

Esther de Waal on
'the equilibrium of contemplation and action' (after Thomas Merton)

from 'Living with Contradiction'
(Canterbury Press, 1997)
p. 106.

'Unless the waters of the spring are living and flow outward, the spring becomes only a stagnant pool. If the stream loses contact with the spring which is its course, it dries up. Contemplation is the spring of living water; action is the stream that flows out from it to others. But the water is of course the same in both. This is equally true for us. If action is out of touch with an interior source in prayer, it eventually becomes arid and barren, and we find ourselves the victims of busyness, frenetic over-activity. But conversely, if our prayer becomes cut out from action it is cut off from life.'



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