

## Solitude

Loneliness expresses the pain of being alone and solitude expresses the glory of being alone.

~ Paul Tillich

Solitude is not a practice just for ourselves, but a practice to cultivate within each of us a greater capacity for living in communion with the world. In solitude we are able to listen more intimately for the whispers of the divine alive in each moment.

~ Christine Valters Paintner, *The Soul's Slow Ripening*

Withdrawal, solitude, is often not what it looks like – a disappearance. No, to withdraw from entanglement can be to appear again in the world in a very real way and begin the process of renewing the primary invitation to engage again.

~ David Whyte

Solitude is where one discovers one is not alone.

~ Marty Rubin

Solitude is the soul's holiday.

~ Katrina Kenison

We have much to learn from within, but it is easy to get lost in the labyrinth of the inner life. We have much to learn from others, but it is easy to get lost in the confusion of the crowd. So we need solitude and community simultaneously; what we learn in one mode can check and balance what we learn in the other. Together they make us whole, like breathing in and breathing out.

~ Parker J. Palmer

You do not need to leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen. Do not even listen, simply wait, be quiet and still and solitary. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked. It has no choice; it will roll in ecstasy at your feet.

~ Franz Kafka

## For Discussion:

Are you drawn to any of these quotes? If so, why?

How do you feel and think about solitude?