

Be gentle

Be gentle with yourself these days.
Sometimes the currents beneath
bring tangles to our hearts
and we don't notice
and glide smoothly on
but wonder why we are
tired, or angry, or fractious.

Let yourself sit gently down
with your wise grandmother,
and let yourself
be a small child again in her arms,
and let whatever comes, come.

And when the small child
has done her crying,
set her gently on her feet again
and send her softly back out into the world.

And sit, as only grandmothers can,
calm and grounded,
wise with twinkling eyes,
amid the ups and downs
of this crazy world. *- Rachel Holstead*

Care

In those moments when you want to care
for all the world,
Remember that in you is also the whole of the world.
And you can only begin here – caring for this skin,
These bones, this heart.
Delve deep into caring, and every cell
Becomes a temple
in which to honour the world. *- Rachel Holstead*

Close

Keep it close,
that moment when your heart tugs
and your eyes well.

To feel the world's sorrow
is also to feel its joy.
Allow moments to expand
to hold all they have to show us.

Slow your step,
so the ground where you are
can be washed by your tears.

Then watch,
as the slow pale light that follows deepens
and the whole world sparkles,
like sunshine after rain. *- Rachel Holstead*

Do not hurry

See how a flower grows
She is not in a hurry
She doesn't compare herself with other flowers
She doesn't long to change her colour
Or find another form
She doesn't try to grow
But when the conditions are right
She will blossom
And the flower is trusting this process.
So relax ... and stay in contact
With your own inner reality *- Leonard Jacobson*

Gift

Give yourself the gift of your attention.
Catch the whirlwind rush
and gently, calmly, set it aside.
Sit still and watch its flurries
echo inside you.

Stick with the stillness
and find calm in your breath.

And as the flurries dissipate,
find the knot inside
whose tight curling, tense clinging,
is at the centre of it all.

And sit and still sit
and know that, in time,
the knot will unfurl, release,
and there will be space again.

And space becomes your gift,
encircles everything,
slows the pace,
lets the light in. *- Rachel Holstead*

He who becomes gentle,
Has conquered himself.
A grateful sigh of liberation arises.
You love others
Because you have learnt to love yourself.
Not as you would want to be
But just as you are. *- Karel Staes*

May the flowers of compassion and wisdom bloom.
In the fertile soil of kindness.
Tended and watered
with the freshness of joy.
In the cool shade of equanimity *- Longchenpa*

Keep knocking ...

The joy that lives within you
Will eventually open a window
To see who is at the door *- Rumi*

May I live this day
Compassionate of heart
Clear in word
Gracious in awareness
Courageous in thought
Generous in love. *- John 'O Donohue*

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt – blessed illusion! –
there was a beehive in my heart.
And the golden bees
were making white wax
and sweet honey
from my old bitterness. *- Antonia Machado*

Listen with the ears of tolerance.
See through the eyes of compassion.
Speak the language of love. *- Rumi*

Even after all this time
the sun never says to the earth,
“You owe Me.”
Look what happens
with a love like that.
It lights the whole sky. *- Hafiz*

You carry all the ingredients
To turn your existence into joy,
Mix them, mix them! *- Hafiz*

How did the rose
ever open its heart
and give to this world
all its beauty?
It felt the encouragement
of light
against its being.
Otherwise,
we all remain
too frightened. *- Hafiz*

Stop en sta
Stop en sta
op je eigen stuk grond
– waar je voeten zijn.

Sta daar echt,
helemaal – lichaam en geest.

Vanaf deze plaats
komt al je wijsheid,
komt elk antwoord
dat je mogelijk
op dit moment
kunt weten

En wanneer je leed ziet,
blijf kalm en weet
dat je een ander niet kunt maken.

Wees met de grond getuige
van dat andere lichaam
met al zijn gevonden
en verborgen wijsheid.

En als je denkt
‘Ik wil je lijden wegnemen’
sta alleen maar.

En als je denkt
‘Ik wil je pijn wegnemen’
sta alleen maar.

En als je denkt
‘Ik kan hier niet zomaar staan,
ik moet iets doen’
sta alleen maar.

En als je echt iets moet doen,
herinner je dan liefde
en adem haar
en wees haar.

En laat de hardheid van je ziel
zacht worden en wegsmelten
zodat de grens
tussen mij en jou
niet langer bestaat

en we zowel liefde zijn
als getuige van liefde,
grond en staande voeten,
vraag en antwoord. *- Rachel Holstead*

Frontiers

On those difficult days,
when a frontier looms,
decisions seem called for
and the armies of your mind muster
and set off on a headlong gallop
towards the horizon,
they make so much noise
that the heart's soft voice
is drowned out,
and kick up so much dust
that compassion's anchor loses
purchase.

The faster the armies gallop,
the farther away the horizon seems,
the bumpier the path
and the cloudier the dusty air
and we trip over innocent rocks
and trample innocent plants
and startle quietly grazing flocks,
causing them to scatter
and become embroiled in our turmoil.

But if we can persuade the horde
to slow a little
– that stopping a while will help
rather than hinder –
perhaps we can sit by the side of the track
and let the dust settle
and the noise die away.

And somehow, we find ourselves
where we need to be
– which is here –
and we can set anchor again.
And when, out of the silence,
the soft voice of our heart speaks,
it has all the answers we need.

Letting go

To let go doesn't mean to stop caring:
it means I can't do it for someone else.
To let go is not to cut myself off;
it is the realization that I can't control another.
To let go is not to enable,
but to allow learning from natural consequences.

To let go is to admit powerlessness,
which means the outcome is not in my hands.
To let go is not to try to change or blame another;
I can only change myself.
To let go is not to care for,
but to care about.

To let go is not to fix,
but to be supportive.
To let go is not to judge,
but to allow another to be a human being.

To let go is not to be in the middle arranging outcomes,
but to allow others to effect their own outcomes.

To let go is not to be protective;
it is to permit another to face reality.
To let go is not to deny, but to accept.
To let go is not to nag, scold, or argue,
but to search out my own shortcomings
and to correct them .

To let go is not to adjust everything to my desires,
but to take each day as it comes
and to cherish the moment.
To let go is not to criticize and regulate anyone,
but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To let go is not to regret the past,
but to grow and live for the future.
To let go is to fear less
and love more.

- Nelson Mandela

Beannacht / Blessing

On the day when
the weight deadens
on your shoulders
and you stumble,
may the clay dance
to balance you.

And when your eyes
freeze behind
the grey window
and the ghost of loss
gets in to you,
may a flock of colours,
indigo, red, green,
and azure blue
come to awaken in you
a meadow of delight.

When the canvas frays
in the currach of thought
and a stain of ocean
blackens beneath you,
may there come across the waters
a path of yellow moonlight
to bring you safely home.

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,
may the clarity of light be yours,
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow
wind work these words
of love around you,
an invisible cloak
to mind your life.