



Dear Editor:

I have enjoyed your journal from its inception and the opportunity it allows us to write from the heart and the soul—a place we must begin if we are to be there for our clients and students. Taking stock of one's life and work is often a painful process although it is a prerequisite for personal and professional growth. As I read the experiences of others in this journal, I take strength from the knowledge that I am not alone in seeking to understand and utilize my innermost conversations to benefit those with whom I work. Thank you for allowing a forum where we can share our humanness as well as our humanity. I offer the following poem as an example of a personal reflection. Thank you.

UNTIL

I never realized how sad my life was
until I could not cry for the woman who slept on the
concrete and washed her face with the tears of a thousand losses—

until I could not touch the hand of another who was ravaged by the
personification of all he was told was sinful
until the old woman I passed in the corridor became the face of my
night time shadows and I could no longer run away
for my body could not catch the fleeing spirit.

when the unisons of rage against the infamies of tyrants no longer
evoke a whisper
when a child asks Why? and I answer—because...
when the stench of poverty is not strong enough to counteract the
hollowness of a life lived in abstinence.

I cry now for I am old and I have missed the essence and settled
For the dregs.

I have ignored the entreaties and cultivated the merciless.
And I am sad because I never knew
Until now.

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SEARCHING FOR: Letters to the Editor

As for most other editors, relief accompanies putting the journal to press. This is our fourth year of publication, and perhaps because of the currency and the meaningfulness of forgiveness, as exemplified by a campus wide event on forgiveness supported by the University, we have sprouted peacock feathers for our prescience. Yet there is unease, even within the joy of what we are doing. "Forgiveness," perhaps the most emblematic, has led us to think more about our purpose. We know *Reflections* has influenced other journals, and there appears to be an increase in biographies, oral histories, and autobiographies in the literature.

A significant purpose of the journal is to expand the discourse around the practice themes expressed in the journal's narratives, and autobiographies. We receive many commentaries about how much you like the journal—but as much as we like the praise, we encourage you to send us mail about your opinions of the practice described and explained in the narratives. For example, in the set of articles (narrative and commentaries) on "Ethics" [*Reflections* Vol. 2, No. 3]—the situation where Annie Houston allows dental dams (contraband in the prison) to be passed in her counseling room—we published several letters reflecting the many sides of the issue.

There are other practice controversies expressed by the various authors in the journal, that could benefit by your opinion. If you disagree/agree, take issue, or have something different to add, send a letter to the editor. Many narrative practice perspectives certainly warrant some conflict or, as my favorite philosopher suggests, initiate intellectual doubt. One of our purposes is to create a discourse within the helping professions. Participate—let us heat up the profession's discourse around its practice. In this current issue there are many themes that evoke professional/personal disagreement; there are many differences of opinion. What's yours? SLA



Corrections: In the last issue [*REFLECTIONS* Vol. 4, No. 3; Summer 1998], we neglected to note Art Nori for his "Talking Circle" which appeared on page 26. We also misspelled the name of contributing artist Maricris Mangohig on the table of contents page.

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