

THE PARADOXICAL FRIENDSHIP OF GRIEF AND JOY

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EMOTIONS AND EMBODIMENT – RECAP

A theology of Emotion

- ❖ Heal ourselves
- ❖ Deepening our bonds in community
- ❖ Strength for fierce conversations

Emotions as source of wisdom, discernment

- ❖ Emotions are always embodied
- ❖ Emotions are useful and our teachers
- ❖ Can be hard to feel
- ❖ Can't numb just one emotion

Emotional regulation as spiritual practice



EMOTIONAL REGULATION AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

What is happening in your body?

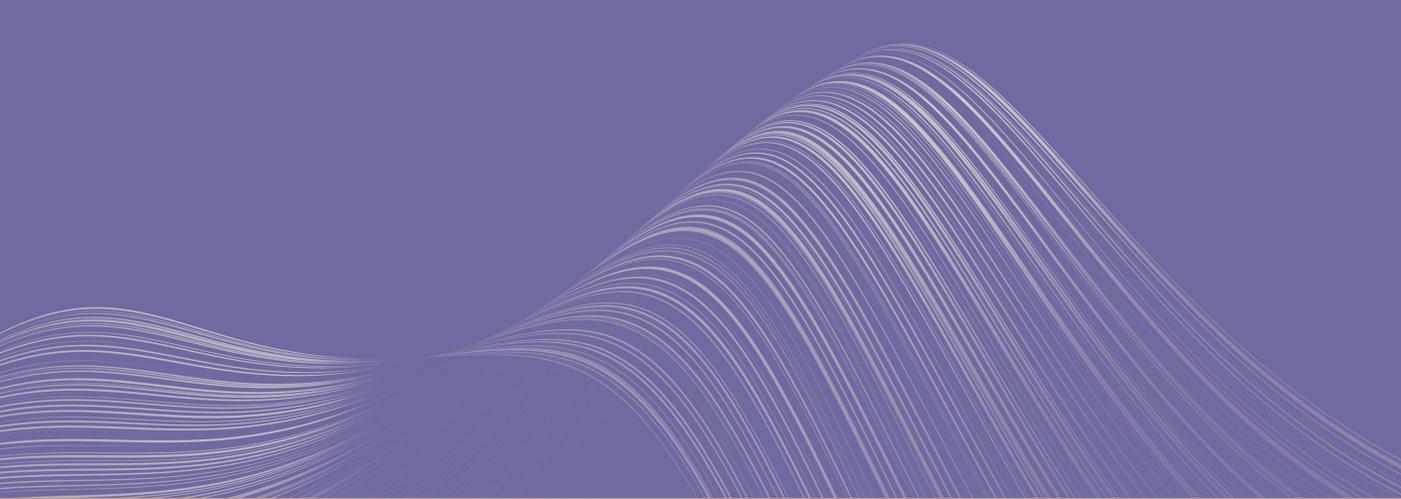
What sort of wave is the emotion?

What is happening in your mind?

Be compassionate

Be curious





GRIEF AND SADNESS

Part of survival, flourishing

Embodied grief

Specific and non-finite grief

Avoiding sadness

Your grief is holy to God



*It's possible I am pushing through solid rock
in flintlike layers, as the ore lies, alone;
I am such a long way in I see no way through,
and no space: everything is close to my face,
and everything close to my face is stone.*

*I don't have much knowledge yet in grief
so this massive darkness makes me small.*

*You be the master: make yourself fierce, break in:
then your great transforming will happen to me,
and my great grief cry will happen to you.*



“PUSHING THROUGH”
-- RAINER MARIA RILKE



JOY

Part of survival, flourishing

Embodied joy

Avoiding joy

Your joy is holy to God

***What is the difference
Between your experience of Existence
And that of a saint?***

***The saint knows
That the spiritual path
Is a sublime chess game with God
And that the Beloved
Has just made such a Fantastic Move
That the saint is now continually
Tripping over Joy
And bursting out in Laughter
And saying, "I Surrender!"***

***Whereas, my dear,
I am afraid you still think
You have a thousand serious moves.***

-- Hafiz



SMALL GROUP CONVERSATION

Reflecting on the last three
years . . .

- ❖ What is one memory of
sadness or grief?
- ❖ What is one memory of
joy?



