

Leann Hollowell  
Response 1

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Notes From the Shore, by Jennifer Ackerman, reminded me to be more aware of my environment and spirit. She writes, "I think of this ability as a sort of specialized muscle, kept firm only by use ... That nerve is an ancient, instinctive kinship for wild things which fires right down on life" (71). I feel that someone who practices this mindfulness, and realizes that there is more to life than just their own worldly realm will become more of a spiritual being.

About a year ago I was wasting my life away in a state of depression. I was in a violent relationship and had given up on living my life the way I wanted. For a time I did not even want to live. After months of physical and mental abuse I got help from the Domestic Violence Shelter and put myself in therapy. In therapy I spent time healing my spiritual being. I went under hypnosis and learned ways to help myself be who I wanted to be. In Ackerman's book she writes, "So much that matters is invisible by the yardstick of human life. How to shatter scale-bound thinking, see more deeply, widely?" (71). This is how I felt when I was going through therapy. I felt like I had to look deeper inside myself to find out why I behaved in certain ways. By looking at my problems more closely I was able to solve them. In addition Ackerman writes, "The rhythms are not caused by the tides themselves; they originate within" (76). Before I was looking at the large picture (the abuse and pain). Later I was able to see the smaller aspect of it all (why I was putting up with it). The chapter "Between Tides" reminded me to look more deeply at life around me. "Peer through one end of the scope or the other: This plain seems boundless toward the great and boundless toward the small" (77). Being more spiritual or conscious of life around you will bring happiness into your own life. Since getting in touch with my spiritual self I appreciate my environment more. I am mindful of how I affect that environment and what or *whom* I allow in it. Looking back I can now say that getting in touch with my spiritual self was one of the happiest times of my life. I began to notice and appreciate things more. I am thankful that Ackerman reminded me of my spirit. Notes From the Shore reminded me that there are a lot of things in life that we take for granted. As humans sometimes we forget that there is more to life than just what is on the surface.