

Contemplative Intention

A Reflection by Kerrie Hide

“And then we can do nothing more than behold God and enjoy God,
with the most powerful desire to be all one-ed in God
and enter God’s dwelling, attend to the wooing, enjoy the loving, and delight in God’s goodness ...”
Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*, Long text, chapter 43.

I invite you to enter into the solitude of your own heart, and become aware of the longings of love deep within. This mysterious longing that resounds in the deepest depths of who we are, stirs us and immerses us in the divine desire that seeks to be one with us. This passion of the divine Lover beckons us, as it silences, stills and awakens our inner eye of love, to behold and to enjoy the loving Presence in the inner-most intimate centre of our heart. When we respond to this deep longing of our heart and choose to enter into the sacred ground of silence and stillness as a member of the *Contemplative Evolution Network*, we surrender into the endless longing of the Trinity of Love in open receptivity.

As we attend to our *one-ing* in the Trinity in our own sacred space, and mindfully join others attending to God at the same time in their own sacred space, we intentionally create a community of like-minded hearts who consciously together between 4.00 pm and 5.00 pm, centre into the ground of our personal and communal heart that has its source in the heart of God. We gather together our sensual, emotional and intellectual ways of being and knowing, and surrender into a spacious, expansive loving which has both a personal and collective intention to create union with God. We desire that the evolutionary communion in the Beloved Trinity of Endless Loving be strengthened, expanded into conscious awareness, and lived more freely. Intentionally, we enter into the depthless ground of eternally creative Love and repose in loving awareness.

In order to explore some of the rich nuances of contemplative intention we will focus on the notion of intention through the lens of Julian of Norwich exploring: the way of intention, the source of intention, the fertility of intention, the wounding of intention, the one-ing of intention and the joy of intention. Then, in an atmosphere of “loving intention”, we will draw out how the graces of contemplative intention enable the evolutionary movement of *one-ing* to expand and strengthen in this moment of time.

The Way of Intention

Gradually, as we faithfully enter the ground of our heart at this sacred time, and repose in loving awareness, we become aware of an aware-ing presence. We intuit that we *are* one, and the one Presence is praying in us. Sometimes when we seek to enter consciously into God’s dwelling we feel changeable, noisy, scattered or even fractured. In these times, we trust that when we choose to remain in loving awareness no matter how distracted we may

feel, the divine Lover is present beyond our consciousness, dissolving all in us that resists *one-ing*. Sometimes we simply dissolve into silence. Sometimes we feel ourselves enter God's dwelling, attend to our Beloved's wooing and delight and enjoy intimacy. Sometimes we have a clear sense of a depthless point of light as the unifying source of our centre and feel we can align our body, mind and spirit into this still, single point. Sometimes we enter a boundlessness with the land and with each other and enjoy a sense of ceaseless *one-ing* love. We realize that personally and communally we are simply one in Love in a vast translucent eternal ground of love that embraces both suffering and joy. In all our experiences of this spacious heart consciousness, we hold and nurture each other and the planet in a concentrated vibrational *one-ing* that expands *one-ing* love.

The Source of Intention

Consciously, or beyond conscious awareness, the enchanting words from the first letter of St John are the ground that draw us. "God is Love" (1 Jn 4:7) and "It is God who first loved us" (1 Jn 4:10). In the extravagant outpouring of this love, God loved us into being. The ground of our being is in God and we return to the intimacy of this original love through contemplation. In the vision of Julian of Norwich the expression of this grounding love centers in Christ who says "I am the ground of your prayer." (*Revelations of Divine Love*, Long text, Chapter 42, hereafter *Rev*, Lt, Ch 42. Translations are my own). It is the Christ who initiates our desire for oneness and stirs us to knit all our energies of love into the divine desire. "Prayer ones the soul to God" (*Rev*, Lt, Chs 41-3), Julian continually reminds us. As we enter into the ground of silence and touch into the flow of the Source-less Source of all life, we come to organically express the original divine desire in and through our loving intention.

The Fertility of Intention

The loving of intention is extravagantly abundant. In fact all the language we draw on as we seek to express this inexpressible yearning of love such as divine desire, the longing of human beings, and the groaning of creation for fullness and union in the oneness of infinite loving, draws us into the bounty of "sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26). In contemporary usage, "intention" is to have a concentration of the mind with a firm resolve or purpose (See, *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1389). In the Christian mystical tradition, this resolve is to activate our will or our loving energy and focus all the faculties of our whole being on God, passionately, with a single focus, so we may see from the eye of the heart in a unitive consciousness. For Julian, this intention is expressed through "*beseeking*" or "*beseeking*". Julian specifies that *beseeking* is: "the true gracious lasting will (intention) of the soul, oned and fastened into the will (intention) of our God, by the sweet inner work of the Holy Spirit" (*Rev*, Lt, Ch 41). The inherent fertility of the desiring, longing, yearning, seeking, is the "lasting" or eternal will in our soul, infused in Spirit which fastens all our loving into the loving of our God. We find that all we can do is abandon ourselves to the sweet inner work of the Spirit and seek the divine intention in an exquisite dance of being filled with desire, experiencing our limits and the absence of oneness with the Beloved we are seeking, until

the absence itself fastens us beyond sense and infuses into a fuller oneness. The more we yearn for the fullness of our oneness in God, the more our longing increases.

