

Love is Always Loving You

~ a talk by Tara Brach presented on April 20, 2016

(audio available at: www.tarabrach.com/love-always-loving-you/)

Namaste and welcome...

In almost every spiritual and religious tradition, the word “home” refers to the space where we really experience, in a sacred way, connection or belonging. John O’Donohue puts it this way, “Our life’s journey is the task of refining our belonging so that we become more true, loving, good, and free.”¹ In this reflection, I’ll be using the language of homecoming - of discovering that belonging and having it come alive for us. And I’ll be drawing on one of the most famous parables in the world, which is the Christian parable, “The Prodigal Son.” I’ve done a few different talks on it over the years and, recently, I had cause to come back to this book by Henri Nouwen called, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*.² It’s a fantastic book - an interpretation of this parable that we’ll be exploring. It’s been an amazing inspiration to me.

In the original story, the youngest son asked his father if his inheritance could be given out early – in other words, split everything that was owed between his brother and himself. He took his portion and he left home and went to foreign lands and he squandered it. He ended up destitute and hungry, realized the error of his ways and decided he was going to return home and just call on the mercy of his father. Here is just a little bit of it:

“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and he was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him. Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick, bring out the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we’ve been fattening – kill it. We’ll

¹ O’Donohue, J. (1999). *Eternal Echoes: Celtic Reflections on Our Yearning to Belong*. (p. 2). New York, NY: HarperCollins.

² Nouwen, Henri, J.M. (1992). *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

celebrate by having a feast because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

Meanwhile, out in the field, the older brother had been watching and he got very, very upset. And he basically said, ‘It’s not fair. I’ve been true to you. I’ve stayed home. I’ve done everything and yet you’re celebrating the return of my brother.’ He said, ‘All these years, I’ve slaved for you and never once disobeyed any order of yours, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, after swallowing up your property – he and his loose women – you kill the calf we’ve been fattening.’ And the father said, ‘my son, you were with me always and all I have is yours. But it’s only right that we should celebrate and rejoice because your brother here was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and is found.’”

Henri Nouwen, in 1983, encountered Rembrandt’s very famous painting of the Return of the Prodigal Son and he was profoundly struck by its beauty and how it was a transmission of compassion. The look of the father as he was offering blessings to the youngest son and as his son was receiving those blessings - it just totally brought to him and his own experience...his longing to be received in that way...his longing to bring his humanness to some very compassionate being and be utterly seen and loved and received. And I have to say that, when I let myself reflect on the painting - even a terrible copy of it on the cover of the book - it can bring tears, because I think it’s an archetypal longing. It’s this longing for belonging. It’s this longing that, for whatever this human conditioning and our imperfections, some being that’s large in the way of open, deep hearted compassion and wisdom can embrace us...receive us...bless us.

As the story continues through the book, Henri Nouwen writes about how he just kept visiting the painting wherever it was in museums, and how his own journey kept evolving through what he saw in the picture. At first, he identified with the younger son. He felt like he was the prodigal son who was always searching for something outside himself. He kept leaving home, which is what the son did. He left home - both physically and metaphorically - to go and find his fame, fortune and whatever he was seeking elsewhere. And so it is with Henri Nouwen that he felt like he would fixate on things outside of himself - approval, success, renown...whatever - and was leaving home that way. This is the way of grasping and attachment in the Buddhist

tradition - the way we leave our beingness and leave the moment.

But, after some time, he found that he completely identified with the older son because he left home in his judgment - in judging himself for leaving home, and in judging others. As it goes, most of us have both the grasping after - we want things more, we want things different, we want what's missing, we want to be more - and then the aversion towards ourselves and towards the world for that happening. For Nouwen, this led to a very radical spiritual transformation that, as he could recognize the suffering of these two elements in him, the older and the younger son - the ways he left home - and then, as the picture conveys, as he began to let in the sense of forgiveness and love that's so much the heart of this story, he had a shift in identity. Instead of being identified as the younger son who was grasping after things in the world or the older son who was judging all of that, the shift was, as he let in love, he became the father - that compassionate presence that could include both dimensions of himself.

This is what we're going to keep on exploring: How is this a path of transformation that each of us, in our own way, is involved with?

