

Weekly Meditation February 23, 2011
By Rev. Teri Lubbers

Racing in the Rain

I know this much about racing in the rain. I know it is about balance. It is about anticipation and patience. I know all of the driving skills that are necessary for one to be successful in the rain. But racing in the rain is also about the mind! It is about owning one's own body. About believing that one's car is merely an extension of one's body. About believing that the track is an extension of the car, and the rain is an extension of the track, and the sky is an extension of the rain. It is about believing that you are not you; you are everything. And everything is you.
~Garth Stein, "The Art of Racing in the Rain"

The story is told in my family that my first outing as a newborn was being taken by my 16-year old mother to the race track where my 20-year-old father was racing. They say that although I flinched as the cars rounded the track I slumbered peacefully. Never woke up, kind of a metaphor for how I sometimes do life.

I confess I never have understood the whole racing thing...Nascar, Daytona, etc. But reading this book, from which the quote above is borrowed, gave me a bit of insight into racing and to my own life. When you are driving on a track at 190 miles an hour everything matters. The seam in the asphalt of the track, the incline, the wind, the moisture, the heat of your tires, your engine, your reflexes, the other cars around you. It all matters. In those moments on the track if you are not present, if your awareness does not expand beyond your little cockpit of a seat, you might not survive...because everything matters.

Most likely I will never be behind the wheel of a racecar going that fast and that's probably a very good thing! But I am behind the wheel of my existence. I can putt-putt along on the familiar roads where I don't have to pay much attention, where the very familiarity of life's landscape and its routines lull me into not really showing up, encouraging me to just push the auto-pilot button to get through the day. Or I can own the reality of my presence in a world of which I am a part, and in which my decisions and intentions, my thoughts and actions, all matter. A human existence is auspicious and not to be taken lightly. Do not doubt the power of your own life.

Prayer: Lover and Maker of All, thank you for this amazing opportunity you have given me, that I should be here, now, this day. Awaken my spirit to the intricacies and surprises of this day and help me be fully present to find and experience You in it. Amen.