



# Daily Discovery: A Devotional

*David F Allen*

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**Life is a challenging journey from the victimhood of our false self, based in fear and shame, to the discovery of our true self, based in love and gratitude.**

Each day in this devotional includes a scripture, an inspirational quote and an excerpt from one of my books: *In Search of the Heart, Shattering the Gods Within, Contemplation: Intimacy in a Distant World* and *Shame: The Human Nemesis*. I invite you to come, read, and be still. If you are hurting badly inside, it will be difficult, but I challenge you to write your own reflections on what it means to discover your authentic self. As you reread the devotional each year, adding to your reflections, you will develop a deeper awareness of your soul, your true self. As you embrace your inner life, you will become a missionary to your own heart.

In the words of St. Paul:

"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be opened so that you may know the hope of your calling, the riches of his glorious inheritance, and the power of God's love dwelling in you" (Eph. 1:17).

Marcel Proust wrote, "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."

Modern life with its urgent time pressures and burgeoning technologies leaves us disillusioned and disconnected from ourselves, each other and nature. As a result, we tend to create a world where friends walk as strangers and strangers as friends. Paraphrasing Georgia O'Keeffe:

No one sees a flower  
No one makes a friend.  
To see a flower  
Takes time.  
To make a friend  
Takes time.  
And . . .we have no time.

It is easy to blame our predicament on external circumstances and forget the words of the wisdom writer: "Guard your heart for out of it comes the issues of your life" (Prov. 4:23). Sadly, the heart, like a sponge, absorbs the hurt and shame of our lives. Unless we release the pain, there is no space in our heart for love.

Facing shame, which I define as Self Hatred Aimed at ME, is not easy because shame buries our authentic self encouraging us to live our lives out of an illusory false self. As we age, this false self becomes more entrenched making us puppets of our external reality and circumstances. As a result, we follow the shadow rather than the substance of our existence.

Our greatest challenge and hope is to face our hurt and shame and open our hearts to the eternal "love which never lets us go and the face which never turns away." Only in silence and stillness will we discover the vision of our authentic self filled with love, gratitude and forgiveness. As the Psalmist wrote, "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10).

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