

Solitude

by Bonnie MacFarlane

“Language has created the word “loneliness” to express the pain of being alone and the word “solitude” to express the glory of being alone.” (by Paul Johannes Tillich)

I savor my solitude. No cell phones, I pads or blackberries for me. When on my daily walks with my dog, I want to hear the chickadees, sparrows, robins, and magpies vocalizing their songs and calls. The whirl of the geese overhead still gives me a thrill, as does the wind blowing in the trees and tall grasses.

I’ve always seen solitude as a necessary time to refill my vessel soul. When I was working as a physical therapist, my well was often dry from all the give, give, giving. I would take off to the mountains for a quiet weekend of reading, painting, sewing, writing, and cooking. No phones, no TVs, and no people. I’d rest and meditate on the mountains, the elk, the wildflowers, the shapes and smells. Barbara DeAngelis said “Women need real moments of solitude and self-reflection to balance out how much of ourselves we give away.”

How cleansing nature has always been for me. I love to sit or lie in a field of tall grasses and wildflowers or watch the clouds while resting under an old oak tree. Walking on an empty beach is heaven: the sound of the waves rolling in and out, the feel of the white sand on my bare, sensory deprived feet, and the gentle caresses by the waves, sun, and wind. Ann Morrow Lindberg in her book: “Gift from the Sea” said that staying at her beach home without her family helped her to replenish and simplify her life.

I much prefer my own company to many others and feel that the ability to enjoy being alone makes one whole, spiritual, and balanced. I’m concerned about all the people who need to be “plugged in” to technology all the time. Where goeth their souls and creativity?