

Journey to your loving self

Beloved person,

Many voices are concealed within us all. We carry memories and longings in us, joy and worries, wisdom and uncertainty. Sometimes we feel strong and connected, and sometimes searching and unsure. We all know those voices within: some that approach the future full of faith, while others are afraid of failing. Sometimes there is a critical voice that whispers that we are not good enough, while at other times a playful, curious side invites to explore new paths. We constantly move between the longing for adventure and the desire for stability.

We believe that all people are essentially good and loving. We all have the ability to make connections with others, to comfort, and to share joy. At the same time, we also possess the power to look at ourselves with faith and gentleness, to walk our own path with resilience and courage. But life leaves its traces behind. Experiences can make us doubt our own power, sometimes causing us to maintain a distance from our deepest motivations. We build protective walls around our heart, lose contact with our internal wisdom or become estranged from our own feelings.

That distance can sometimes estrange us from our true self. Author Griet Op de Beeck expresses that estrangement but also the importance of looking at it with gentleness: *'We all possess an internal world that we don't understand well. Parts of ourselves that are damaged, that scream to be heard, that are scared or angry or lonely. But what if we stopped turning our back to them? What if we should approach them with softness, despite how difficult that is?'*¹

We all carry a core within – a *Self* – that is not damaged, no matter how turbulent the path may be. It is a place of rest, compassion and wisdom, a place where love rules. The internal journey is a path back to this core. Not by forcing or judging ourselves, but by listening with loving attention to what lives within us. By not pushing away those parts of us that are struggling, but to approach them in a friendly manner. In the stillness of our heart, we can discover that we are more than the voices of fear, hope or longing. We are the space that carries all of these voices.

If we have the courage to want to be in that space, we can find the connection with ourselves once more. When you find peace with your inner world, you can be present in the world around us more genuinely and lovingly. It is the power of the internal journey about which Sabien Tiels and Stef Bos sing: *"Search for a path, dare to fall, don't be afraid of the storm. Follow your heart, go straightforwardly. It makes no difference where, as long as you have loved."*²

The way back to ourselves can sometimes be challenging, but in meetings with others we can find recognition and encouragement. Just like the trusted sound of your own language in a foreign land, the sharing of experiences and hearing of other peoples' journeys can help us to find our own path once again. We are not alone on this journey; we carry each other. In the communities that we are a part of, we believe in the power of connection. We recognise something of ourselves in the other. This realisation connects with the deepest layers of our belief: that in every one of us there is a spark of the greater totality, a sacred space in which we cannot become lost.

This week, let us accept the invitation to look at ourselves and the other gently and with curiosity. Not to judge, but to realise that we are *one* in our plurality. And that we, in this way, can touch upon something greater than ourselves.

With a warm-hearted greeting,
sister Maaïke Blomsma and brother Andrew Hoffmanns



¹ Griet Op de Beeck, in *Het wordt beter* (*It will get better*)

² Sabien Tiels & Stef Bos, *De Reis* (*The Journey*)

Illustration: Merijntje aan de Rijn (Merijntje Betzema)