



### Signpost Eleven

**“Be Still and Know that I am God.”**

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know

Be still

Be

**“ . . . the whole earth is full of God’s glory” ~ Isaiah 6:3**

In the beginning of my healing journey, I would go to Pat and say, tell me what to do. Give me steps, and I will do whatever it is I need to do to --- fill in the blank --- get sober, change behavior, forgive, trust . . . all of it. Just tell me what to do and I will do it, whatever it is.

I knew how to go through the motions and cross things off the list. Give me a to-do list and I will kick its ass.

So when people come out to the farm and say something similar to me, I tell them what Pat told me then and still tells me today: This is an inside job. Until you go inward, you will keep trying to rearrange your external world by filling your days with busyness and accomplishments. You hustle for the completion of the list and how you think it will make you feel, but all those to-dos are actually what keep you from experiencing peace.

Getting still scared the shit out of me then and sometimes still does today. Being busy was what kept life at a safe distance, not having to feel, not having to be vulnerable or connecting in any deep way. And yet, stillness was what I was most hungry for and longed for. I was running towards it and away from it at the same time. It is a deeply ingrained pattern that I have worked hard to heal and create different pathways in my heart.

The lie is -- “I am too much and not enough” at the same time. I start running in opposite directions, wide ass open. This seems to happen when I am **hungry, angry, lonely, tired (HALT)**, off-center, out of balance, not speaking my truth, not setting healthy boundaries and not listening to my heart. When I move too fast for too long, I become discontent and uncomfortable in my body, mind and soul.

Sometimes I witness this when people come out to the farm.

Things are slower out here in the country. Quieter and more spacious.

Coming out here with nature, the animals and a slower rhythm brings to the surface whatever has been held down for a while. Often the tears start pouring out of people as they're walking down the gravel road, sometimes before they ever say a word. Stillness will do that to you.

I understand this so well.

Slowing it all down has a way of allowing things to rise up and flow out of us.

Slowing it all down can provide the greatest gift for healing: the power to see differently. Getting still allows us to just watch ourselves and others in how we relate and what we say. Noticing and witnessing gives us the discipline to not react and not repeat what we always say or always believe or always do. It gives us spaciousness and a chance to do it all differently. I know when I take the time for stillness, even small moments here and there, it changes the quality of my busier moments.

Being in nature and around animals has a way of slowing things down for us.

This is a promise ... there is always a “knowing” after stillness. And from my experience, there is usually a gap, an undetermined wait time between “Be Still” and “Know.” I keep learning that I cannot control the length of time of the gap, but I can choose how I wait during the gap.

**“I would like to spend the rest of my days in a place so silent - and working at a pace so slow - that I would be able to hear myself living.”**

**~Elizabeth Gilbert**

In the beginning of my journey, I couldn't "Be still and know God" because I had walked away from God. I had included God in with the people I perceived had wronged me and who I couldn't trust. In waking up to the truth, I discovered it was me I didn't trust, and I projected that onto God and others.

I thought "be still" meant to be still physically, in my body.

For years, I did a morning "devotion" -- even the word doesn't sit right with me now. I would read something, pray, and then get on with my day. Whatever I read, usually didn't take. There was no stillness.

I couldn't remember what I read two minutes after I read it. It was done from a place of "this is what I was supposed to do to be a good girl and get on God's good side." I wanted to be "good" -- but underneath that, what I really wanted was to be seen and chosen.

Everything in my life changed when I started integrating moments of stillness. It was a drastic shift then, and now when I get off-center and out of balance, it has just as a powerful effect on my life.

This doesn't mean that I sit in a teepee in a loin cloth for hours at a time. I wish I was one of those highly enlightened people, you know the "chosen ones" that seem to hear from God in an audible voice calling their name, unphased by all the ups and downs of life. I don't have a teepee or a loin cloth, and my knees hurt if I sit for too long in the same position. So although the image is nice, for me it isn't real or obtainable. AND ... that is no longer an excuse or reason for why I don't choose and practice stillness *in my own way* each day.

I experience a profound difference when I consciously choose to start and end my day in stillness and create moments of stillness throughout my day. It ends up changing what I see, how I respond, and the energy I show up with in my life and relationships. Choosing small moments of being still in my body, in my spirit, and especially in my mind changes my entire life ... just by choosing to slow it all down.

I have read several books about people who meet with those who are dying, at the very edge of life, at the end. Many people who are dying have a similar regret: they didn't live their life, they weren't authentic, they wasted so much time being who others needed them to be, they spent most of their life being so busy that they were not present, and they felt like they missed their life.

This has always scared the shit out of me.

And it's why I have offered one of those books as a book study from the farm more times than I can count: *Life Lessons* by Elizabeth Kubler Ross and David Kessler.

I don't want to miss life. I don't want to be so busy in all my doing that I look up and a year, a decade, or my entire life has passed me by. I don't want to be lost in who I think others need me to be and forget to connect with my heart and just be me.

