

## Intimacy by Rachel Whitehead

Often described as 'into-me-see', which indicates that when you are able to know and truly see yourself, only then will you be able to 'see' or know another. This often requires us to go on a quest to explore our own reality and to become interested into our own thinking and feelings. Tracking our own bodily based feelings inside our bodies is, for most of us, a long-forgotten experience.

When we grow up in a family where we repeatedly feel unsafe, we learn to 'leave' the body and disassociate, as a way to survive. When we repeatedly 'leave' our bodies, we become dead inside. Numb, disconnected, disassociated, frozen. What I notice again and again (and I am guilty of this myself) is that we start to look for 'aliveness' in experiences that are extreme, intense, big, explosive, dramatic and at the opposite end of the spectrum.

Some of us are so 'dead' inside that we mistake intensity and drama for true connection. Drama and intensity might be the only way to 'feel' something, but since it is dysfunctional, you will be left feeling empty and alone. The moment we start to try to grasp the same feeling or recreate the experience, it won't happen. What will happen is a pseudo intimacy or pseudo connection. And we might mistake this for the truth or the answer to our deadness inside. You will be forever chasing an experience, missing this very moment, right now. You might be running from one experience to the next experience only to miss this very moment.

Initially this might not be visible to us since now we are 'feeling' something for the first time and we desperately crave to feel this 'aliveness' again. The problem with craving something so deeply is that it makes us very susceptible and vulnerable for manipulation, control and re-traumatisation. Let me give you a few examples-

- Some people need to jump out of a plane to feel alive
- Some people feel alive through working until they drop dead
- Some people feel alive when they are stressed
- Some people can only feel connected in a "sacred circle"
- Some people feel alive by being in a dysfunctional relationship
- Some people feel alive when they make a lot of money or drive a Ferrari

## **But...**

Intimacy is not rolling around the dance floor with another in an inextricable yin yang position.

Intimacy is not sharing your life story on Facebook with tears in your eyes.

Intimacy is not sharing your love for someone through an email or a text message.

Intimacy is not stepping into an experience with a script, goal, agenda and preconceived idea in your mind.

Intimacy is not a performance.

Intimacy is not a demonstration or a showing off.

## **Intimacy starts with yourself ♡!**

Our nervous systems have been trained to deal with intensity and high levels of stress. While we can easily tolerate this, it is not a healthy tolerance. A simple, still moment is much more challenging for us these days. That's why we keep running and don't stop.

But some day, some time, some random experience, totally out of the blue, in a spontaneous moment, you might stop in the middle of the street, while life continues at a fast pace around you. You stop, pause and take a deep breath and you suddenly feel deeply connected to everything and everyone around you.

Or someone might look at you from across the street and smiles to you and tears start welling up in your eyes.

Or you might just be drinking a cup of tea and suddenly become aware of how deeply content and peaceful you feel.

Or some small talk with your neighbour makes you feel warm inside.

Or you might look at a flower and start to feel deeply held and supported by life.

Intimacy happens in the most random, simple, unexpected, moments, in daily life. Nothing fancy, nothing that is planned, nothing explosive, nothing big. No fireworks will go off; but inside of your body, you might feel fireworks going off, which will feel like the most magical experience.

Intimacy is available for us in every single moment. Intimacy happens spontaneously and within the simplest of moments in ordinary life.