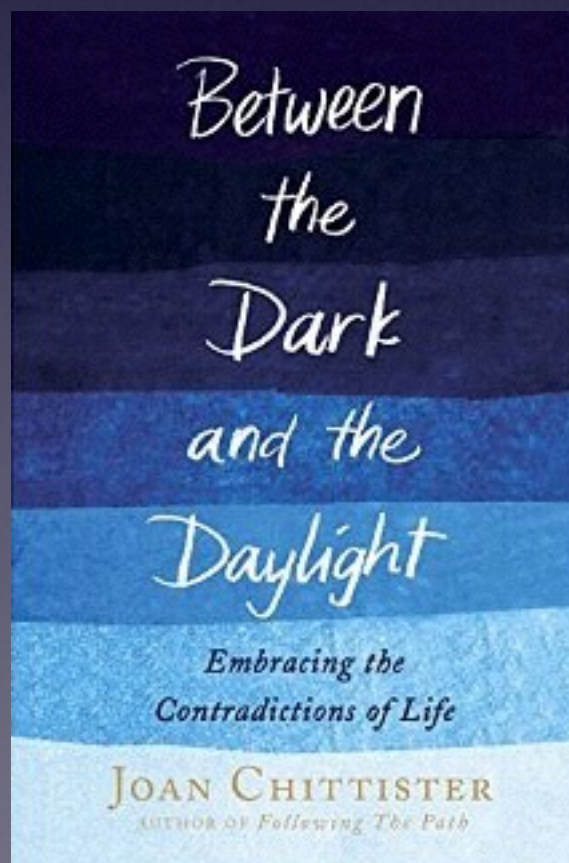


# Spiritual Darkness Two Studies

ACTS  
Fall 2014

St David's United Church  
Calgary



# Opening





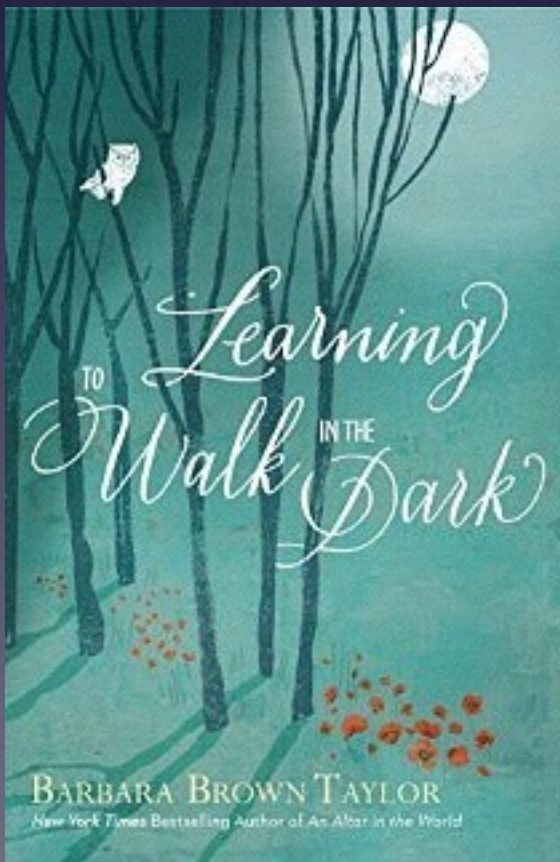
# Thanksgiving - Oct 12

No Bookstudy Session

# Learning to Walk in the Dark

## Session 3

- Opening
- Ch 3
- Ch 4
- Break
- Discussions
- Closing





# Ch 3 - Hampered by Brilliance

“Lie down [and regard the night sky], and you risk wondering things that will make you dizzy for days. Where does that path of stars lead? Where does the cosmos end? What lies beyond it, and who are you to wonder about such things? If you are ever in doubt about your place in the universe, this is a good way to remember.”

# Ch 3 - Hampered by Brilliance

- Taylor says we are increasingly lighting up the darkness of the night. Here's a collage of orbit shots from the International Space Station of exactly that. Including spectacular aurora that we can't see from the "brilliance" of our cities any longer.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev9oPUNaqXE>
- 1m 47s excerpt

**SEBASTIAN SZ**  
@ YouTube





# Ch 3 - Hampered by Brilliance

- “There are so many places in the world where poverty and darkness are synonymous, where the absence of electricity means that people die sooner than they have to for all sorts of preventable reasons and rural women spend their whole lives doing things by hand that their city sisters do by flipping a switch.”
- only the rich have lit up the night



## Ch 3 - Hampered by Brilliance

“The brightest spots on earth have never been the places where the most people live, but rather the places where the most prosperous people live. Where there is money and power enough to light the night, darkness does not stand a chance.”

## Ch 3 - Hampered by Brilliance

“Darkness is necessary to our health. Without enough of it, we make ourselves sick with light. Worse than that, we take all creation with us, making the whole planet pay for our fear of the night.”



# Ch 4 - The Dark Emotions

- Awake at night - thinking about things you don't want to think about.
- “What if I could learn to trust my feelings instead of asking to be delivered from them?”
- “What if I could learn how to stay in the present instead of letting my anxieties run on fast-forward?”
- ‘A bed, in short, is where you face your newness to or fairness from God.’

