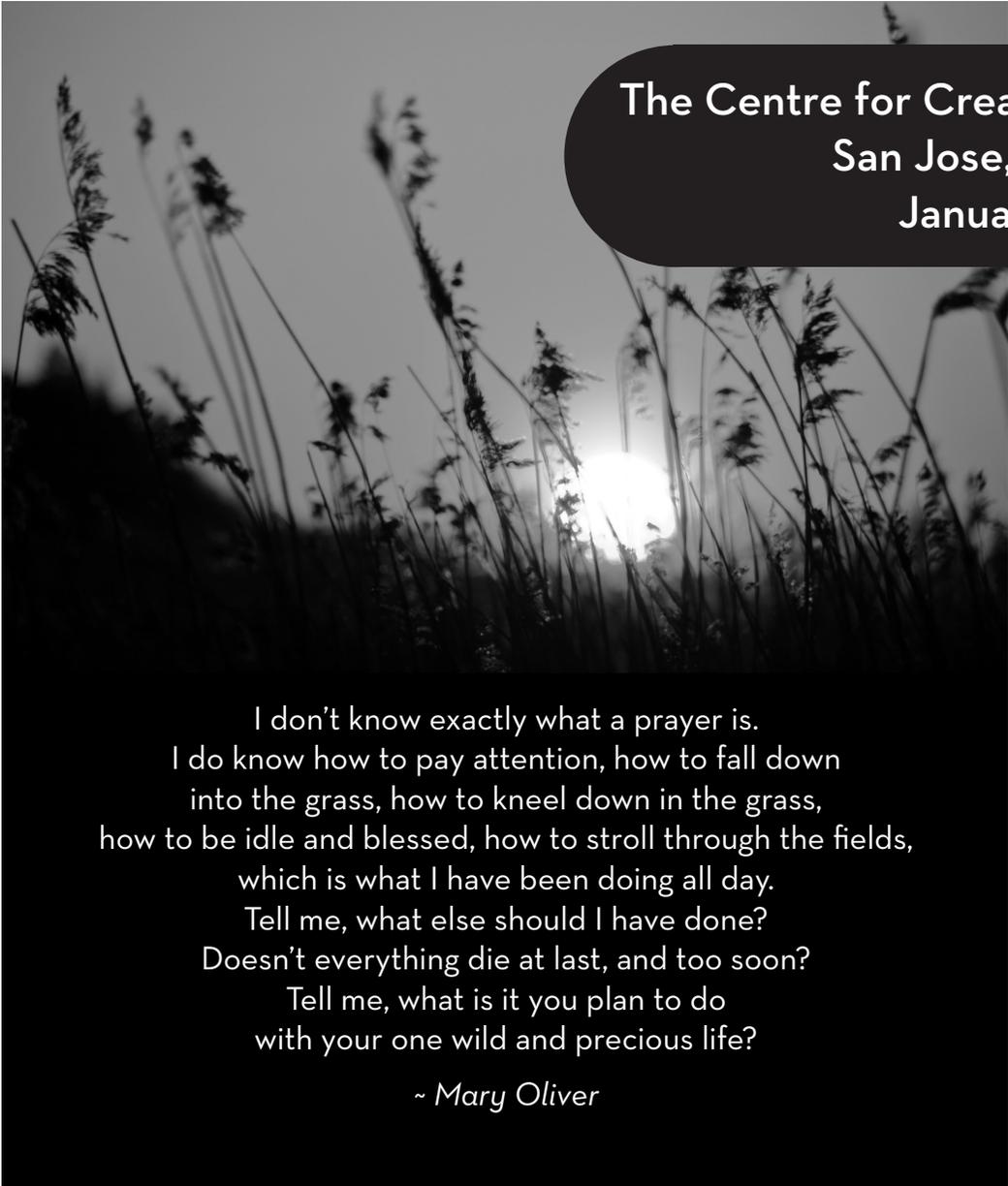


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**Poetic Medicine:
The Healing Art of Poem-Making
*AIDS & HIV Rejuvenation Retreat***

~ with John Fox, CPT ~



The Centre for Creative Living
San Jose, California
January 25, 2019

I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

~ *Mary Oliver*

THIS POEM BEGINS WITH LOVE

This poem begins with love,
tree root love, olive branch love,
deer grazing at sunset love,
birds swooning in morning sun love.

