

Learning to Walk in the Dark Advent Study Guide Chapters 4-6

Quotes and ideas worth repeating:

Carl Jung: Knowing your own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darkness of other people. (page 73)

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 ... Sadness does not sink a person; it is the energy a person spends trying to avoid sadness that does that. (pages 79-80)

In a cave...always, always look back... Nothing looks the same coming out as it did going in. (page 126)

Introductions: Share your experience of walking to the mailbox in the dark.

Reflection/discussion:

Miriam Greenspan writes that there are no dark emotions - just unskillful ways of coping with emotions we cannot bear. Agree or disagree?

BBT describes times when we wake up and are unable to go back to sleep as times because it is too dark for most of our usual shallow distractions to work. How do you handle waking up with things on your mind? (page 76)

Discuss endarkenment (page 86) Is it good not to comprehend everything all at once? Example: Nicodemus walks away from Jesus after not understanding the “born again” comment. Can you describe a time when you had a gradual understanding of a subject or concept? How might this be true for your spiritual journey?

Has anyone ever visited a cave? Describe it using your senses - how did it feel/smell?

BBT was amazed at things she could hear that she doesn't normally notice. Are you surrounded by noise? What might you miss because of the “noise” of your life? (page 122)

In a cave, always, always look back. Every few minutes, turn around. Nothing looks the same coming out as it did going in. (page 126) Agree or disagree?

Resurrection happened in the dark. BBT says new life happens in the dark. Agree or disagree?

Meditation: “Morning Star”
by Ann Weems

There are those times when
all the stars are torn from our skies, and morning will not come.
We try to make our way
in unlit passages, frightened, desperate and despairing.
We cannot see,
for wherever we turn
the night continues,
And yet, it is
into this impenetrable night
that the Child is born.
Tearing through the seams of darkness,
the Morning Star appears in our eyes and in our hearts.
The people who walked in darkness have seen a great Light.