

SILENT NIGHT

The white noise of existence is everywhere. Amongst the hum of the drum and the buzz of busy-ness, the overflowing emptiness prevails. We fill every nook and cranny with stuff yet the cracks open up only to reveal another void. There is an almost pathological need for the western world to eke out every micro second of connection and to be linked in all moments, whether by face to face dialogue or space to space cyber chat. We are so filled up we leave very little time for examining what really fulfills us. We leave that daunting discovery to those Madison Avenue advertising gurus who lead us into the grace land of consumption. On and on we go building and destroying, eating and purging, buying and selling, using and wasting not once slowing down to feel the emptiness, never taking time for nothingness, never allowing sadness to seep in.

In the past few weeks sadness seems to have become a prevalent theme in my life and I too have been looking at the infilling process. It is an easy pattern to engage especially with the king of white noise quickly approaching....that king being Christmas. Of all the times of the year Christmas seems to be the one that requires infilling the most. It is a time for those who have been living in pain, when the gap is greatest. On one side of the canyon they, (we) peer across at an amazingly beautiful oasis, green, verdant and life giving. Symbolic of all that affirms life, it is an illusion to those in pain. Instead they (we) stare towards their feet where the parched, cracked earth tentatively keeps them from teetering into the abyss.

When I am still, my reflection leads to resignation and resignation gives way to surrender. It is within these moments when I am most paradoxical in my thinking. I am both whole and shattered, I am both lost and found, I am both loving and angry, I am me! Filling me up with stuff will not change this experience. Filling my empty moments with platitudes and soothing sound bytes will only accelerate the disintegration. What I need in those moments is to crumble into dust and topple into the awaiting abyss where the noise stops. No sound, no substance, no stuff....just silence!

"Today I live in the silence and stillness of sadness!"

Excerpted from "Simply Lost for Words: A Father's journey into loss" by Alan Balser for the Zone'in Child Development Series Newsletter, October 2013