Yes, this poem begins with love,
the kind of love that is me
loving you loving me love
a smile here, a hello there
real stubborn neighborly love
crossing boundaries love
global village love
the love that says
take a stand, take a knee.
This killing ain't right love.

Yes, this poem begins with love
reaching out to one another love
witnessing that which resides in all of us love
the suffering we all bear in the bits and pieces
of what is lost love, this intersection
of humanity where the heart lives
where this poem finds its place
in our belonging to each other love.

Yes, this poem begins with love.

Debra Hiers

THE SLEEPLESS ONES

What if all the people
who could not sleep
at two or three or four
in the morning
left their houses
and went to the parks
What if hundreds, thousands,
millions
went in their solitude
like a stream
and each told their story
what if there were
old women
fearful if they slept
they would die
and young women
unable to conceive
and husbands
having affairs
and children
fearful of failing
and fathers
worried about paying bills
and men
having business troubles
and women unlucky in love
and those that were in physical pain
and those who were guilty
what if they all left their houses
like a stream
and the moon
illuminated their way and
they came, each one
to tell their stories
would these be the more troubled
of humanity
or would these be
the more passionate of this world
or those who need to create to live
or would these be
the lonely
ones
and I ask you
if they all came to the parks
at night
and told their stories
would the sun on rising
be more radiant and
again I ask you
would they
embrace

Lawrence Tirnauer

THERE ARE WORDS IN US

There are words in us
That don't know how
To get to the surface.

Words hidden in our marrow
Afraid to show themselves
Afraid the world will come apart
If they are spoken.

Words that cannot stop trembling
So deep the river of pain
That must be crossed
To say to the person
Next to us,
"Are you in as much pain as I am?"
"Are you hiding too?"

Words that wish to tell the world
How much we are
How much love is hidden
Just below our fear.

Words that know how to sing
How much we care
How much we dare love.

And some of these words have
Somehow found their way
And live among us
Barely hidden in plain sight
In everyone's eyes,
If only we had
trust in these words
To speak themselves
For the freedom of us all.

Word hide in the strangest places,
Under stones, in clouds,
In a moment of your friend's kindness
In a moment of your generosity
Poems are beginning
Their first line
Climbing happily
Into the heart singing
How close the moon comes
When we trust the night.

Words even hide
In other words.
Mercy hides in the hesitant pause,
Attempting to delay what is felt,
Questioning how much is safe
To say out loud,
How much can be trusted
To the tongue, to the pen.
Reminding what has not forgotten
That in our heart
It is our own true song
Rising toward the surface.
Telling us
Hope has put a pen
In our hands
For us to find our song.

Stephen Levine

Stephen Levine, author of *A Gradual Awakening* and *Who Dies?* is a long time friend and advocate of this work. He wrote this poem especially for the Institute for Poetic Medicine. It describes so well what occurs with "poetic medicine" and this poem is helpful to those who hear it.

START CLOSE IN

*Start close in,
don't take the second step
or the third,
start with the first
thing
close in,
the step you don't want to take.*

Start with
the ground
you know,
the pale ground
beneath your feet,
your own
way of starting
the conversation.

Start with your own
question,
give up on other
people's questions,
don't let them
smother something
simple.

To find
another's voice
follow
your own voice,
wait until
that voice
becomes a
private ear
listening
to another.

Start right now
take a small step
you can call your own
don't follow
someone else's
heroics, be humble
and focused,
start close in,
don't mistake
that other
for your own.

*Start close in,
don't take the second step
or the third,
start with the first
thing
close in,
the step you don't want to take.*

David Whyte

STEADFAST

Now is the time
to be steadfast
with myself,
steadfast

like moss is
or a star;
something close
& something far away.

Both say
in their own language
and touch me
in their own way:

We aren't going away soon.
We have been here for a long time.

John Fox

PRAYING

It doesn't have to be
The blue iris, it could be
Weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
Small stones; just
Pay attention, then patch
A few words together and don't try
To make them elaborate, this isn't
A contest but a doorway
Into thanks, and a silence in which
Another voice may speak.

