

One of my favorite pieces...this is "*The Invitation*" by Oriah Mountain Dreamer

from her book *The Invitation* (c) 1999. Published by HarperONE, San Francisco. All rights reserved. Printed with permission of the author. www.oriah.org

The Invitation by Oriah Mountain Dreamer

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living.
I want to know what you ache for
and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are.
I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool
for love
for your dream
for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon...
I want to know if you have touched the centre of your own sorrow
if you have been opened by life's betrayals
or have become shriveled and closed
from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain
mine or your own
without moving to hide it
or fade it
or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy
mine or your own
if you can dance with wildness
and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes
without cautioning us
to be careful
to be realistic
to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me
is true.
I want to know if you can
disappoint another
to be true to yourself.
If you can bear the accusation of betrayal
and not betray your own soul.
If you can be faithless
and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see Beauty
even when it is not pretty
every day.
And if you can source your own life
from its presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure
yours and mine
and still stand at the edge of the lake
and shout to the silver of the full moon,
"Yes."

It doesn't interest me
to know where you live or how much money you have.
I want to know if you can get up
after the night of grief and despair
weary and bruised to the bone
and do what needs to be done
to feed the children.

It doesn't interest me who you know
or how you came to be here.
I want to know if you will stand
in the centre of the fire
with me
and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom
you have studied.
I want to know what sustains you
from the inside
when all else falls away.

I want to know if you can be alone
with yourself
and if you truly like the company you keep
in the empty moments.

More Wisdom from Eckhart Tolle

What is this change of consciousness that Tolle talks about? It results in an awareness of one's connection with every other living thing. To move toward this spiritual goal, we let go of the "ego," that part of ourselves that is reliant on manifestations of the mind.

To be in the "ego," he says, is to be unaware, unconscious. When we relinquish the ego, we give up the identification and obsession with THINGS. We can value and care for nice things, but attachment to those things leads to obsession. The ego is never fulfilled. It always craves more...thus obsession and even addiction to things follows.

When we become a watcher, an observer of the ego, we begin to go beyond it. It is the beginning of that path toward consciousness and awareness.

"Making yourself right and others wrong is one of the principal patterns the ego takes," Tolle says. When you're absorbed in thoughts (mind activity) and associated feelings, then you're in the hold of the ego.

The ego expresses itself in:

- complaining
- name-calling
- resenting and holding grievances
- reactivity to others' drama
- superiority
- taking things personally
- seeking out drama
- name-dropping or one-upping
- playing roles
- holding a hidden agenda

and many other patterns that we all inadvertently employ to protect ourselves from what we imagine will hurt us. Any of those sound familiar to you or people you interact with?