

After you read the selection below, stop for a few moments and answer the questions at the end of piece.

The Vacation

I imagine I retire to a lonely place
to give myself the gift of solitude,
for solitude is a time when I see things
as they are.

What are the little things in life
that lack of solitude has magnified
unduly?

What are the really big things
that I find too little time for?

Solitude is the time to make decisions.
What decisions do I need to make
or reconsider
at this juncture of my life?

I now make a decision
about the kind of day today shall be.

Will it be a day of doing?
I list the things I really want to do
today.

Will it also be a day of being
--no effort to achieve,
to get things done,
to gather or possess,
but just to be?
My life will not bear fruit
unless I learn the art of lying fallow,
the art of "wasting" time creatively.

So I decide what time to give to play,
to purposeless and unproductive
interests,
to silence, intimacy, rest.
And I ask myself what I shall taste
today,
and touch
and smell

and listen to
and see.

Anthony de Mello, Wellsprings

~ Keeping an open-mind with yourself, address the following and record your reflections in a journal or log.

- 1) What do I notice in my body as I read this piece-warmth/coolness, tightening/opening?
- 2) What questions about 'taking time' 'solitude' and the like come to mind for me personally?
- 3) What does 'the art of lying fallow' mean to me at this point in my life?
- 4) What 'right action' will I take as a result of reflecting here today?