



Waterfall of Words, by Mark Nepo

There was a time in my life during my years in college when I was so talkative that the waterfall of words kept others at a safe distance. Of course, in time, this cascade pushed others away. But what I didn't realize till much later was that I kept talking faster and louder to the world around me because I couldn't hear the world within me. Of course, the more noise I made, the less chance I had of having what was real enter me or rise from me. It became a damning cycle.

So often, we mistake the need to hear with the need to be heard. All that talk was a way of reaching out to others with my heart. Ultimately, it was all based on the fear that if I didn't throw my heart out there -- through endless words and gestures and questions -- I would be left alone. It's taken me many years to learn that the world comes flooding in if I can only keep myself open.

It remains important to reach out and to express oneself, but underneath that is the need to be porous and real. Through the open heart, the world comes rushing in, the way oceans fill the smallest hole along the shore. It is the quietest sort of miracle: by simply being who we are, the world will come to fill us, to cleanse us, again and again.

--Mark Nepo, *_Book of Awakening_*