Mary Oliver

THE PLACE WHERE WE ARE RIGHT

From the place where we are right
flowers will never grow
in the spring.

The place where we are right
is hard and trampled
like a yard.

But doubts and loves
dig up the world
like a mole, a plow.
And a whisper will be heard in the place
where the ruined
house once stood.

Yehuda Amichai

THE HEALING TIME

Finally on my way to yes
I bump into
all the places
where I said no
to my life
all the untended wounds
the red and purple scars
those hieroglyphs of pain
carved into my skin, my bones,
those coded messages
that send me down

the wrong street
again and again
where I find them
the old wounds
the old misdirections
and I lift them
one by one
close to my heart
and I say holy
holy.

Pesha Gertler

BLESSING OF BROKENNESS

4/23/2010

Why did this happen to me?
What did I do to bring this on?
Is this a reflection of who I am?
Then I ask, "Why am I still here?"
The answer is quiet.
The answer is gentle.
"You are not finished yet."

I am broken.
I have nothing left.
All has been shattered.
But again, the answer comes.
"You are not finished yet."

I don't understand.
A concrete answer, if you please.
Nothing comes, so I let it be.
Then, like a radiant dawn,
It begins to arise.
I find myself at a pinnacle,
And the joy my arrival brings.
There is the next, rising before me,
Beckoning me with the challenge.
And then I go, joyfully onward.
The excitement of each newfound goal
Pulls me onward, raising my spirit.
My wings have found me.
They lift me first with effort.
But then I soar.
The blessings of my brokenness
Are my wings of flight,
And so I fly with joy.

Karl J Vide

WHEN SOMEONE DEEPLY LISTENS TO YOU

When someone deeply listens to you
it is like holding out a dented cup
you've had since childhood
and watching it fill up with
cold, fresh water.
When it balances on top of the brim,
you are understood.
When it overflows and touches your skin,
you are loved.

When someone deeply listens to you
the room where you stay
starts a new life
and the place where you wrote
your first poem
begins to glow in your mind's eye.
It is as if gold has been discovered!

When someone deeply listens to you
your bare feet are on the earth
and a beloved land that seemed distant
is now at home within you.

John Fox

TIME FOR SERENITY, ANYONE?

I like to live in the sound of water,
in the feel of mountain air. A sharp
reminder hits me: this world still is alive;
it stretches out there shivering toward its own
creation, and I'm part of it. Even my breathing
enters into the elaborate give-and-take,
this bowing to sun and moon, day or night,
winter, summer, storm, still — this tranquil
chaos that seems to be going somewhere.
This wilderness with a great peacefulness in it.
This motionless turmoil, this everything dance.

William Stafford

INSIDE THE QUIET

You could learn a lot
just sitting watching God
take tea with Buddha
in the tent at the top of the world.
They keep the flap open
so you can walk inside the quiet and cool
and see the small cups that you thought
too tiny for the hand of God
who after all holds the whole world.
That's why God needs to rest
on a cloud of cushions
and contemplate with Buddha
the art of letting go.

Anne Powell

I LIKE TO LIVE

4/23/2010

I like to live in peace.
Its tranquility finds me,
If I allow it.
In the midst of chaos
It finds me.
I think of the niche
Along the racing cataract.
The sun warms me.
The spray cools me.
The rushing water roars.
Yet all is peaceful.
As the waters rush past,
I feel the power.
It is mighty.
It gives me strength.
It stirs my soul.
Yet all is peaceful.
Where have I found the quiet?
It dwells deep within.
It is me....It is mine.
It cannot be otherwise.
I rest in that awesome peace
That is...deep within.

Karl J Vidt

I SEE YOU

You said,
"I didn't want you to see me like this."

If I don't ever see you
with the weight of worry
pulling down your eyelids
How will I see you?
If I don't see you
with a fear that creases your brow
for a fleeting moment
How will I see you?
If I can't see
how your eyes still dance
with every memory you've created
How will I see you?
If I'm denied the chance to witness
how your spirit shines
and you step outside yourself,
when you speak of what
gives your life passion...
How will I see you?