To begin, why this emphasis on letting in love? Because that's what the picture shows. The picture shows the father blessing his younger son, but it also shows the younger son letting it in. That's where the transformation happens. Often when we explore spiritual awakening, we talk about the two wings of awareness - that we're waking up this wing of recognition...of seeing the grasping, seeing the aversion, seeing how we're leaving home - and then we wake up the wing of love which is holding what's happening with an unconditional tenderness. But we don't often talk about that love in terms of whether we are letting it in, and I'm wondering how many of you have begun to reckon with how difficult it is - not abstractly, but in a very real way - to actually let in caring and love?

In a way, we can think of absolute love as non-directional. It's everything. It's the essence of what we are. I like the metaphor best that absolute love is this ocean of being that is just loving the changing waves that are part of it. But when we're caught in grasping or aversion - when we're in that place of 'something's missing' or 'something's wrong' - there is an illusion and a sense of being a wave that's really cut off or a set of waves that really

doesn't belong to the ocean. There's a sense of being separate and, in those moments, I sometimes think of it like a sea anemone contracted. It's no longer possible for the ocean to wash through it. When we're scared and contracted or contracted and grasping, the love and the energy of this universe no longer flows through us in a natural way. That's our regressed, wounded state - where we're tensed and we're not able to let in. We're afraid of letting in because we're afraid we'll be rejected or further wounded. And that's actually not just for those of us who have been traumatized or abused - but it's actually a very pervasive conditioned state that we don't often feel ourselves washed through with the love of this universe.

The key dimension in homecoming for each of us is relaxing that protective layering. It feels, at first, like a risk. Spiritual growth always feels like a risk – like we are, in some way, taking a chance. There's still the fear there, but we are taking the chance to let in, to relax that armoring that is keeping away the threat and also keeping away the love - because that's what it does. It takes some trust that there is some love here and that it's worth the risk...and then once we let some love wash through, we begin to trust even more - there's more and more of that belonging.

This is the message in the parable. The message is, basically, that love is here – that the father has “pre-forgiven,” as one poet writes it. It's not even a forgiving. Everything was already forgiven. From the father's perspective, his son always belonged. You see it so much in the picture - the posture and the hands of the father are just confirming belonging - and just to give you one piece that I thought was really cool, the left hand of the father is different from the right hand. The left hand is more masculine and it has a firmer, stronger kind of grip. He's holding the son as if saying, “I see you and you belong. I see who you are.” The right hand is feminine - and you can see that Rembrandt did this very much on purpose. It's more caressing and consoling and nourishing. What you get in the picture is that the father is not a male patriarch. There's really an androgyny where you see both the masculine and feminine archetypes in receiving the wayward son back home. It's quite beautiful in that.

The Indian master Poonja put it this way...he says, “Love is always loving you.”³ You're always a part of the ocean. Love is always loving us and yet,

³ Poonja, H.W.L. (1995). *The Truth Is*. Prashanti De Yager (Ed.). York Beach, ME: Weiser Books.

because of our beliefs and our contraction, we don't experience that. In a way, the path is to relax back into a way of recognizing that love is always loving us. That phrase, for me, is quite a beautiful one – that love is always loving us. The basic question that Henri Nouwen asks is, “Okay, so when we've left home, what helps us discover and trust this?”

And just to say, it's part of our evolutionary journey to leave home. It's not a mistake. We evolve in a way that we have the perception of not belonging – of being separate - and that's not the end of the evolutionary story. We keep on evolving to realize, “Oh, okay, so that was happening and it causes suffering if I keep on believing that.” But what is that next unfolding that allows us to rediscover a larger sense of belonging – that love is always loving us? That we really were never a separate wave?”

The first step is to recognize leaving. On every spiritual path I've encountered, suffering is the wake up. When we sense, “Oh, something's hurting. I'm not fulfilled. Something's not working,” we start looking more deeply. So the first step is to notice how we are leaving. I'm going to ask each of you to check into your own lives and sense whether you are you identifying more as the younger son and feeling like you're leaving because you're chasing after things, or is it more because of the aversive judgment of the older son?

The younger son leaves because of wanting - Buddhism calls it clinging - searching for love where it can't be found, fixating on substitutes. As it's described in some of the parts of the parable, there's a sense of the loudest, most demanding inner voices in us saying, “I want this now,” which leads us to quest in foreign countries. In other words, we leave this home right here for approval. We quest for wealth, for power, for accomplishment, for prestige...and that questing takes over.

