

Week 12 Practice

My clients often become frustrated when we start talking about the voice of grace. Usually, they have come to me because their relationships are not working and they are seeking some help to get the love they want. That is, they are trying to figure out how to find a voice of grace *outside* of themselves. The thing is, though, we cannot truly hear grace spoken from the outside of us until we have first been able to hear it on the inside of us. I was able to receive my wife's grace and tell the story above because, first, I was able to hear the voice of grace whispering within me, reminding me of my light. This happened slowly, over time, with a great deal of intention. So, as I tell my clients, the core task of the rest of your life is to listen for the voice of grace within you.

This week, you will simply begin one thing—you will begin to listen for the voice of grace inside of you. You do not need to make this voice speak; it is always speaking. All you need to do is become more intentional about listening for it, and more capable of recognizing it when you have heard it. This exercise builds on all the previous exercises. In other words, when you have noticed the voice of your shame and pressed pause on it, you won't simply sit in silence and emptiness. You will begin listening for an alternatives voice. To help you recognize the voice of grace when you have heard it, here are some of its hallmark qualities:

- 1. It extends you more compassion and tenderness than you have ever given yourself.*
- 2. It says things you don't expect to hear—good news that sounds too good to be true.*
- 3. It believes in you more than you believe in yourself.*
- 4. It speaks of your light, because it is your light.*
- 5. When you hear it, you will feel hope like you've never known before.*
- 6. After hearing it, you will begin to feel a profound connection to everyone and everything.*

That is an incomplete list, a primer to help you get started in your recognizing. You will recognize the voice of grace when you get surprised by the love that has always existed inside of you, too quiet to be heard over the din of shame that is just now beginning to quiet down. As you begin to hear it, you can add to the list above.

This is the central practice for the rest of your life. It cannot begin until you have cultivated stillness, stopped running from your pain, and confronted your shame. And once begun, it cannot ever end. Of course, once you have heard the voice of grace, you will never *want* it to end. This week, begin. Listen. Grace is whispering of your worthiness.