

WEEK 51 THE DARK SIDE

“When you look at the dark side, careful you must be. For the dark side looks back.” - Yoda

Everyone has a Dark Side. To never encounter your own Shadow and come to know it is to never become fully integrated as a human being. Most people are too afraid to peer into the dark recesses of their psyche. They do not want to know what dark secrets exist there. They remain strangers to themselves as a result. When the Dark Side does come out in force it is overwhelming. Sometimes you have to invite the Dark Side out to play, to look deep within and stare it down.

Star Wars is a saga of Heroes and Villains. There is conflict, struggles to overcome and the ever-present tension between the opposing sides of the Force. There are those that follow the Dark side who oppose those on the Light side of the Force. The story of epic struggle between light and darkness, good and evil is as old as time. The Epic Gilgamesh was the earliest tale of where a man embarks on an adventure where in the end, he finds peace and redemption by overcoming his darker side.

The Greek legends, Beowulf and the Nordic sagas all share the same theme of the struggle of the hero to not only overcome the monster, tyrant or evil before him but also the darkness in his own heart. Overcoming his struggle, the Hero returns home redeemed and reborn. In the ancient world the Gods played out the eternal saga of birth, death and rebirth as the sun bought life and hope with Spring, rose to fully glory in Summer and then was dragged to the underworld to battle with dark forces over Winter only to arise anew in the following Spring.

Always the struggle between light and dark. Darkness tries to snuff out the light and eclipse it from existence. Fear and despair prevail. Light shines forth and beats back the darkness bringing hope and salvation. A cycle, until, like Ragnarok, the end of days.

The Star Wars prequels presented the fall of the Divine Child, the promised one, into darkness. The original trilogy introduced a New Hope. This time the dim flicker of light would prevail against the darkness and not falter. The Dark Side would be beaten back into the shadows. Darth Sidious would be cast down, Anakin redeemed, and Luke Skywalker would bring balance to the Force...for a time. Every story ends is a new beginning.

Like the seasons the story repeats in the sequel trilogy. The light has dimmed, the Hero has grown old. The sky darkens and hope struggles against despair. A new Hero steps forward and holds a candle to the darkness once again. The forces of Light always prevail in myth. They have to. The myth gives hope to the living.

Yoda said, "Fear is the path to the Dark Side. Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering". Despite his warnings Anakin succumbed to the Dark Side. Luke overcame the temptation to join his Father and submit to the Dark Side (in an alternative ending to "Return of the Jedi" by Lucas, Luke does take up the helmet of Darth Vader and surrenders to the Dark Side). In a moment of folly and rage Luke fails his nephew Ben Solo who turns to the Knights of Ren embracing the Dark Side.

Were they evil? No. Did they suffer? Yes. The Sith claimed that the Dark Side gave them freedom and power to control natural laws and life. The Sith did not claim to be evil but believed that the means justified the ends. Morality was relative and open to debate. Is nature not cruel and indifferent to suffering? Is evolution not evidence that the weak must perish and the strong prevail for the benefit of life? The Sith offered the Galaxy safety and security in exchange for liberty and justice. No surprise they were met with resistance. No one wants to be a slave to darkness.

What is your Dark Side? Have you faced it? Do you recognize your Shadow? Are you willing to accept that it exists, that you are capable of horrible and dark things? Life is a struggle between the Dark and Light sides of your nature. Which side prevails is the question you must resolve in your own personal Hero's Journey.

DAY 351

“Once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny.” – Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

DAY 352

“The dark side clouds everything. Impossible to see, the future is.” - Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

DAY 353

“Joined the Dark Side Dooku has. Lies, deceit, creating mistrust are his ways now.” - Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

DAY 354

“Remember, a Jedi’s strength flows from the Force. But beware anger, fear, and aggression. The dark side are they. Once you start down the dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny.” – Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

DAY 355

“To be Jedi is to face the truth and choose. Give off light, or darkness, Padawan. Be a candle or the night.” – Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

DAY 356

“In a dark place we find ourselves, and a little more knowledge lights our way.” – Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

DAY 357

“Strong is Vader. Mind what you have learned. Save you it can.” - Yoda

Today I am Grateful for:

Morning Contemplation

Evening Reflection

WEEK REVIEW

Reflect on your daily practices and personal goals for the week.
How did you do? Where can you refocus your attention?

Meditation:

Physical Exercise:

Diplomacy:

Awareness:

Self-Discipline:
