



Turning Down the Noise: The Quiet Power of Silence in a Busy World

Christine Jackman

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Heartfelt and with touches of humor, Christine Jackman's *Turning Down the Noise* showcases the inviting power of silence.

The book tracks Jackson's growth into appreciation of the practice of silence. Her development happened in fits and starts—a lifelong quest that intensified in recent years as she companioned her aging father through illness. Her honest narrative includes insights to motivate others toward a similar learning process.

Silence itself is tangible in the story, almost like a person or place that Jackman is trying to find. Her narrative shows that seeking silence is not a means to enlightenment or wisdom, but is a worthy end in itself. While her story centers on adulthood, the book shares the tantalizing idea that “the memory of silence lingers” from childhood and before “in our unconsciousness.” In fact, Jackman's pursuit began when she stayed behind, outside in the quiet, while her kindergarten class left its recess.

Jackman's storytelling is strong. Her descriptions are paced out, and her voice is compelling; she has a good sense of others. Her calm tone permeates the book, so that even the process of reading it ushers in mental quiet.

While Jackman's narrative is central to the book, it also contains practical takeaways for calming inner and outer noise, including seeking out natural surroundings, paying attention to breathing, and engaging the wisdom of monks, gurus, and other practitioners of silence across generations. It closes with a how-to guide to help others embrace the countercultural practice of pursuing silence, which begins with small moments—three slow, deep breaths; smiling while waiting or facing frustration—before moving on the larger silences of nature walks, tech-free bedtimes, and silent retreats.

Turning Down the Noise brings the gift of silence into everyday life.

MELISSA WUSKE (May / June 2021)

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