the mind must not be allowed to fully assert itself whilst you are putting effort into the development of Faith. There is a degree of surrender required. This is very important, since surrender requires faith. Therefore, surrender then leads to faith being exercised and strengthened. (just like a body builder)

Do not fear in times of mental unrest. Remember to say to yourself if ever there is a struggle within. "What are my motives? Do they have a higher purpose? Is goodness and righteousness my goal? Indeed, what Father would abandon or ignore his very own child as it calls out to Him in tender love with courage. This can guard your best efforts through activating awareness.

In the present is where your power lies. Automatic or conditioned mental responses are old (perhaps invalid) links with the past. Such inner struggles are your acquired mental dispositions

trying to assert themselves with the purpose of protecting you. This motive of protection is aimed at protecting you from.

- ***PAIN (emotional)***
- ***DISAPPOINTMENT***
- ***DEFEAT***
- ***HUMILIATION***

Such reactions illustrate how your subconscious is at work considering the implications of your actions (*ie: exercising faith and standing up to the assertions of the mind*) and the consequences that might come back to you, through THE COMPARISONS OF YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES. This mental barrier can be formidable at times so be Courageous!

Belief Systems indoctrinated into us at childhood, also have an extremely significant impact in the struggle to develop a new adult spiritual maturity. In our childhood we were simple and uncluttered, and by virtue of that youth, we were naturally without the benefit of many life experiences. In that era, the mental evaluative process of the adult was not present. Young minds allow and accept without objection, verbal teaching, instruction and other guidance. Sometimes that youthful guidance can cause conflict in later adult life as a newly acquired experience clashes with embedded and unchallenged indoctrination. Again, amid any conflicts, remember the motive of your new goal. Say... "I will become new through my Love and my courage. I am prepared to test the waters for the experiences that shall uplift my life.

One day, you will find this spiritually mature faith will bloom within, to have entered an entirely different dimension to the way you live life both spiritual and worldly. When this bridge of the mind is crossed, a new horizon will reveal itself to bring you new roads to the spiritual journey. This faith will enable joy and confidence to naturally manifest as the mind accepts the reality of Spirit as authentic.

We could now say that the mind has become purified if not at least elevated, and the journey of the spiritual aspirant is nothing but enhanced. But of course, there is no other path greater to knowing God than through Love, and recognition and sustenance of the sense of the Father to Child relationship. That is, God, as a loving Father with personality, and you as a Son or Daughter of whom this Father has nothing but admiration for His own children.

Please read the short discourses on Meditation and Contemplation as these also are vital allies in assisting you to developing a mighty faith.

Be Peaceful,

Adrian