And if we said to one another
"I want you to see me like this"
How would we then see?
If we displayed our fears like
pieces of fruit beside each other
in the bowl.
If we shared the secret places
where we hide away the enormity
of what we might become.
If we took off the coat of pretence
and revealed the glory
of our naked longings.
If we placed our intentions
on the table between us-
and bathed them
in the light of understanding...

And what if I could hold you
like a jewel, up to the light
and see all of who you are?

What if I saw it all-
And loved you anyway...

Elizabeth McNally

I SEE YOU

10/24/2008

I am grateful to you, AODS
You have deconstructed everything I made.
And allowed it all to reassemble
 In a new creation.

Still all that I was – but a new creation.
All that I will become,
Yet all that I am.

Ode to Soldier

Karl J Vidt

10/24/2008

Soldier – you are my guide
You are the eyes I see with
You ease my burden
by taking care of the little stuff
And point me to the things
I need to deal with
You represent the Holy Spirit
who is my guide
Who is the eyes I see with
Who eases my load
By showing me when to let go
And bringing wisdom to the
situation I must face
You both are my teachers
Guiding my way through life.

Karl J Vidt

NEW DOG

Jimi and Tony
can't keep Dino,
their cocker spaniel;
Tony's too sick,
the daily walks
more pressure
than pleasure,
one more obligation
that can't be met.

And though we already
have a dog, Wally
wants to adopt,
wants something small
and golden to sleep
next to him and
lick his face.
He's paralyzed now
from the waist down,

whatever's ruining him
is moving upward, and
we don't know
how much longer
he'll be able to pet
a dog. How many men
want another attachment,
just as they're
leaving the world?

Wally sits up nights
and says, *I'd like
some lizards, a talking bird,
some fish. A little rat.*

So after I drive
to Jimi and Tony's
in the Village and they
meet me at the door and say,

*We can't go through with it,
we can't give up our dog.*

I drive to the shelter
--just to look—and there
is Beau: bounding and
practically boundless,

one brass concatenation
of tongue and tail,
unmediated energy,
too big, wild,

perfect. He not only
licks Wally's face
but bathes every
irreplaceable inch
of his head, and though
Wally can no longer
feed himself he can lift
his hand, and bring it
to rest on the rough gilt

flanks when they are,
for a moment, still.
I have never seen a touch
so deliberate.
It isn't about grasping;
the hand itself seems
almost blurred now,
softened, though
tentative only
because so much will
must be summoned,
such attention brought
to the work—which is all
he is now, this gesture
toward the restless splendor,
the unruly, the golden, the animal,
the new.

Mark Doty

THESE DAYS

Whatever you have to say, leave
the roots on, let them
dangle
And the dirt
Just to make clear
where they come from

Charles Olson

THESE DAYS

When I say I'm scared
my friends scoff.
The word they say is
challenged
I say I'm pissed.
Enlightened nostrils flare.
The word is
uncomfortable
People cringe at the word
cancer, avoid me
and say on the run,
Darling, you must stop scaring people.
Say:
illness
I'm furious with my dentist
for putting mercury in my teeth.
Didn't he know it'd leech into my brain?
I'm told to
chill
Lonely, I cry at night.
I'm told to make peace with
solitude
If I took an Uzi to the mall,
shot a round or two,
they'd rightly call me:
misunderstood.

Anne Silver

A poem written after the election of Donald J. Trump

FRAGILITY

The more I am hollowed
by the fire, the more my ribs
spread like the tree of life.

Mark Nepo,
from *What Sustains*

This would be the time
to make good on the impossible,
not to put the impossible off any longer,
because it could never happen –
especially now, when possibility itself
seems to have been given a death sentence.
So much and so many lined up against
the grey wall, with barely room for anyone's elbows.
Oh, and could you please breathe for me?
Standing before their flat gazes so many paces off,
I am both forgetting and unable to breathe;
would you breathe for me? And if there is still time,
when you need it, I will breathe for you.
I will find a way to breathe deeply for you.
That would be an honor in these moments
when we are pressed against one another – your elbow
pushed into my ribs. Now that we are without it,
I am aware of how precious breathing space is
and I see you are fragile, so fragile, and that is different from weakness.
I see that because my gaze upon you right now is anything but flat.
Your fragility, at this impossible time, is what opens my heart.

