

notice feelings in
discernment
... "something keeps
pulling me to commit..."

then fear sets in

if decision is not in
tune with desire, negative
feeling sets in

good analogy ... gray land
vs technicolor

when we are not in tune
with God's desire/will
for us, "the flowering
world becomes a wasteland
of dry stones."
Think about this

"The December Project" by Sara Davidson

If You Go to Afghanistan | 69

~~"I don't believe in astrology."~~-----

"So, let's see—what is calling you to do this?" he asked.

"I'm not sure, but something keeps pulling me to commit, and here's what I notice. When I think, Okay, I've set this in motion and I should see it through, every moment becomes heightened and precious. Like sitting here with you. Or hearing my daughter play Chopin, or seeing the aspens turn that astonishing gold. This could be the last time I hear my daughter play piano or see the aspens or talk with you, and how sweet it is."

Then I'll start feeling terrified, I said. "My whole body is shaking with fear—getting in the car, answering the phone—and I'll think, Why take the risk? I can't handle this level of fear. I don't have to go; nobody else will care."

I paused, trying to calm my breathing.

"So I resolve to cancel my trip, and for a moment, I feel relieved. Then depression sinks in, and everything seems flat and colorless."

Zalman gave a rueful smile. "You've decided to go back to the gray land rather than the one that's Technicolor, where everything feels significant."

That reminded me of Joseph Campbell's words about refusing the call. If the hero doesn't heed the call to action, he wrote in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, the "flowering world becomes a wasteland of dry stones."

"This morning, I was pretty sure I wasn't going, and I felt so bleak I had trouble getting out of bed. No amount of mental processing or meditating could help. When I feel that depressed, I don't want to live. I may as well go to Kabul! Is that insane?"

Zalman laughed softly. He said it's easier for him to