And ... this doesn't mean I have to sit in that teepee in a loincloth for hours. I can slow it all down in ways that work for me. I can take baby steps to integrate this and practice it. Just like anything, the more I do it, the more natural it becomes. Seeing how it affects my life and relationships encourages me to make it the most important part of my days.

Having a regular practice of stillness helps me be present in my doing. We all have shit to do. I want my "doing" to have a quality of "being" in it.

I want to listen, really listen to other people. Not be thinking as I pretend to be listening. I want to listen deeply to God, to others, and to my heart and deepest truth. Choosing small moments of stillness keeps giving all of this.

I want to pay attention and not miss seeing God. I want to be able to see a perspective of the hugeness and the details in life. Stillness gives me this.

I want to flow with the unfolding of my days and not feel like I am always fighting upstream against the current. Stillness gives me this.

Being Still was a turning point for me. It was difficult in the beginning because each time I was still even for brief moments, tears would come out of me. I would get uncomfortable and start moving again. Activity kept the tears away and it also kept everything I craved away.

Understanding comes in layers for me, and I share it in layers.

Each Signpost points us to understand the difference between our external selves and our internal selves. It seems so repetitive, and yet for me, repetition is what was needed to change long-held ways of being and beliefs.

Stillness has to come before my doing. When I go out into the world without allowing some stillness to come first, the energy I bring to my doing is rigidity, expectations and performance. As I go about my day there is an underlying unsettledness in my soul. It can be small, but the feeling is discontentment. The way I breathe, move, speak, feed animals, do chores and show up for others and life has an edginess and intensity to it. Everyone can feel this, especially the animals.

**“Look at a tree, a flower, a plant. Let your awareness rest upon it. How still it is, how deeply rooted in Being. Allow nature to teach you stillness.”**

**— Eckhart Tolle**

My breath has become my guide. It reveals to me where I am in the moment and helps me connect with where I want to go. Shallow breathing means shallow moments. Deep breathing means deep moments. I have a hand-painted sign in the barn that was a gift from my friend Elizabeth. It is a reminder for those new to the barn, “In the barn we go deep, not wide.” Which also means in life and starts with our breathing.

I have come to understand just how precious and how short this life is. My moments and my breath add up to my life. When I don't have regular stillness, I am just going through the motions, I am missing out on my life.

Stillness is the point where I surrender, where I stop forcing, pushing and controlling. It is the space where I hold out my hands and open my heart. It is the humble place where I step back, out of my own way, and ask for God to lead the way. It is where I get off the world's rhythm and choose God's rhythm.

Stillness gets me out of my head and into my heart.

Stillness asks me to receive, to surrender and to be vulnerable.

Stillness reminds me there is something much bigger going on.

Stillness builds trust in God and in myself.

Stillness gives me an experience of God in an indescribable way.

Stillness gives me a healthy relationship with God, myself, and others.

Can there be a more incredible gift than all of this?

***“When you lose touch with your inner stillness, you lose touch with yourself.***

***When you lose touch with yourself, you lose yourself in the world.”***

***~ Eckhart Tolle***

***“The memory of God comes to the quiet mind. It cannot come where there is conflict, for a mind at war against itself remembers not eternal gentleness.”***

***~ A Course in Miracles***

**Excerpted from *Love Will Find You Out* by Jen Lemen**

**At the end of your unraveling,**

**You will look down and see your own feet**

**That have carried you so, so far**

**And you will decide for once that it is okay**

**To sit down**

**To rest**

**To hold out your hands**

**To lift up your head**

**To open your heart**

**To the possibility that you were never alone after all**

**Not for one minute**

**That love was right there**

**In her terrible silence**

**Not quite sure how to say it so you would believe her**

**That you were a thing of rare beauty on the earth**

***The Practice, Sewing it to Your Heart***

Do you believe this? “The whole earth is full of God’s glory.” How does your life reflect this? Can you practice seeing more of this? What would this look like?

Do you have a regular practice of solitude and stillness? If not, would you like to create more of this in your life? How can you choose this?

When we get still, what is inside comes out. Does this feel healthy to you, scary to you? Or both?

What stops you from choosing stillness? Not the quick answer but the deeper truth?

Can you see how being busy actually causes us to miss out on life? How does Elizabeth Kubler Ross’s research, about people who are dying and their biggest regret is they missed out on a lot of their life by not being present for their life, sit with you? If you were at the end of your life, what would you want to be choosing more of? Less of?

Can you see how choosing some time of stillness affects the rest of your day? The quality of your doing?

How can you choose to slow things down and catch up with your life? What would this look like?

Spend some time with Eckhart Tolle’s quote and journal what comes up for you.

*“We resonate to the beautiful verse in Psalms, ‘Be still and know that I am God,’ because it repeats different names for our own essence. ‘Being,’ ‘stillness,’ ‘knowing,’ and ‘I am’ are all synonymous in their core. Each one guides us to our own real essence.”*

*~Eckhart Tolle*