

A Poetic Reflection on Client Growth and Healing

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FALLING & FINALLY

I did not ask this time.
I did not wish or push or pray.
I did not want or hope or long for.
I did not feel sorry for my cracked and crippled heart.
I did not pick up the wine to fill my cup,
Or another to fill my time.
Instead I walked up behind me, softly tapped my shoulder, and introduced myself.
I took my own hand, and a new heart started Beating. Beating.
Stronger. Faster. Pulsing. Racing.
I sat with myself in the dark.
I sat with my tears hot and soundless.
My insides screaming out to no one who could hear them.
I sat with myself, inside of myself.
Then taking the deepest darkest breath my lungs would let me,
I heavily exhaled and closed my eyes,
Bracing myself,
Waiting for the dam to burst.
But instead She sent me a universe,
She sent me a waterfall.
And as the cold and clean washed over my tired bones and bloodshot eyes,
I stepped out of old skin and into the twilight.
My very first steps took me back to the shoreline,
And with hands open and shaking I greeted myself,
And met the Moon again for the very first time.
She was quiet and bright, shining light so pure,
As it peeled away layers that no longer serve.
And I finally found permission there,
To fall in love with myself.
Open and alone,
Under far away stars,
The waves gently lapping over my planted, unbalanced feet.
This is the love I'd been missing.
The love I couldn't see with my blinded eyes.
The love that had always been there.
A love waiting patiently in the depths of soft stillness,
Buried under a desert of distraction and disappointment,
Beneath the shade of a tree always Almost bursting with blossoms.

Love.
She was waiting there.
She was always waiting there.
Waiting just for me.

Conclusion

As a university crisis counselor and survivor advocate, I am privileged to work with students, faculty, staff, and their loved ones who have been impacted by sexual or relationship violence. I am given permission from my clients each and every day to engage in this work with them and to bear witness to a small part of their healing journeys. I utilize self-reflection daily to assist me in processing—and with the overall experience of—being a helping professional in the field of trauma and interpersonal violence. Poetry is my creative outlet, my way to express myself and “move things through” so I can continue to approach this work with competence, compassion, and presence of mind/body/spirit. This poem was written after reflecting on my observations during trauma work over the last several years because I wanted to acknowledge and honor the raw, unbelievably resilient nature of survivors.

I hope this poem can resonate with the reader in some space. It is a reflection and threading together of countless stories, powerful moments of moving forward, and a glimpse into the bits and pieces of unique healing journeys that my clients have so bravely decided to share with me. I am grateful for the opportunity to share this piece with fellow professionals and practitioners.

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