Illustration: A man walking along a California beach was deep in prayer and he says out loud, “Lord, please grant me one wish,” and suddenly the sky clouds over and a booming voice says, “Because you've tried to be faithful to me in all ways, I'll grant you just one wish.” So the man says, “Please, Lord, build a bridge to Hawaii so I can drive over any time I need to see the beautiful sights and alleviate the stress in my life.” And the Lord said, “Your request is really materialistic. I mean, think of the logistics of that kind of

undertaking, the supports required to reach the bottom of the Pacific, the concrete and steel..." as he goes on and on. He says, "Take a little time. Think of another wish – a wish that could truly evoke my almighty power or blessing." The man thought about it for a long time and finally said, "Lord, I wish I could understand women. I want to know how they really feel. What they're thinking when they give me the silent treatment. Why they cry. What they mean when they say, 'Oh, it's nothing.' And, most important, how I can make a woman truly happy." After a few moments, God said, "You want two lanes or four on that bridge?"

Our most obvious way of leaving ourselves, for most of us that I know, is seeking approval – seeking our own approval and seeking the approval of others. But what's important to really start investigating about that is that in any moment that we're in some way in the grip of wanting others to think of us a certain way - even a little bit - we've left home. We're no longer inhabiting a kind of spontaneity and naturalness. We've conformed ourselves to be okay for that other person. There's a little bit of that contraction, in which case we're reaffirming that we can't trust our naturalness and, in that mistrust, there's a natural contraction that can't let the loving wash through. We can't trust that love is always loving us when there is any bit of seeking approval - which is something we all do. So just watching how that happens...

Reflection:

This is the first reflection on how the younger son might be living out the wanting mind in your life. As you pause, you might just ask yourself where you most see the evidence of wanting mind - where there's some addictiveness in the extreme, or obsessing, or seeking in some way to get something: to get approval, to win something, to win someone, to accomplish something. Often, when we're caught in wanting mind - when we're leaving ourselves in this way - there's a sense of "if only." "If only this, then I'd have what I wanted. Then I could be..." What's the "if only?" It could be very material, like, "If only I got that raise," or it could be very spiritual, like, "If only I was able to meditate a couple of hours a day, then..." It's still "if only" mind. What is it that you're wanting that you feel like you need in order to be okay? For some, it's a kind of relationship. For some, it's that our bodies feel a certain way.

Choose one that feels strong, where there's some energy, where you can sense that your decisions and your actions get organized around that wanting - to accomplish more, to be more, to be different - whatever it is - and just take a moment to investigate how this is leaving home for you...what the feeling is when you're really in the grip of it - when you're really wanting that person's approval, or you're really wanting a certain relationship to be a certain way, or whatever it is. You might even, from the inside out, let your posture take the posture of wanting mind. Just be a little playful with this. For some people, there's a leaning forward or a little bit of clenching of the fists or tightening to the face - just feel the intentness of what you're wanting. What happens in the body when there's wanting mind? How does the mind get small or tight? Notice the contraction like the sea anemone that, when you're wanting, you're more separate. And sense for yourself - what is your sense of yourself when you're really wanting something...and do you like yourself?

The wanting mind of the younger brother often brings up the older brother which says, "I shouldn't be this way. This is bad. This is a sign of my lack of spiritual development. I'm just a grasping, clinging person," and the worst, "I'm needy. I'm needy. I'm needy." That's really a 'bad' one. That brings up all the shaming of the older brother. The older brother, externally, is being dutiful. He stayed home. He's doing things right...but, internally, he left in judgment - judging others for seeking pleasure, for all the hindrances. The older brother is what we call the 'second arrow' - the condemnation of how things are. There is usually a righteousness with the older brother in us, condemning others for wrongdoings. There is an anger at injustice, a feeling of being victimized - just some of the characteristics of this aversive older brother. There can be envy. Often, though, it takes the form of judgment and aggression. The older brother is the part of us that is trying to control, trying to get people to do things our way, to agree with us, to be like us, to cooperate.

Rita Rudner writes, "My grandmother was a very tough woman. She buried three husbands. Two of them were just napping."

