

## Transformation

From Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life, Fred and Mary Ann Brussat, Scribner, New York, 1996, pp. 434-435. We read from this book in class, which is also on the recommended reading list, attachment # 22.

"There is a part of every living thing that wants to become itself," writer Ellen Bass observes, "the tadpole into the frog, the chrysalis into the butterfly, a damaged human being into a whole one. That is spirituality." It is also a capsule description of the holy grail of transformation.

The quest for wholeness is a global phenomenon. Individuals in all parts of the world are involved in inner work, trying to get in touch with soul, imagination, and creativity. Some are searching for a connection with the Sacred Source through contemplation, rituals, and retreats. Others are drawn to explore the spiritual dimensions of relationship.

Sam Keen, a freelance philosopher, looks at how this impulse toward renewal is reflected in the world's religions: "The great metaphors from all spiritual traditions--grace, liberation, being born again, awakening from illusion--testify that it is possible to transcend the conditioning of my past and do a new thing."

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We want to bring to the fore parts of ourselves that have been overlooked. Indeed, whenever we are involved in the process of personal reformation or renewal, we must face the shadow. As Andrew Harvey, a modern-day mystic, points out, "The very things we wish to avoid, neglect, and fell from turn out to be the 'prima material' from which all real growth comes."

Be on the lookout for resources [**tools**] that will unlock your inner potential. Be on the lookout for imaginative experiences that will stop you in your tracks and turn you around.

One of the great examples of personal transformation is St. Paul. In Romans 12:2, he suggests, "**Be transformed by the renewing of your minds.**" [emphasis added]