John Fox

TO FEAR

You that is in my heart
When the time is wrong,
like lightening you appear.
What are you? Where are you?
Where have you come from?
Do you have a family?
You seem new-born, like a freshly hatched egg,
I should take you in, I should teach
you right from wrong,
you need protection from the unknown
of the world, from struggling to keep your emotions
in balance, not sad about leaving a place you love,
not so happy that you go overboard,
the unknown should be known to you,
only when the words right
from wrong are spoken
I should raise you as my own.

Ng Reh, 15 years

TIME, DEATH AND LOVE

I am time. I hold
everything in place.
I hold your place.
I am death.
I hold time
in my hand
and choose when
it is yours. I
am Love.
Love will always
be there.
You just have
to find it. I am
life. What will
you be?

Monique, 12 years

I WANT TO WORK IN A HOSPITAL

I want to work in a hospital
where it's okay
to climb into bed with patients
and hold them pre-
op, before they lose
their legs or breasts, or after,
to tell them
they are still whole.
Or post-partum,
when they have just returned
from that strange garden,
or when they are dying,
as if somehow because I stay
they are free to go,
taking with them
the color of my eyes.
I want the daylight
I walk out into
to become the flashlight they carry,
waving it
so God might find them
as we go together
into their long night.

Cortney Davis, RN, NP

WHAT I WOULD GIVE

What I would like to give them for a change
is not the usual prescriptions with
its hubris of the power to restore,
to cure; what I would like to give them, ill
from not enough laying in the sun
not caring what the onlookers might think
while feeding some banana to their dogs —
what I would like to offer them is this,
not reassurance that their lungs would be fine,
or that the mole they've noticed change is not
a melanoma, but instead of fear
transfigured by some doctorly advice
I'd like to give them my astonishment
at sudden rainfall like the whole world weeping,
how ridiculously gently it
slicked down my hair; I'd like to give them that,
the joy I felt while staring into your eyes
as you learned epidemiology
(the science of disease in population)
the night around our bed like timelessness,
like comfort, like what I would give to them.

Rafael Campo, M.D.

from **WILDERNESS**

There's a wolf in me with fangs pointed for tearing and gashing
And a red tongue for raw meat
And for hot lapping of blood.
And I keep this wolf because the wilderness gave it to me
and wilderness won't let it go.

And there's a fox in me.
A silver-gray fox that sniffs and guesses
And picks things out of the wind
And out of the air.
And with a nose into the dark night
That takes sleepers and eats them and hides the feathers
And then circles and loops back and double crosses.

And there's a fish in me.
And I know that I came from the salt blue waters
And I scurried with the shoals of herring
And I blew waterspouts with porpoises
And that was before the land was
And that was before the water went down
And that was before Noah
And that was before the first chapter of Genesis.

Carl Sandburg

THE ANIMALS OF MY FEELING

There is a crab in me.
It is a small red crab;
it makes no sound, walking on
a beach in my mind;
that crab is my anger, it is my right;
I feel that crab if I'm unhappy, if
I get hurt;
it gives me anger, it gives me
the right to feel and god won't let
me live without it.

There is an owl in me.
A small gray owl,
it flies around all day and
all night;
it hoots when it stays up at night;
it is my wisdom.

There is a donkey in me,
it is a medium gray donkey.
It is my right; it is my determination,
it gives me the right to achieve
what I want.

There is a dolphin in me,
a blue dolphin.
It swims around in me;
it is my action;
it lets me move, run, walk.

And there is a dove in me;
it lets me have friendship, it lets me
like others and god won't let
me live without any of these.

Evelyn Krampf, third grade

**Poetic Medicine at the AIDS and HIV Rejuvenation Retreat,
October 21, 2011.**

DON'T FOLLOW SOMEONE ELSE'S HEROES

Don't follow someone else's heroes
Don't wait to see which way the wind blows
Like a snake in the grass
But instead, embrace the wind
Wherever it takes you.
The wind in its purity, to each person
A different direction
Invites us not to cling to the
Ground, since an anchor can
Also be a prison
Instead, we may glide in the
Ways the birds teach us,
Wordlessly,
Yet with huge accomplishment.