Of course, the older brother - the judging part of us - aims a lot toward ourselves with "I'm less than. I'm never enough. I've failed."

Reflection:

Continuing with your earlier reflection...sense how the archetype of the older brother – the judging, aversive one – plays out and how your life gets organized around that. You might bring to mind some place where you've locked into judgment, to anger, to aversion or fear, and just notice when you're in the thick - when you're leaving home in this particular modality, what it's like. If you're in the midst of judging someone or judging yourself, you might sense, really full-blown, what you're believing in those moments – because there's always a belief. We're always believing something that's limiting. Most importantly, what's it like in your body when aversion takes over – when judgment, anger, fear takes over? Again sensing, like that sea anemone, the contraction and if you want to model the posture a little, feel your face tightening...etc. What's it like when you're in that mode? What's your sense of yourself? Do you like yourself? Notice how there can be almost infinite second arrows...

The real suffering of leaving home is that we've left the truth of who we are. We don't feel that belonging that's really what we long for. Henri Nouwen, in his own process in talking about the return of the prodigal son, describes that, at first, there's this recognizing that we're leaving home. Then it starts moving toward how we go from there - beginning at that suffering place – to letting in love? How do we make this key shift from playing out the wanting or playing out the aversion to letting in love?

The pathway is one, always, of deepening our attention - right where it's difficult - deepening our attention. Which means we pause...we step out of all our ideas about what's going on - because that's the only way we can deepen attention - and we come into the lived experience of what's going on. I sometimes like to call this 'taking a U-turn.' What I mean by that is, if you're the younger brother and you're fixating on what you want and what you want is approval from so and so, the U-turn is letting go of that outward directed fixation and bringing the attention back to the wanting itself - to the energy in the body right here. Or, if you're fixated on judging that person because they've betrayed you, the U-turn is that you let go of fixating on 'bad person out there' and you come right back to the aversive feelings in your body right here. It doesn't matter what's going on - if you're suffering, you have fixated on something that is leaving home outside yourself. You're

believing something about yourself and the world, and you're living in those thoughts and feelings - and the U-turn is the only way to begin to undo that identification that keeps you small. The reason? It's only when you contact the vulnerability that's underneath – that's right here – that there starts to be a porousness that makes letting in love possible. The outward fixation keeps that armoring and separateness in place. It's when you make the U-turn that you start feeling vulnerability, and there's a kind of softening that lets the ocean wash through.

A couple of examples that are helpful in really sensing how that touching in with the U-turn can happen:

I gave a talk on *The Return of the Prodigal Son* a few years ago and a lot of people read the book. One man read it and he described his process afterwards. He was very involved with commercial real estate - very good, honest, caring guy. His “prodigal son,” - his way of leaving home – was that he was hooked on being a wheeler/dealer type of guy - going after the prize, being very competitive and wanting others to know his successes. He really wanted to impress. These are all the ways he saw the prodigal son in himself; competitive on all fronts, including his tennis game, having his kids go to the best schools and accomplish, and so on...

So when he started meditating on the journey described in *Return of the Prodigal Son*, he really got in touch with his self-centeredness and how leaving home – with all his competitiveness and grasping after things – left him, deep down, feeling really lonely. He also felt really ashamed of the grasping and a sense he was never enough. It was like no matter how much he accomplished or how much he won, there was still a sense of, “I'm not there yet.” And he was intelligent enough to know that it didn't matter how much he accomplished, he'd never be there according to that track he was on.

So he started to do this U-turn of tracing back all the grasping that was going on – tracing it back to what was really the vulnerability underneath. He started with, “I want to win. I have ambition so that I'll get...” And he said, “What is it that I really want to get from winning – from getting the biggest contracts, from impressing people? What is it that I'd really get? Well, if I impressed everybody, I'd be able to finally relax and know that I was enough. And if I knew that I was enough, what would that give me? Then

I'd feel appreciated. Then I'd feel belonging." It was like if only he could get enough, he'd end up feeling belonging. That's what he was longing for – being appreciated and feeling loved and belonging. When he got to that, there was a feeling of a place in him that he felt like had been crying - he called it his crying place. When he got there, underneath all that chasing after, there was this place that just wanted to be seen and appreciated and be part of – to belong.

