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My concern and interest in the spiritual came as a result of a search for a way to deal with extreme introversion, which I began to experience as a child. This introversion resulted in an overwhelming sense of alienation. A corollary to the alienation was an apprehension regarding mortality, which began when I witnessed the death of my grandfather.

When I was four, I had my first experience of “ecstasy.” My eyes were suddenly struck by sunlight reflected off a green wooden gate at my grandparent’s country house. I still remember that the vision stopped me in my tracks. Unable to move I contemplated forms bathed in colored light. The experience was uplifting, joyous, in contrast to the overall sadness I felt around me.

Born in Poland, I moved to Tunisia as a teenager, finally immigrating to the U.S. at the age of 19. My sense of alienation and fear of death followed me throughout. I realized that external changes are powerless in alleviating my condition and resolving my doubts. I tried drugs and therapy, but only through meditation on the breath was I able to touch something beyond my constricted sense of self. Later, with hesitation, I started to practice meditation in an organized way, in the context of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism.

Making art for me springs from the inner experience, or what Kandinsky refers to as “inner need,” although the categories “inner” and “outer,” strictly speaking, do not apply when one is fully absorbed in what one is doing. Perhaps, instead, I could say that my art arises from attention.