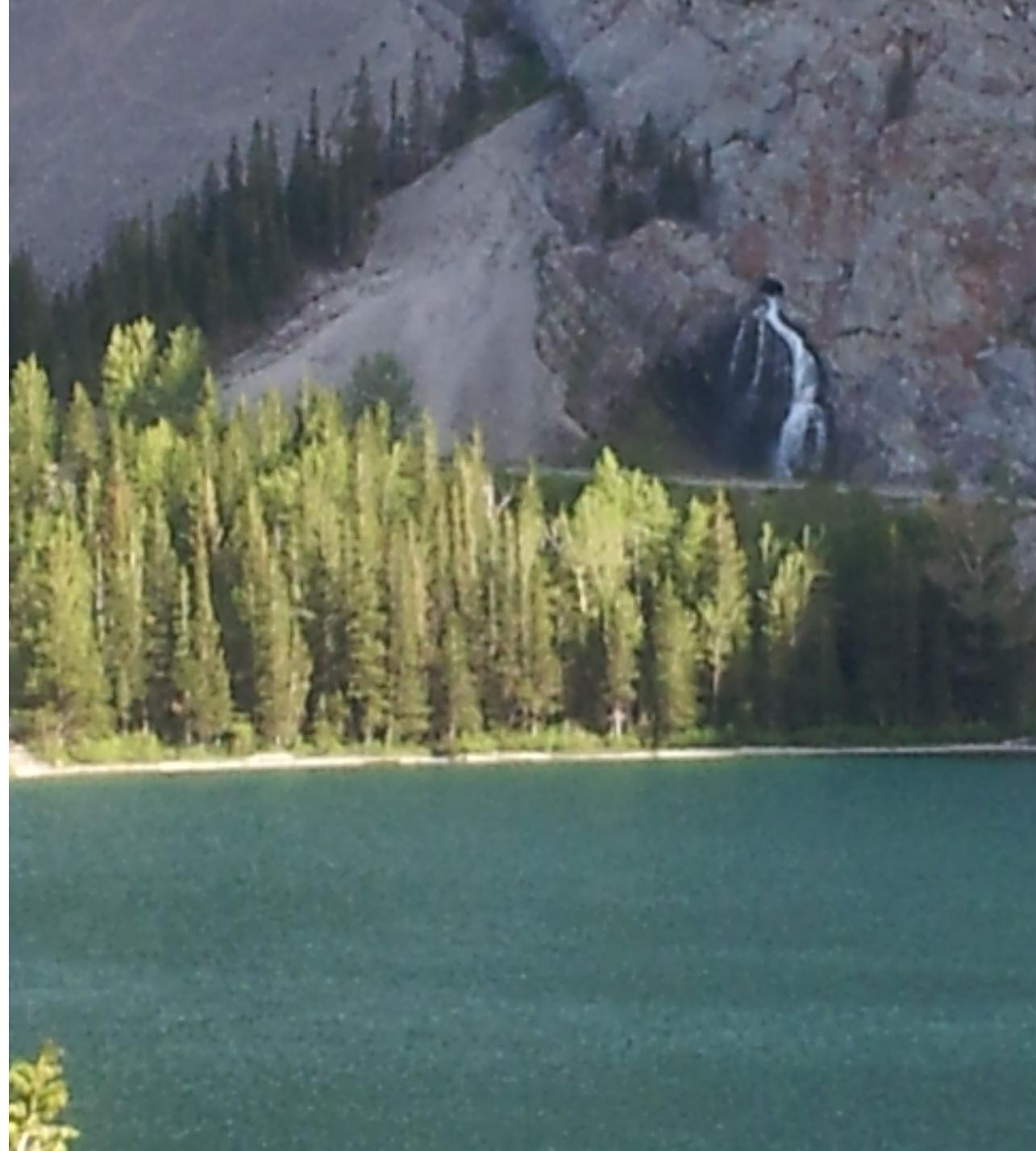
GRIEF + JOY = THEOLOGY

Paradox of grief and joy together

**Embodiment of death and
resurrection**

Unitive consciousness and flow

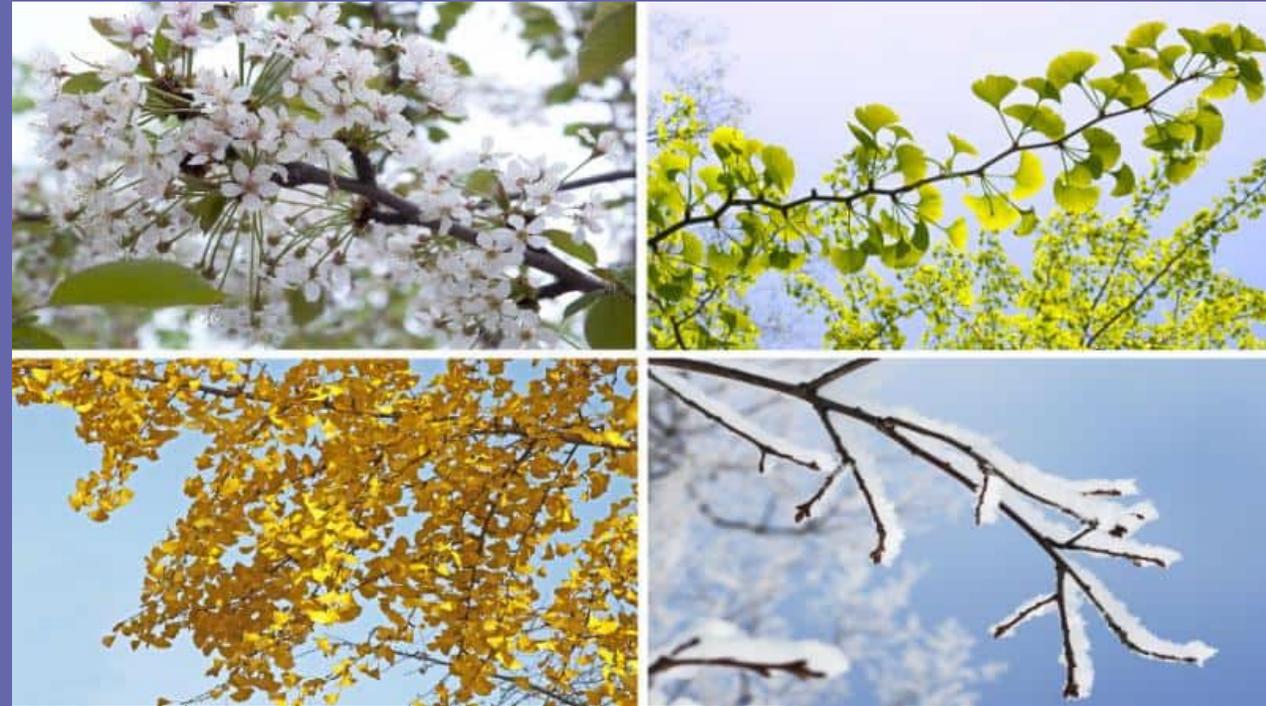
Hope in the present



We have familiar experience of the order, the constancy, the perpetual renovation of the material world which surrounds us. Frail and transitory as is every part of it, restless and migratory as are its elements, never-ceasing as are its changes, still it abides.

It is bound together by a law of permanence, it is set up in unity; and, though it is ever dying, it is ever coming to life again. Dissolution does but give birth to fresh modes of organization, and one death is the parent of a thousand lives. Each hour, as it comes, is but a testimony, how fleeting, yet how secure, how certain, is the great whole. It is like an image on the waters, which is ever the same, though the waters ever flow.

Change upon change—yet one change cries out to another, like the alternate Seraphim, in praise and in glory of their Maker. The sun sinks to rise again; the day is swallowed up in the gloom of the night, to be born out of it, as fresh as if it had never been quenched. Spring passes into summer, and through summer and autumn into winter, only the more surely, by its own ultimate return, to triumph over that grave, towards which it resolutely hastened from its first hour.



We mourn over the blossoms of May, because they are to wither; but we know, withal, that May is one day to have its revenge upon November, by the revolution of that solemn circle which never stops—which teaches us in our height of hope, ever to be sober, and in our depth of desolation, never to despair.

-- John Henry Newman



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

When have you been aware of experiencing both joy and grief?

How did you experience it in your body?

Where is God in all of this?