

Fame or Peace

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Below is an excerpt from "The Book of Awakening: Having the Life You Want By Being Present to the Life You Have". I've not read this book, but a good friend of mine shared this excerpt and it resonated with me. We are attracted by the bright and shiny things of this world, and, regretfully, we tend to let go of what is eternal for the life consuming things that are temporal. If you are unfulfilled, and spiritually malnourished by keeping up with the Jones', then it is my prayer that you will experience the great peace that comes from serving others before serving self. As a biblical reference, King Solomon, known for his great wisdom, wrote Ecclesiastes. I encourage you to read this book one chapter at a time if you want to know what Solomon would say about the the temporal and the eternal.

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Much of our anxiety and inner turmoil comes from living in a global culture whose values drive us from the essence of what matters. At the heart of this is the conflict between the outer definition of success and the inner value of peace.

Unfortunately, we are encouraged, even trained, to *get* attention when the renewing secret of life is to *give* attention. From performing well on tests to positioning ourselves for promotions, we are schooled to believe that to succeed we must get attention and be recognized as special, when the threshold to all that is extraordinary in life opens only when we devote ourselves to giving attention, not getting it. Things come alive for us only when we dare to see and recognize everything as special.

The longer we try to get attention instead of giving it, the deeper our unhappiness. It leads us to move through the world dreaming of greatness, needing to be verified at every turn, when feelings of oneness grace us only when we verify the life around us. It makes us desperate to be loved, when we sorely need the medicine of being loving.

One reason so many of us are lonely in our dream of success is that instead of looking for what is clear and true, we learn to covet what is great and powerful. One reason we live so far from peace is that instead of loving our way into the nameless joy of spirit, we think fame will soothe us. And while we are busy dreaming of being a celebrity, we stifle our need to see and give and love, all of which opens us to the true health of celebration.

It leaves us with these choices: fame or peace, be a celebrity or celebrate being, work all our days to be seen or devote ourselves to seeing, build our identity on the attention we can get or find our places in the beauty of things by the attention we can give.

(*Nepo 206, 207, Nepo, Mark. [The Book of Awakening: Having the Life You Want By Being Present to the Life You Have](#). San Francisco: Conari Press, 2000.*)

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