And here's what he wrote to me...he said, "Tara, I was the one kneeling before the compassionate father with just the pure longing to belong. I could feel his hands on my shoulders – that he was seeing me, receiving me, blessing me. My head was bowed and I let it in. I let that love wash through me." He said it was many, many rounds of that - it wasn't a one-shot and 'Voila, I'm free.' It was tastes of that freedom - tastes of that shift in identity where, once that loving washed through him, he just felt that sense of openness. He just felt that sense of "love is loving me." But, as he described it this way, he said "It was many rounds that I would fight ambition, be charging forward, feel the suffering, feel the deep place of shame – of never enough – and then imagine, again, my head bowed, bathing in that forgiving, loving energy. Many rounds." The end of the story is he's still in real estate. He's still going for it. He still plays competitive tennis. And there's much more space, and humor, and spontaneity, and warmth. He feels he can hold a space for others and let them know they're enough - and that's the gift.

I loved that story because he took an archetypal picture of just bowing one's head and being blessed and he actually let himself energetically inhabit it and it shifted the sense of who he was from being the prodigal son who was always grasping or the judgmental older brother to that space, to that ocean, to the love that's always doing the loving.

To me, it's very interesting that when we're caught in the grasping or the aversion, there's always a story going on in our mind about how it all is - what we're believing. In other words, there are certain voices we're listening to. It's really important to start getting what voice you're listening to. Are you listening to the voice of, "If only..., then I'll be good enough?" Or, "You can never trust such and such." Or, "You can never trust people, they'll always hurt you?" What voice are you listening to? Until we step out of the beliefs and the stories in our mind, as long as we're believing the voices in our mind, we cannot make that full U-turn to the vulnerability...

Many of you may be familiar with this excerpt from the Mary Oliver poem, *The Journey*, which brings to mind this kind of homecoming – making this U-turn.

“One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice...

‘Mend my life!’
each voice cried
but you didn’t stop.
You knew what you had to do...

It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.
But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do –
determined to save
the only life you could save.”⁴

We stop listening to the thoughts and the beliefs and we strive deeper and deeper into the world. That’s the inner world - that’s the U-turn. We’re

⁴ Oliver, M. (1986). *The Journey*. In *Dream Work* (p. 38). New York, NY: Atlantic Monthly Press.

tracing back and back into that place of pure presence and receptivity and tenderness as we stop believing those voices.

Another example of the return home, from some years back:

A woman that I was working with had come to retreats and done different practices and she was very stuck in the older brother syndrome. She was very angry and judgmental towards her husband for not prioritizing her, for coming home late - everything else was first - work, friends, everything. She said that he'd make periodic gestures that would only make her angrier because she felt like he was being dutiful and he really didn't care. And, underneath, she was feeling, "I'm just not as desirable as I used to be. He just doesn't want to be with me and he's not admitting it." So, in a way, she felt that he was being false. Then he'd get upset and he'd say, "But I love you and I'm trying and you don't believe me - so you're judging me and it gets to be no fun. It's hard to be around and always be judged and never get it right." So they were pretty stuck.

Her U-turn: The voices that she was believing were, "He's bad. He's not doing our relationship right. He's not loving me." And underneath that, "I'm bad. I'm undesirable." Those were the voices that she was listening to. So she went under them and, and under that voice of, "I'm bad," or "I'm undesirable," to a place where the real vulnerability was...just the felt sense of unlovable and with that, the grieving, and even underneath that, this deep longing - much like John O'Donohue describes - longing to belong...this longing to feel and trust love. The voice of that longing was that very simple, pure cry of, "Please love me. Please love me."

So she traced back and then she let herself inhabit that longing. For her, the experience was that the more she let herself feel the rawness and the vulnerability of this yearning to belong, the more she could call on and imagine and sense "the beloved" - her term for the sense of warmth or light in this universe that was bathing her, that was around her, that was, in some deep way, with her in a loving presence. For her, that phrase "love is always loving me" became what she called her "true voice." In other words, remember in Mary Oliver's poem, stepping out of the voices and going deeper and deeper until there's a voice that feels like your true nature speaking. "Love is always loving me" was the truth that became the voice

that, she said, “This is the one I’m dedicated to listening to. When I get lost, love is always loving me. That is the voice that can bring me home.”

