

In Silence Together: An Invitation

This letter comes to you with a simple, yet in our experience, profound invitation: To join women around the world in a day of silence every month.

At the end of August, five of us who have been guiding the Coming Into Your Own course in the United States gathered for two days to talk about ourselves, our lives, and particularly our sense of calling around women and the nature of women's work in this day and time. As we explored the topics and themes that are relevant for us, as well as what we all might want to put our collective energy into, silence came up repeatedly as an important and central theme.



Shell photo donated by Ann Foorman

Several of us had already been experimenting with various practices in this realm. By the end of the gathering, one thought took hold for us as a group, and thus this invitation to you was born.

We would like to invite you to join women all over the world in an ongoing experiment to practice a day of silence each month. We began the cycle in September. The day that we have chosen is the last Sunday of each month. In considering all the various options and possibilities, we landed on this day as potentially the most doable for the largest number of women. We recognize that some may not be able to accommodate this rhythm for very real work or family reasons (e.g. as a nurse in a busy hospital), and yet the beauty of this linkage is that all those who so choose, can be present in spirit with those of us who are practicing. Or you could choose another day. Or dedicate an hour to silence around family responsibility.

We found a simple and profound book that describes one woman's experience of two days in silence for the last 17 years. We met the author, Anne LeClaire a few weeks ago, and she ended up spending time in our women's retreat that was just held on Cape Cod. Her book is called *Listening Below the Noise*. (You can order Anne's book on Amazon.com. Anne's website is www.anneleclaire.com.) Anne is present with us all on the last Sunday of each month.

If you would like us to consciously know that you are joining us, or if you have any thoughts or questions, feel free to email Dorian Baroni at: dorian.baroni@googlemail.com and she will keep a list of participating women that will be posted on the blog. The Ashland Institute is the home for this endeavor and is providing all of the background support and hosting necessary to get this launched and off the ground. We are most grateful for this clear backing and foundation so that this idea can take wing quickly and with ease.

May you be filled with the wonder and joy of friendship that comes your way with this letter.

If you feel the desire to pass this invitation along, please do. We jumpstarted this project with Peri's purchase of a hundred books, which we sent to friends worldwide along with this invitation. You could "pay it forward", too, if that felt right.

It is our belief and experience that meaningful expression, activity, relationship, and personal calling are contained in a matrix of life that holds us all. In silence, we have a heightened and dynamic sense of connection to this source, thus informing the choices we make and the way we know ourselves.

We are hosting a blog for women to share their experience of the silence. The blog can be found at:
www.insilencetogether.com

In honor and celebration of the wholeness, beauty, and voice of "all our relations,"

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