

VISIO



DIVINA

The Wisdom of Contemplative Vision

CREATOR-CREATIVITY

Jalaluddin Rumi

Creature and Creator, creation and creativity—these are linked in this visionary poem by Jalaluddin Rumi. We are self-aware beings who know of our Creator. The imprint of the Creator is within us, and the signs of that Source are our own urges for creativity. Humans are creative beings, we reflect the Creator in that way. We fill our days and nights either dreaming of what we might do or accomplishing our creative goals through action and innovation. .

Someone may object, “But I am not an artist. I am not creative.” But the fact is everyone creates, whether thoughts, goals, speech, outcomes, agendas. We are constantly creating. We are constantly creating, following the pattern and deep intention of our Creator, and mirroring the divine Creativity in our own way.

The Source of all things has been creatively expanding the divine Work and Activity for billions of years and the results lie in profusion all around us. Our world, and the universe around us are but a drop in the cosmic bucket. In our relatively short time-span of life and experience, we see but a tiny sliver of that Great Work, yet we feel its power surge within us.

But Rumi knows something else—that we can learn to tap into the great universal, creative Source. We can ourselves be linked to and know it as a living force within us. That transcendent and immanent Source can become the “enough for you,” that Rumi is speaking about. The secret that Rumi knows is that this creativity is a sufficiency that will never run out and never expire as an infinite force for us.

The ultimate act of creativity is, however, almost unimaginable—to be able to make something out of nothing (no-thing), and to turn what is false into the Real. These are acts of supreme creativity, and these are skills that we also can learn, starting first in the laboratory of our own being.

The Creator can take what we consider to be “nothing” and turn it into something that we did not imagine. The Creator can also take what is false (or as of yet unreal), and turn it into the truth and reality. The Creator can help us “realize” the potential that has only been latent or perhaps, at least not yet present. When this happens it is miraculous, and perhaps we should stop worrying about the particulars in the way we think they should or must be. The divine creativity is enough, for when the Creator performs these acts they are clearly sourced within the domain transcendent to us, and yet they are ready to be made immanent and explicit within us.

Jalaluddin Rumi is, of course, a Sufi saint of the Islamic tradition. His life-span was from 1207-1273. He and his family survived the Mongol invasion by fleeing to Turkey where he died after teaching multitudes of students—Jewish, Christian and Muslim about the spiritual path. His visionary poetry is loved and read worldwide today.

Reflections on Image and Text:

1. *Do you typically consider yourself to be a creative person? What experiences of creativity have you had? What creative urges have you pursued in your life?*
2. *What are your daily agendas that are the normal activity that you pursue day after day? (You may not see them as acts of creativity but they are, because you make them happen).*
3. *When you look at the human world that is so full of art, music, science, social structures and institutions—do you see these things (even when they are flawed) as moments of creativity? Think about them that way and then re-examine the world around you. What do you see differently?*
4. *How are you contributing to any of these creative activities in the larger world around you?*
5. *When and how has a “nothing” in your experience been turned into a “something?”*
6. *Have you ever seen something unreal (or unrealized) become real in the objective world—a potential perhaps in someone, in yourself, or in your child? Describe this acts of creativity.*
7. *The illuminations provided for this meditation focus on the acts of divine creativity out of nothingness as well as changing the false into the real. After contemplating the images, what attracts your attention? What insights do you have from this reflection and contemplation of the images?*
8. *What are some false things that you feel could be made Real? How might that be accomplished?*
9. *Is there a prayer or invocation that you could make to the creative Force calling it down into your life, experience, or being? Record it in your journal*

A Place for Notes and for Journaling your Answers:

This reflection, text and its illumination have been provided by Alison Hine and Lynn Bauman as a means for contemplative prayer.

LECTIO DIVINĀ

The Contemplative Reading of a Sapiential Text

*L*ook at your Creator,
let that creativity be enough for you.
God is the One who makes something out of nothing.
God is the One who changes the false into the real

—from the mystical poetry
of Jalaluddin Rumi

These poems are found in the
Kulliyat-e Shams-e Tabrizi (Volumes 1-VII)
or the **Mathnawi** (Volumes 1-VI)

Contemplating
THE ILLUMINATIONS