Reflection:

With that, I’d like to invite you to practice a little bit in a simple way. A general comment about the reflections we do in a middle of a talk is that these are short and the practice of letting in love is a life practice. We’ve spent so much time in that more armored sea anemone – where we really don’t let the ocean wash through us – that it’s familiar. In fact, we don’t even notice sometimes that we’re not letting in love. So we’ll explore a bit and the invitation is to take it home and, as this woman described it, to practice letting that sense of “love is always loving me” be what you turn toward. Rumi puts it this way, “Whenever some kindness comes to you, turn that way, toward the source of kindness.” This is a choice to turn toward the loving.

We did some earlier reflections of where you felt hooked. You might bring one place up now - whether it’s a form of chasing after something that consumes you or whether it’s a form of pushing away, aversion, blame – some situation where you feel stuck and you know that it’s one of the situations where you leave home.

When you have that in mind, you might bring up the particulars of where that gets activated - just one particular setting where, maybe with a certain person that you’re acting in a certain way that you know you’ve left home, maybe at work, maybe with family. Let it be close in enough and real enough that you can actually feel the sense of judgement or aversion that arises – the anger, the fear, the wanting. You could even let your face, your body, your posture - just let yourself feel it - become that more contracted sea anemone, where you’re really caught in that.

Begin the U-turn by letting go of the outside fixation of who’s wrong, the storyline, the voices, and come right back here to this body - to what’s right inside the distressed part of you - and begin to trace back and sense, “What is it I’m really fearing?” or “What is it I’m really wanting? What’s the deepest need inside this angry or upset or judging place? What am I really wanting or needing to feel?” And you might find, like the man I described,

that you're really needing to feel a sense that you're enough, that you're seen, appreciated, that you belong. Or you might feel the need, like the woman, just to really trust you're loveable.

Let yourself feel the longing to be seen...to be held - that part of you that knows what it's like on the inside to say, "Please love me." And it may be that there's a certain source toward which you turn that you really want the love from - a source you want to be seen by. It might be a living person or a deity. It might be a formless energy. It might be, as the man I described, that you really want to sense a wise, compassionate being putting their hands on your shoulders or the beloved kissing you on the brow or embracing you. Whatever it is that you sense that would be an experience of turning toward and experiencing love, just imagine it - let yourself imagine it. Let yourself be on your knees with those hands on your shoulders. Let yourself be bathed in warmth or light.

You might hear the words, "Please love me." Sense the possibility, the courage of just letting it in a bit - letting it wash in some. It might be subtle - just warmth, a gentle embrace like floating in warm water, relaxed - or it might be a real washing through.

What if you could trust that love is always loving you? And what if you could really let go and be the love that's loving you - become that loving...that ocean that's cherishing the waves?

In this final portion of this journey that Henri Nouwen describes, he says that, to let in love - to know that you're loved - means that you know that you *are* love and this is the blessing of the journey. In his language, by letting love in we become that loving presence. Our identity shifts. We let in love and then discover we are the father and the mother and that which is loving the waves.

He describes it this way at the very end of his book, *Return of the Prodigal Son*. He says:

"To claim, for myself, spiritual fatherhood and the authority of compassion that belongs to it, I have to let the rebellious younger son and the resentful older son step up on the platform to receive the unconditional, forgiving love that the father offers me, and to discover there the call to be home as my

father is home. Then both sons in me can gradually be transformed into the compassionate father. This transformation leads me to the fulfillment of the deepest desire of my restless heart. Because what greater joy can there be for me than to stretch out my tired arms and let my hands rest in a blessing on the shoulders of my home-coming children?”⁵

And so it is with us, that we can relax back and rest in that loving presence that includes all the different streams of our being and, in that resting, realize a sense of oneness and joy.

So we close this inquiry and reflection with a sense of curiosity – what would it mean to trust that love is always loving me? What would it mean to trust that I am that loving awareness embracing this changing life?

Namaste and thank you.

Tara

For more talks and meditations and to learn about my schedule or join my email list, please visit tarabrach.com.

Transcription services by: www.gmrtranscription.com

Gratitude to Christy Sharshel for editing.

⁵ Nouwen, p. 133