The Wounding of Intention

Intention wounds. By its very nature it expands us beyond ourselves and makes us vulnerable. For Julian, the divine intention for us to be one in love, creates an open wound of longing in the Christ who cries from the depths of his heart: "I thirst" (See *Rev*, Lt, Ch 17). This wound then replicates in Julian as she longs to feel what her wounded Lover feels (See *Rev*, Lt, Ch 2). Intention experienced as longing wounds us as it contracts and expands, unites, creates and recreates. So, many of our intentions are impassioned pleas lamenting life's pain: crying, weeping, wailing, moaning, aching, complaining, keening, screaming, imploring. Frequently felt as the absence of Divine Love, these pleas express our incompleteness, our fragility, our brokenness, our emptiness, the pain of losing the awareness of the ground of our being and our essential need to be one with our Source. Yet Julian reminds us that in the very experience of absence, our wounded lover cries: "My dear darling, I am glad you have come to me in all your woe. I have ever been with you, and now you see my loving, and we are *oned* in bliss'." (See *Rev*, Lt, Ch 40). These cries from the depths of our wound of longing expressing what is said and unsaid, personally, communally and cosmically enable our pain to be transformed into joy. Sharing the wound of longing frees us to surrender communally into a more dynamic and stable *one-ing*.

The One-ing of Intention

Essentially then, entering into contemplation with an awareness of a community of like-minded people also intending to help create a contemplative field of love, strengthens what is good and of God. Julian specifically identifies this stirring of the Spirit deep within our will inciting our desire and activating the desire of our will to respond to the One who is the ground of our prayer as our "*godly will*" (See *Rev*, Lt, Ch 36). Our "*godly will*" is good. It is godly. It is the loving energy within us, that must respond as God desires because in *one-ing-love* there is only one will. Julian emphasises how, as we enter into the ground of our heart, attend to the sweet inner stirrings of Spirit in our *godly will* and fasten all our attention into the intention of our Lover, we experience *one-ing*. There is a movement from actively seeking or choosing, to a delicate silencing and stilling, to simply being. In a natural flow "seeking" evolves into "be-seeking" as our loving response becomes more and more an absorption into the one will. In this flow, gently, organically and effortlessly, the ground of awareness opens up from within and there is only one seeing, only one willing. This sweet inner working of the Spirit knitting, *one-ing*, closing and *be-closing* us into the one love of the Trinity incites joy.

The Joy of Intention

Consequently, as we respond to the stirrings of our Beloved in our heart and grow in awareness that our Good Lover is the ground of our prayer, we discover ourselves infused by the joy of the Trinity. Julian encourages: "In our beseeching, our will is turned into the will of our God, enjoying" (*Rev, Lt, Ch 42*). Notice the passive nature of this turning and enjoying. As we abide silent and still, the Spirit touches, turns, knits and infuses us in joy. We can do nothing more than respond to this gracious initiative gently turning and knitting our will, which is all our loving energies, into the desire of our God, enjoying. Julian elaborates:

For when through grace our courteous Lover comes to our soul, we have what we desire. In this time, we do not see what we should pray for, for all our intent and all our strength is set wholly in beholding God. And this is a high unperceivable prayer, in my eyes (*Rev, Lt, Ch 43*).

In the homely, loving, silent stillness, when all our intention with all the strength of our being is "set" in be-hold-ing our Lover, we simply are enfolded and enclosed, one in one Love. Julian continues:

For the reason we pray it is to be *oned* into the sight and beholding of our God, marvelously enjoying in loving wonder, with such sweetness and delight, that we can pray no other way than as God stirs us. For when our soul is homely with God we do not need to pray with words. We simply behold lovingly (*Rev, Lt, Ch 43*).

When we are at home and naturally, organically set all our intent wholly in beholding our God in a loving beyond perception, we unearth the beauty of how profoundly we are already one in eternal love. We uncover how intention is not seeking something extraneous from us, but returning to the ground of our being where subject-object illusions dissipate, and in the simplicity of divine loving all things are one. Here our vision is always unitive. Our heart is always be-holding God and our will naturally turns into the loving of God. Our whole being is always caught up in the divine delight of enjoying.

The Grace of Intention

Julian reminds us that the Ground of our being is the God of boundless Love who extravagantly desires oneness for us. She inspires us to continue to become aware of passionate divine desire who is always *one-ing* in us and turn, knit and one, every movement of our heart into the divine desire. This loving intention is powerful. It is passionate. It has the power to enhance the evolution of all things becoming one in the one divine love.

As we move into this wonderful new evolutionary phase, there has been a resurgence of interest in the importance of contemplative intention and the unitive vision of *one-ing*. An expansive array of contemporary wisdom teachers remind us that we can align ourselves with the evolutionary desire of the divine. We do have the capacity to activate and assist the evolutionary process of all things becoming one in God through our intention which is strengthened when we unite with others doing the same.

Quantum physics continues to provide empirical evidence of what Teilhard de Charidn identified as the noosphere, that the universe is indeed a unified whole. We are interconnected energetically beyond locality, with an entanglement and coherence held throughout the whole. Researchers are identifying how our thoughts do affect outcomes, influence energy and form morphogenic fields. Inspired by intention our brains can change and become more contemplative and peaceful. We can lift ourselves and others out of limiting negative patterns and nurture all that is good, all that creates *one-ing* love. We can yearn with all the passion of our heart to create a world imbued in peace and light, with people who are united in the ground of their being in the one ground of all being. So in the one ground of all being may we behold God and enjoy God, with the most powerful desire to be all *one-ed* in God. We can trust that in contemplative intention we are in God's dwelling, attending to the wooing, enjoying the loving, and delighting in God's goodness.