

# The Soul

Parker Palmer

"...the soul, that life giving core of living self, with its hunger for truth and justice, love and forgiveness....."

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## Nobody knows what the soul is.....

Mary Oliver

*It comes and goes like the wind over water.*

*But just as we can name the functions of the wind, so we can name some of the functions of the soul without presuming to penetrate its mystery.*

*The soul wants to keep us rooted in the ground of our own being, resisting the tendency of other faculties, like the intellect and ego, to uproot us from who we are.*

*The soul wants to keep us connected to the community in which we find life, for it understands that relationships are necessary if we are to thrive.*

*The soul wants to tell us the truth about ourselves, our world, and the relation between the two, whether that truth is easy or hard to hear.*

*The soul wants to give us life and wants us to pass that gift along, to become life-givers in a world that deals too much*



## Exercise

Slowly read Mary Oliver's poem on the four functions of the soul... reflect on their meaning for your life and career. Think about the people, places, things and ideas in your life. How does Mary Oliver's view of soul impact your career thinking?

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### Looking at the four functions of the soul...

"Keeping us rooted in our being"- Write a line describing how your intellect and ego may get in the way of your souls development.

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"Connected to the community"- Write a line describing how one or many of your relationships enhances your soul's development.

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"Telling the truth"- Write a line describing one hard truth to reflect on, talk about or explore.

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"Giving / passing along life"- Write a line describing what passing along on life means to you.

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