# Ch 4 - The Dark Emotions

- "... grief, fear, and despair have gained a reputation as "the dark emotions" not because they are noxious or abnormal, but because Western culture keeps them shuttered in the dark..."
- Spiritual Bypassing - "... we may not have enough faith in God. If we had enough, we would be able banish the dark angels from our beds, replacing them with the light angels of belief, trust, and praise."
- "... I found better ways of coping with the melancholy that was so hard for me to bear. When I stopped trying to block my sadness and let it move me instead, it led me to a bridge with people on the other side. Every one of them knew sorrow"



# Ch 4 - The Dark Emotions

- “After years of being taught that the way to deal with painful emotions is to get rid of them, it can take a lot of reschooling to learn to sit with them instead”
- “ Who would stick around to wrestle a dark angel all night long if there were any chance of escape? The only answer I can think of is this: someone in deep need of blessing; someone willing to limp forever for the blessing that follows the wound.”



## Melancholy

In earlier times the god/planet Saturn was considered the ruler of melancholy.

Aristotle in “Problema” wondered why genius tended to be melancholic, citing Socrates as an example. The Greek Ideal was understood as the middle ground of possibility, and melancholy was clearly an imbalance. He thought this Saturnine imbalance was the "remarkable gift" that from its non-centered restless perspective, was more able to notice and consider matters, than those living in the satisfactory middle.





Melancholy

between the light and the dark

Joseph Campbell thought that madness was a sea in which the ancients swam and we moderns drown. Thomas Moore notes that we try to cure depression whereas generations before considered it a part of life. We were not to resist times of melancholy, nor to accept them, but rather to consider them.

(Isaiah 35:4): "Say to the fainthearted: Take courage and fear not."

## **Melancholics**

We are not enslaved - but are lost in our freedom.  
We are not hurt - but are angry.

Our eyes see too much - we prefer the twilight.  
Our ears hear too much - we relish the silence.

We deliberate engagement - life is distracting.  
We are quick to understand - but slow to act.

We rest - that we might remember the good.  
We return - that we might hear our hearts beating.

We care - that people hurt and love each other.  
We hear - the discourse of souls around us.

We marvel at much - but are fainthearted.  
We are paralyzed - to decide our own care.

We are made strong - but not enough.  
We do not break - but suffer in our introspection.



# Ch 4 - The Dark Emotions

- “One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light,” Carl Jung wrote, “but by making the darkness conscious.”
- The great mystics of the Christian tradition all describe it as part of the journey into God,”

# Ch 4 - The Dark Emotions

- Ken Wilber “understands how religious faith works”.
- Translation - Sermon on Mount
- Transformation - not comfort but newness

# Learning to Walk in the Dark

## Ch 2 - Video

- Here is another excerpt from Sam Keen's lecture on "The Absence of God"
- In this excerpt he is speaking about religious emotions - repressed and ontological.
- [http://library.fora.tv/2010/03/11/Sam\\_Keen\\_In\\_The\\_Absence\\_of\\_God#k6mAPzDRLGbP85fZ.99](http://library.fora.tv/2010/03/11/Sam_Keen_In_The_Absence_of_God#k6mAPzDRLGbP85fZ.99) 3m44s minute excerpt





# Ch 4 - The Dark Emotions

- Disney/Pixar's "Inside Out" personifies the emotions of a child (light and dark )in a fascinating dialogue surprisingly similar to Taylor's model.
- here's an excerpt. enjoy!
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Cn1pYnAZSE>
- 9m37s



CBRtrailers



BREAK

# Discussion Questions

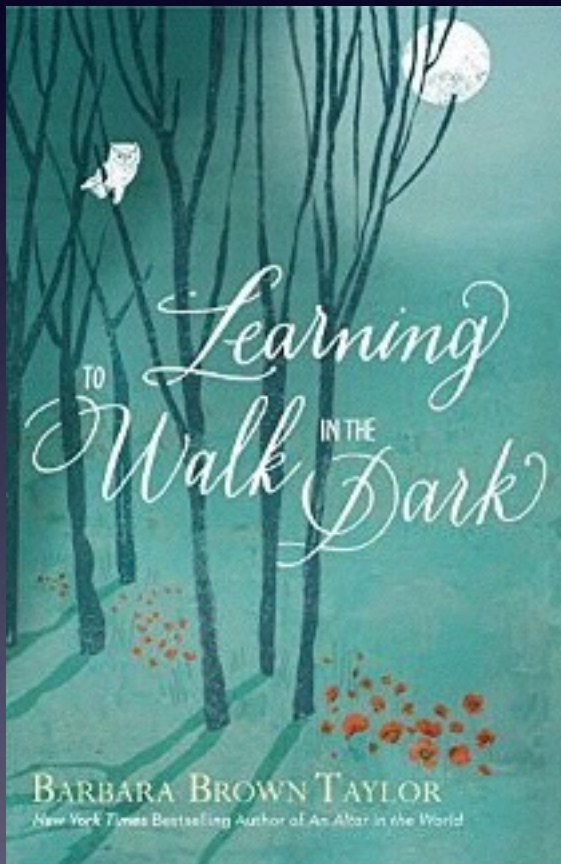
1. **Hampered by Brilliance** - Discuss

"Darkness is necessary for health; we make ourselves sick with light" (p. 71)

2. **The Dark Emotions** - Name a dark experience in your own life and share what it has come to mean to you.

# Learning to Walk in the Dark

**Next Readings - Oct 19**



- 5. The Eyes of the Blind
- 6. Entering the Stone

**Study Website**

<http://dark.stdavidscalgary.net>



Closing