

## Being Nothing Isn't So Bad Either

*Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.*

—generally attributed to Abraham Lincoln

One day, a rabbi and his cantor walked into their temple together and found themselves overwhelmed by the immensity of God's presence. Both fell to the ground in humble awe and exclaimed, one right after the other, "O Lord, I am nothing!"

The temple janitor was cleaning behind one of the pillars when he saw these two devout men fall to their knees. Moved by their striking display of devotion and humility, the janitor stepped out from the pillar and also fell to the ground, crying out, "O Lord, I am nothing!"

Seeing and hearing the janitor's passionate display, the cantor nudged the rabbi and whispered, "Hey, look who thinks he's nothing!"

But seriously, folks, being nothing can be a very high spiritual state, or admittedly, it can be an excuse for living a shallow life. For a spiritual person, being nothing can open the door to becoming everything. It's one of those funny twists of life: By being nothing, you become everything. How does it happen? What does it feel like?

The following three-part contemplation can help you open to the possibility of living fully while being nothing, walking lightly in your heart even as you walk upon the earth:

**1. Imagine what it would be like to have no worries, no fear, no confusion or stress, nothing that you're wishing for or waiting for, nobody to be angry at, and no pressing matters at hand.**

Of course, this clear state of mind is easier said than done, right? Nevertheless, just by opening yourself to the possibility of entering this state of inner freedom, you're paving the way to its door.

**2. In your mind's eye, invoke an image of yourself as a young child.**

You may not have felt a truly deep level of security, comfort, and freedom since your early childhood, before school responsibilities came in and disrupted your little party of being a carefree child — bringing stress, test scores, peers, deadlines, homework, teachers, and all the responsibilities and challenges of being thrust into a large group of other souls. I remember this time as a big shock after a relatively smooth and carefree toddlerhood. Imagine and remember what life was like at age two or three, when your biggest concern was hopefully about which color candy would pop up when it was your turn.

**3. Take all that carefree feeling and bring it into the circumstances of your life as it is now.**

Imagine what it would be like to live your life with all the things and people that have accumulated around you, but with absolutely nothing to worry about. You're not worried about death, money, or someone else's opinion about you, nor are you afraid of losing anything, yet you're still joyful, caring, vibrant, and involved with everything that's going on. This peaceful state is what it feels like to integrate spirituality into your life.