

DEC 2019

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

I recently had tea with one of Vancouver's premier Feng Shui Masters Marlyna Loos. Our conversation led into the notion of a culture of lack in our society today. What it means to our overall health, running from one thing to the next – steeped in our own version of the hustle; trying to be heard, to stand out. This culture of lack isn't limited to a sense that we don't have enough financial security or 'things' around us. It affects our expectations of ourselves as high functioning humans. How we raise our children. How we compare ourselves with the barrage of messaging we absorb daily; telling us we can and should do better (subtext, we're lacking).

In an effort to shift my mindset from lack to one of abundance, I've become more curious as to how this sense of lack propagates my thoughts. For example, recent speculation of an economic slowdown stimulates this sense of less and our automatic response mechanism to 'survive'. But what positives can a slower pace offer? More time to spend with friends and family; or pursuing other interests such as rekindling a love for playing a musical instrument, taking up an art project or joining a sports team. How would we benefit from being able to work in a relaxed environment where time can be spent reflecting on a job well done?

You probably have your own list.

Historically, we are richer and safer than any generation before us. Yet we worry about not having or being enough. If we paused for even a brief moment, we might begin to sense, intuitively, that we lack for nothing; really.

Thanksgiving is far in the rear-view mirror obscured by the warm glow of tinsel. But

what if we kept the spirit of gratitude throughout this holiday season? We have so much to point to that flies in the face of this culture of lack. The busy holiday season is a good time to step back and assess what all of this is worth. Whether the want for more is worth the erosion of our collective wellbeing. It might afford us the space to recognize the inevitability of the abundance that surrounds us.

I'm reminded of a poem by Pablo Neruda titled Keeping Quiet: of which I've shared.

This holiday season I wish for you true joy and profound, beautiful stillness. A space where you and I can rest, knowing we have all it takes to be exactly who we are and where we were meant to be.

Enjoy the poem;

Happy Holidays!

Michelle



Keeping Quiet

Pablo Neruda

Now we will count to twelve
and we will all keep still
for once on the face of the earth,
let's not speak in any language;
let's stop for a second,
and not move our arms so much.

It would be an exotic moment
without rush, without engines;
we would all be together
in a sudden strangeness.

Fishermen in the cold sea
would not harm whales
and the man gathering salt
would not look at his hurt hands.

Those who prepare green wars,
wars with gas, wars with fire,
victories with no survivors,
would put on clean clothes
and walk about with their brothers
in the shade, doing nothing.

What I want should not be confused
with total inactivity.
Life is what it is about;
I want no truck with death.

If we were not so single-minded
about keeping our lives moving,
and for once could do nothing,
perhaps a huge silence
might interrupt this sadness
of never understanding ourselves
and of threatening ourselves with death.
Perhaps the earth can teach us
as when everything seems dead
and later proves to be alive.

Now I'll count up to twelve
and you keep quiet and I will go



Painting: *Ravine; Winter Landscape (1883)*
Medium: *Ink on paper; Japanese hanging scroll*
Artist: *Kanō Hōgai (1828-1888) Edo period*