

## A Valentine of Peace, Calm, Tranquility

Many financial professionals achieve great success in their work. Few succeed in achieving contentment, satisfaction and happiness in their Being. My Valentine to all of you is a 2½-minute exercise to let your Being breathe while gentle winds clear away anxieties and give you renewed, endless access to peace.



—Andrew Wyeth, *Wind from the sea*, 1947, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

I don't think there's a reproduction—digital or otherwise—that could do justice to Wyeth's *Wind from the sea*. It surprised me when I first saw it at the National Gallery in Washington. It doesn't command your attention, in fact it seemed almost an afterthought in a room with many other paintings. But that quiet, secret fluttering in those curtains wraps you in a world of Being-memory. A world our Being-selves know, even though we can only sense it from a distance.

Peace.

The problem with peace is that it's not about *doing* anything. It's not even particularly about "letting go." I think it's about finding some other world where a part of you always exists—a part that knows the travails of our daily lives, but also holds the wisdom of our eternities. We can't live there. Our physical bodies are too heavy! Even our thoughts and emotions are too heavy. It's weightless. Like air.

Peace. It's something that most successful people have difficulty with, because success typically requires effort, output, activity...doing.

Peace—like the unseen, secret wind from the distant sea—is about breathing. Peace is about letting your soul breathe. It’s about being in that realm where your soul’s breathing is more alive, more engrossing, more *real* than the physical you in the real world.

That’s not an easy task for pretty much anyone! But some composers have left us great gifts of music that can transport us to that realm of the Air within the air. Mozart gave us several sublime musical paths to peace, even though he didn’t have that peace in his own life. Perhaps that’s why he kept trying to create peace in his music.

The trio from his opera *Così fan tutte* can transport you almost instantaneously into that other world. All you have to do is sit, eyes closed, and breathe slowly and deeply. Then exhale slowly—almost without feeling you are exhaling at all. At the same time, try to feel the osmotic intake of air through your skin.

<i>Soave sia il vento,</i>	May the winds be gentle
<i>Tranquilla sia l’onda,</i>	May the waves be calm
<i>Ed ogni elemento</i>	And may every one of the elements
<i>Benigno risponda</i>	Respond warmly
<i>Ai vostri desir.</i>	To your desire.

Feel as if you are slightly lifted, floating on the gentle winds of the song, and let the busy-ness of the world vanish.

There are countless recordings of this opera and this trio, and I sifted through more than a few on YouTube. Some of them are a little too slow, so the air gets droopy, sags and eventually splats on the ground. Some got over-engineered, so the bass is too much or the women’s voices are too alive, too featured, and no longer blending within the composite world of the music. The version I’ve listed below keeps you suspended in the “gentle winds” and cradled in the “tranquil waves.”

Those gossamer curtains in Wyeth’s painting seem to glisten ever so slightly, as if the lace has captured unseen droplets of the sea’s salt air in them. That painting completely envelops you if you let it. Mozart’s music can do the same.

[Mozart, \*Così fan tutte\*, Act 1, “Soave sia il vento,”](#) sung by Lucia Popp, Brigitte Fasbaender, and Tom Krause, Vienna Haydn Orchestra, Istvan Kertesz, conductor, 1972 Decca recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtQn2gl-9rU>

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