Graham Bottoms

THERE IS A LITTLE FURRY ANIMAL IN ME

There is a little furry animal in me
Feverish and frenetic
Quick-witted
Attuned to the life of the forest
Always ready to move
Respond to the needs of the moment.

There is a bar-headed goose in me
With great persistence and commitment
I climb over the Himalayas
As my ancestors did, and their ancestors before them
With my companions
Other geese
Each with both common and individual
Purpose.

Graham Bottoms

Poems from the Poetic Medicine AIDS Rejuvenation Retreat January 2017

WORDS THAT KNOW HOW TO SING

Songs are poems put to music
That we put in practice every day without knowing
There is an old Gospel song that says,
“I sing because I’m happy,
I sing because I’m free,
His eyes are on the sparrow
And I know He watches me”
Songs are poems put to music

Ronnie Grigsby

THESE DAYS

I’m trying to do my part to un mess the mess
All around me and make my world
Better for the rest of us
What I can to take down walls
And be welcome to all
“Bring us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses,
Yearning to be free.”
HA

Ronnie Grigsby

THESE DAYS

People with power
And real money
Are saying what they
Really think
Have been taught
And the 99.9% of us
This is contrary to
What we have been taught

Kermit Conley

THE REASSURANCE

About ten days or so
After we saw you dead
You came back in a dream.
I'm all right now you said,

And it *was* you, although
You were fleshed out again:
You hugged us all around then,
And gave your welcoming beam.

How you like to be kind,
Seeking to reassure.
And, yes, how like my mind
To make itself secure.

Thom Gunn

SUMMONS

Keep me from going to sleep too soon
Or if I go to sleep too soon
Come wake me up. Come any hour
of night. Come whistling up the road.
Stomp on the porch. Bang on the door.
Make me get out of bed and come
and let you in and light a light.
Tell me the northern lights are on
And make me look. Or tell me clouds
Are doing something to the moon
They never did before, and show me.
See that I see. Talk to me till
I'm half as wide awake as you --
And start to dress wondering why
I ever went to bed at all.
Tell me the walking is superb.
Not only tell me but persuade me.
You know I'm not too hard persuaded.

Robert Francis

THE PONDS

Every year
the lilies
are so perfect
I can hardly believe

their lapped light crowding
the black,
mid-summer ponds.
Nobody could count all of them --

the muskrats swimming
among the pads and the grasses
can reach out
their muscular arms and touch

only so many, they are that
rife and wild.
But what in this world
is perfect?

I bend closer and see
how this one is clearly lopsided --
and that one wears an orange blight --
and this one is a glossy cheek

half nibbled away --
and that one is a slumped purse
full of its own
unstoppable decay.

Still, what I want in my life
is to be willing
to be dazzled --
to cast aside the weight of facts

and maybe even
to float a little
above this difficult world
I want to believe I am looking

into the white fire of a great mystery.
I want to believe that the imperfections are nothing --
that the light is everything -- that it is more than the sum
of each flawed blossom rising and fading. And I do.

Mary Oliver

QUOTES ON SILENCE

Don't look for meaning in the words. Listen to the silences.

Samuel Beckett quoted in *Forty Days of Solitude* by Doris Grumbach

Nothing is so like God as silence.

Meister Eckhart quoted in *Why Not Be a Mystic?* by Frank Tuoti

Silence is the shaft we descend to the depths of contemplation. Silence is the vehicle that takes us to the innermost centre of our being which is the place for all authentic practice.

Elaine MacInnes in *Light Sitting in Light*

It is in deep solitude and silence that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brother and sister.

Thomas Merton

Silence is the cornerstone of character.

Ohhiyesa quoted in *You Already Know What to Do* by Sharon Franquemont

At such moments we don't choose silence but *fall* silent. Silence, like love, is not something we reason our way into. And once we are in it, we recognize that it has been there all along. It's there like the background noise of the universe, that uniform hiss astronomers find when they point their radio telescopes at the space between stars, the remnant of the big bang, the residual wind of our origin.

Philip Simmons in *Learning to Fall*

The seeker's silence is the loudest form of prayer.

