

Being Here is So Much

by John O'Donohue

The human mind is in itself a world with huge mountains, deep valleys and forests of the unknown. Given the private depths, deep strangeness and wonders of our interior life, it is amazing that we can reach out towards the world and to each other with such intimacy and understanding.

More amazing still is our ability to make everything so familiar and normal that we actually succeed in forgetting how strange and wondrous it is to be here.

Rilke said: "Being here is so much."

We turn the mystery and strangeness of this world into our private territory. We make a home out of the world. Life becomes predictable and we function automatically within our frames: route to work, colleagues, friends, patterns of thinking and feeling, the faces of the family, etc. Without sensing it, we become lost inside the automatic traffic of functioning.

It is only when something goes wrong that we are hauled back to the edge. Quite abruptly the familiar map has melted and territories that were sure ground an hour ago don't exist any more ...

If we can free ourselves from our robot-like habits of predictability, repetition and function, we begin to walk differently on the earth. We come to dwell more in the truth of beauty. Beauty is the secret sound of the deepest 'thereness' of things.

To recognize and celebrate beauty is to recognize the ultimate sacredness of experience, to glimpse the subtle embrace of belonging where we are wed to the divine, the beauty of every moment, of everything.

from

Beauty, 2004

