

Let Your Life Speak by Parker J. Palmer

Journal 1

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SWK676 Leadership and Organizational Practice II

I love poetry and right away I knew I was going to enjoy this book. I didn't understand the poem at first, but now after reading the first chapters I have put meaning into the poem. The river frozen and unmoving on the surface has currents ever moving underneath. The river is my life and without me taking the initiative to stand by its side and listen, I will miss the deeper unseen, unspoken currents of my life.

I know the feeling and thought, "I wish this wasn't my life." I've been there in different seasons, at different times. I'm thankful that that's not what characterized my life at the moment. I know the sensation of trying to willfully manipulate my schedule, disciplines, and routines so that they submit to an ideal life that I've created in my mind. That lifestyle was way too much for me. I want everything I do to flow from a place of desire. What I think I mean is that I want to want to do everything that I do. For example, this morning after my 6-9am language lesson I noticed that the floor was dirty in the kitchen. Instead of either neglecting to care for it or doing it quickly to "get it out of the way" I decided to embrace the goodness that comes from making something clean. And I genuinely enjoyed sweeping up the kitchen and went on to do the living room and bedroom as well. In my life at home, at work, at school, etc I want my actions to come from a place of choosing to do something because there is goodness in the action and therefore delight, meaning, and calling.

As I'm settling into the routines and tasks of my internship I have felt like this role doesn't fit me perfectly. I'm working remotely and I love to be with people. I'm working on researching and writing and I want to talk with community members and have my feet on the ground. I'm sitting most of the time and I love to be active and change locations. How do I receive my vocation in this situation? Palmer wrote, "Our deepest calling is to grow into our own authentic selfhood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we *ought* to be. As we do so, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks- we will also find our path of authentic service in the world" (2015, pp. 16). I think over and over again I look to find my identify and worth in the things that I do. Its normal for me to have a personal expectation of myself based on external criteria either of a job description or otherwise. But if my calling and identify comes from within, from being keenly connected with the image of God in me, then I can live anywhere doing anything because my calling will be living according to *the way* that God has made me to live.

References

Palmer, P. J. (2015). *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. Wiley.