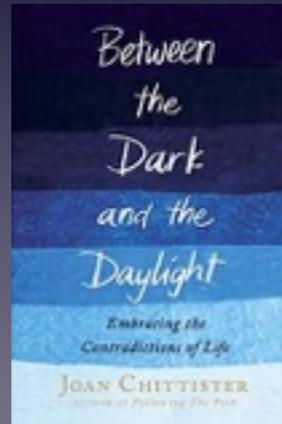


Spiritual Darkness Two Studies



ACTS
Fall 2014

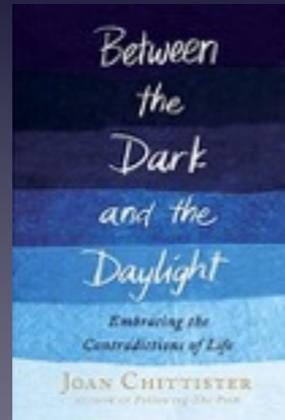
St David's United Church
Calgary

Opening

description
link
time

Between the Dark and the Daylight

Session 7



- Opening
- Introductions
- Chapter Summaries
- Media
- Discussions
- Closing

Between the Dark and the Daylight

Session 6 - Readings

Selected Chapters

7. THE EMPTINESS OF ACCUMULATION
8. THE POVERTY OF PLENTY
9. THE ROLE OF FAILURE IN SUCCESS
10. THE SUCCESS OF FAILURE
11. THE ENERGY THAT COMES FROM EXHAUSTION
12. THE PRODUCTIVITY OF REST AND RECREATION

The 3 green chapters, 1,2 and 5 will be looked at tonight.

Ch 8 The Poverty of Plenty

Key Theme:

The politician and the pauper

- One had everything and was satisfied with nothing.
- The other had nothing and was satisfied.

Ch 8 The Poverty of Plenty

- “Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction.” ... Erich Fromm
- Greed is the engorgement of the soul, a spiritual obesity that consumes one bite of life after another without ever bothering to really taste the prize.
- We can all become gluttoned by the pursuit of things rather than the pursuit of life.

Video

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Having and Being - Eric Fromm

3m excerpt from an upcoming documentary by Thiago Da Costa on the life and works of Erich Fromm.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7GpHrdXOFI>

In this 4m excerpt, Dr. Fromm discusses the “having” and “being” modes of orientation, of how seeing life as having things means seeing yourself being what you possess, and if you lose your possessions, you lose yourself as well. The video is from 1976, when his book “Having and Being” had just been published.



Video

-

The Eyes of Children Around the World

3m excerpt of 8m

“Appreciation is the grace of sensibility,
of really experiencing every moment
for its uniqueness and its awe.” ... Chittister

<https://www.facebook.com/TheEyesOfChildrenAroundTheWorld>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuRpQND3ykA>

The Eyes of Children around the World

The close bond that springs out from looking at the innocence of these eyes transcends the judgement of the mind, and puts us in contact with an essential part of ourselves, a part where the real values of the human being live: love, compassion, gratitude, empathy, solidarity...

The values of the world are falling apart; We hope that these children help us rescue them.

The Eyes of Children Around the World

Uganda © GTrevice



Ch 10 The Success of Failure

Key Theme:

What is true failure? What is true success?

- As long as you are doing what you like best, there is no way you can fail.

Ch 10 The Success of Failure

- "No one remembers who was number two" - is a sad commentary on what it says about a person who is willing to try.
- Failure, in fact, is a necessary part of the process of real and ultimate success.

Ch 10 The Success of Failure

- Failure is a teacher. Trial and error is not loss. Without failure all we have is untried ability. In failure we learn to be grateful for having tried and failed.
- Life is about participating in the fine art of finding ourselves - our talents, our confidence, our sense of self, our purpose in life.

Video

-

“It is well with my soul”

6m - the history behind the hymn.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzxKz08_bow

Many hymns have moving and dramatic stories behind their creation, and it adds greatly to their singing to know those stories. The lesson of this chapter, to find success in failure, is nowhere better illustrated than the story behind the hymn “It is well with my soul”.



Ch 11 The Energy That Comes From Exhaustion

"I've got a great ambition. It is to die of exhaustion rather than boredom" ... Thomas Carlyle.

Key Theme:

The important choice in life, then, is to choose our stresses carefully.

Ch 11 The Energy That Comes From Exhaustion

- But exhaustion drains us physically, while boredom depletes the soul. A person can die either way. By wearing down or by withering. Choose.
- Good stress (eustress) however, brings the system to its highest pitch. Effort drops us tired on the field of life, but feeling good about the exhaustion. Exhaustion keeps us honest about ourselves.
- There is an energy in the exhaustion that comes from meeting life head-on, a signal to the world that we are here, a sign to ourselves that life for us has been everything it is meant to be.

Video

-

Compassion Fatigue

Dr. Frank Ochberg discussing Compassion Fatigue. - 6m

On burnout because of “relentless responsibilities”.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VubmnvCl9sk>

Chittister concludes “There is an energy in the exhaustion that comes from meeting life head-on, a signal to the world that we are here, a sign to ourselves that life for us has been everything it is meant to be.”

In this 6 1/2 min video, Dr. Frank Ochberg discusses “compassion fatigue” - how those that help others are subject to burnout because of their “relentless responsibilities”. Ochberg is a psychiatrist and educator and one of the team that first defined PTSD.

It is an important point of Chapter 11 “Energy from Exhaustion”, that Chittister’s lesson can be applied, that “exhaustion tells us how really far we can go.”



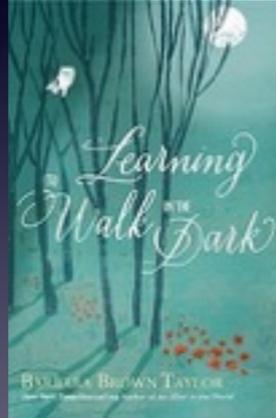
Discussion Questions

1. Discuss: "We can all become gluttoned by the pursuit of things rather than the pursuit of life."
2. Chittister writes as an American.
What is the Canadian national myth of success?
Is there a difference between them?
3. Another name for "good stress" is "eustress".
Choose your stresses carefully.(p. 69)
"Why choose to extend, rather than save the self?"
(p.67)

Break

Closing

Learning to Walk in the Dark



Next Readings

13. THE TEMPTATION OF SINLESSNESS
14. THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN GUILT AND GROWTH
15. THE CREATIVITY OF CONFUSION
16. THE SANITY OF IRRATIONALITY
17. THE LOSS OF THE MASCULINE EMASCULATES THE FEMININE
18. THE NEED FOR THE FEMININE IN MASCULINITY

Study Website

<http://dark.stdavidscalgary.net>