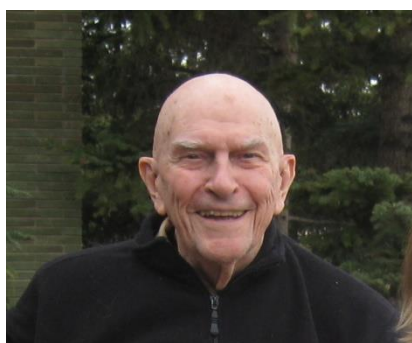


Notes from a Deep Conversation. Fr Thomas Keating.

Without thinking or feeling some emotion, there is just awareness. There is then no desire for bliss, enlightenment, or to teach others. Things are just as they are. In that so-called emptiness, enjoyment arises of itself. As soon as we try to enjoy, the enjoyment ceases. Somehow at the bottom of emptiness (openness, pure awareness), there is enjoyment, fullness, presence and peace.

Bring the same emptiness and freedom to each moment and its content. Then you will be happy even in the midst of suffering. Accept everything and everyone just as they are, where they are, and try to act as lovingly as possible in every situation. Be ready to be led you know not where or when. Hush the discriminating mind dividing things into good or evil for me.



Fr Thomas Keating
St Benedict's Monastery, Snowmass

Fear draws us to the center we have created, the ego self. Love expands from our real center, the true self.

One feels the pain of others and must reach out to help them even if they are unaware of their pain. But one is content and at peace because one does not discriminate.

The true self is all the colours of the rainbow and must expand to experience the whole of one's being. One is not limited to one or two colours. One need not reject any colour, but is to become all of them. The more colours one manifests, the more one manifests the Light that we are and the

Light that we share. Ladders and stages suggest leaving behind the previous rung or stage. One rather adds new dimensions to what one is, like a tree adds rings.

Take and accept yourself just as you are, where you are. If you are aggressive, lustful, fearful, or shy and passive, notice your feelings before, during, and after each incident, without emotional reactions of blame, shame, anger or discouragement. Let God work with your faults and limitations. Just recognize them and be with them, without trying to correct them directly. As you watch them, feel them, and accept them, their force and exaggeration will gradually diminish. Keep moving to the center of your being where divine love is and be present to and welcome whatever bodily feeling or emotion that is happening. The present moment contains all we need to be happy.

(Contemplative Outreach newsletter. June 2015)