Swami Vivekananda quoted in *Monastic Journey to India* by M. Basil Pennington

In the sweet territory of silence we touch the mystery. It's the place of reflection and contemplation, and it's the place where we can connect with the deep knowing, to the deep wisdom way.

Angeles Arrien quoted in *The Millionth Circle* by Jean Shinoda Bolen

The study of silence has long engrossed me. The matrix of a poet's work consists not only of what is there to be absorbed and worked on, but also of what is missing, *desparecido*, rendered unspeakable, thus unthinkable. It is through these invisible holes in reality that poetry makes its way — certainly for women and other marginalized subjects and for disempowered and colonized peoples generally, but ultimately for all who practice any art at its deeper levels. The impulse to create begins — often terribly and fearfully — in a tunnel of silence. Every real poem is the breaking of existing silence, and the first question we might ask any poem is, What kind of voice is breaking silence, and what kind of silence is being broken?

And yet I need to say here that silence is not always or necessarily oppressive, it is not always or necessarily a denial or extinguishing of some reality. It can be fertilizing, it can bathe the imagination, it can, as in great open spaces, I think of those plains stretching far below the Hopi mesas in Arizona — be the nimbus of a way of life, a condition of vision. Such living silences are more and more endangered throughout the world, by commerce and appropriation. Even in conversation, here in North America, we who so eagerly unpack our most private concerns before strangers dread the imaginative space that silence might open between two people or within a group. Television, obviously, abhors such silence.

But the silence I abhor is dead silence, like a dead spot in an auditorium, a dead telephone, silence where language needed to be and was prevented. I am talking about the silence of a Lexan-sealed isolation cell in a maximum security prison, of evidence destroyed, of a language forbidden to be spoken, a vocabulary declared defunct, questions forbidden to be asked. I am also thinking of the dead sound of senseless noise, of verbal displacement, when a rich and active idiom is replaced by banal and inoffensive speech, or words of active courage by the bluster of false transgression, crudely offensive yet finally impotent.

Never has the silence of displacement been so deafening and so omnipresent. Poetic language lives, labors, amid this displacement; and so does political vision.

Adrienne Rich
from Arts of the Possible

You ask why I make my home in the
mountain forest,
and I smile, and am silent,
and even my soul remains quiet:
it lives in the other world
which no one owns.
The peach trees blossom.
The water flows.

Li Po

THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Wendell Berry

They spoke no word,
The visitor, the host
And the white
Chrysanthemum.

Ryota

ANTHEM

The birds they sang
at the break of day
start again
I heard them say
Don't dwell on what
has passed away
or what is yet to be.
Ah the wars they will
be fought again
the holy dove
she will be caught again
bought and sold
and bought again
the dove is never free.
Ring the bells that still can ring,
forget your perfect offering
there is a crack in everything
that's how the light gets in.
We asked for signs
the signs were sent:
the birth betrayed
the marriage spent
yeah the widowhood
of every government—

signs for all to see.
I can't run no more
with that lawless crowd
while the killers in high places
say their prayers out loud.
But they've summoned, they've summoned up
a thundercloud
and they're going to hear from me.
Ring the bells that still can ring...
you can add up the parts
but you won'd have the sum
you can strike up the march
there is no drum
every heart, every heart
to love will come
but like a refugee.
Ring the bells that still can ring
forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything,
That's how the light gets in.
That's how the light gets in.

Leonard Cohen

LIFT UP THE BANNER OF YOUR HEART

Lift up the banner of your heart boldly
and commit your very next step
to what you love most dearly.
Such a banner is for the greatness
of wildflowers kissing their way delicately
through glaciers, for the beauty
of the mountaintop from which your soul
undoubtedly has gazed.
The next step you take shall bring you home
if you but release your cares
and think instead that help has come,
as sure as the wind will fly the banner
that you have raised--
the quietness of a wind
in an unseen meadow that waves
the banner of who you are
with the whispered assurance that says:
I Am. Or the great, great wind
that fills ships sails announcing
your arrival to a throng of blue sky,
angelic presence's hushed in appreciation.
Your arrival to the new world of a new day,
the blessed shore rushing up to greet you.

John Fox