

Look Well Within Soul Date and Exercise for Week 2

The Importance of Even One Good Memory

Soul Date Venue for Week 2:

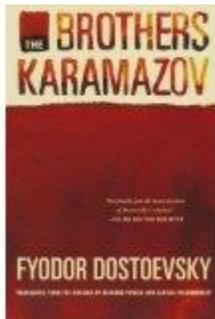
A place in nature. Perhaps a park, near a body of water, under a tree, on a forest path, or any space in nature where you feel peaceful and aware.

Tools Needed:

This page, a journal or pad of paper, and a pen.

Exercise:

Read the following excerpt from *The Brothers Karamazov*, and reflect on the questions that follow.



“He was a nice boy, a kind and brave boy; he felt honor and his father's bitter offence made him rise up. And so, first of all, let us remember him, gentlemen, all our lives. And even though we may be involved with the most important affairs, achieve distinction or fall into some great misfortune -- all the same, let us never forget how good we once felt here, all together, united by such good and kind feelings as made us, too, for the time that we loved the poor boy, perhaps better than we actually are. My little doves -- let me call you that -- little doves, because you are very much like those pretty grey blue birds, now, at this moment, as I look at your kind, dear faces -- my dear children, perhaps you will not understand what I am going to say to you because I often speak very incomprehensibly, but still you will remember and someday agree with my words. You must know that there is nothing higher or stronger, or sounder, or more useful afterwards in life, than some good memory, especially a memory from childhood, from the parental home. You hear a lot said about your education, yet some such beautiful, sacred memory, preserved from childhood, is perhaps the

best education. If a man stores up many such memories to take into life, then he is saved for his whole life. And even if only one good memory remains with us in our hearts, that alone may serve some day for our salvation. Perhaps we will even become wicked later on, will even be unable to resist a bad action, will laugh at people's tears and at those who say, as Kolya exclaimed today, "I want to suffer for all people" -- perhaps we will scoff wickedly at such people. And yet, no matter how wicked we may be and God preserve us from it -- as soon as we remember how we buried Ilyusha, how we loved him in his last days, and how we've been talking just now, so much as friends, so together, by this stone, the most cruel and jeering man among us, if we should become so, will still not dare laugh within himself at how kind and good he was at this present moment! Moreover, perhaps just this memory alone will keep him from great evil, and he will think better of it and say: "Yes, I was kind, brave, and honest then." Let him laugh to himself, it's no matter, a man often laughs at what is kind and good; it just comes from thoughtlessness; but I assure you, gentlemen, that as soon as he laughs, he will say at once in his heart: "No, it's a bad thing for me to laugh because one should not laugh at that!"

'It will certainly be so, Karamazov, I understand you, Karamazov!' Kolya exclaimed, his eyes flashing.

From *The Brothers Karamazov*
By Fyodor Doestoevsky

Questions for Reflection:

What memory do I have of a time or event that offered me the grace of thinking of myself as better than I actually was?

What memory do I have of participating in something so good that it would be a source of strength, hope, and motivation to goodness for someone (even myself) if that person (or myself) should find evil or negativity lurking nearby?

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