

POETRY

Stebbin's Gulch

by the randomness
of the way
the rocks tumbled
ages ago

the water pours
it pours
it pours
ever along the slant

of downgrade
dashing its silver thumbs
against the rocks
or pausing to carve

a sudden curled space
where the flashing fish
splash or drowse
while the kingfisher overhead

rattles and stares
and so it continues for miles
this bolt of light,
its only industry

to descend
and to be beautiful
while it does so;
as for purpose

there is none,
it is simply
one of those gorgeous things
that was made

to do what it does perfectly
and to last,
as almost nothing does,
almost forever.

- from "Blue Horses" by Mary Oliver

DHARMA

Buddha's Final Teaching

"Make of yourself a light. Rely upon yourself. Do not depend upon anyone else. Make my teachings your light. Rely upon them. Do not depend on others' teachings."

-Buddha

Deepening Practice

Men are not free when they are doing just what they like. Men are only free when they are doing what the deepest self likes. And there is getting down to the deepest self! It takes some diving.

-D.H. Lawrence

Present Moment, Wonderful Moment

There are so many exercises we can do to help us breathe consciously. One exercise is to recite these four lines silently as we breathe in and out:

*Breathing in, I calm my body,
Breathing out, I smile.
Dwelling in the present moment,
I know this is a wonderful moment!*

It is a joy to sit, stable and at ease, and return to our breathing, our smiling, our true nature. Our appointment with life is in the present moment. If we do not have peace and joy right now, when will we have peace and joy — tomorrow, or after tomorrow? What is preventing us from being happy right now? As we follow our breathing, we can say, simply, "Calming, Smiling, Present moment, Wonderful moment."

-Thich Nhat Hanh