

# **The Compassionate Journey:**

Poetry, Parables and Pictures\*

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\*Pictures are not included within the Internet version due to the long download times. The pictures are expected to be available in the hard cover edition and, in the future, as separate downloads.

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## Introduction

This book is meant to serve as a complement to other works by this author on the compassion space and all its variants. It is offered as a workbook, as a starting point for reflection on the processes of facilitating the compassion space. It is a book that should be discussed with others, with practitioners, and contemplated upon in meditation.

Within this document are short poems grouped under themes. In addition there are parables, stories with a message -- and pictures interspersed throughout (pictures not available on the Internet version). These stories, poems, and pictures are meant to work together, as different ways of speaking about similar themes important to the healing journey. These messages are to be interpreted, and this process of interpretation to be explored, as part of each person's understanding of the compassion space.

It is proposed that people let themselves experience reactions to the poetry, parables, and pictures. Then make note of the reactions. The reactions can then be presented to a group, a practitioner, or a peer who knows the material within the helping relationship documents. Discussion of the reactions should be framed against the material included within the healing relationship documents. It is proposed that such a reflective process will help readers expand their awareness of well being. The use of the masculine orientation in the stories should be interpreted as neutral gender.

**Readers with any questions, comments, or constructive feedback, can return to the website to submit feedback: [www.CompassionSpace.com](http://www.CompassionSpace.com)**

## **The Search for Reality**

A man started his self-seeking journey from his house. He considered himself a helping and kind person. He helped others from a place of knowing what it meant to help others and people were grateful to him. It was a comfortable place he called home. From its five windows he would view the world. People would come to these windows. He would talk to them and listen. He would help them and they left the windows feeling better about their lives. This brought a smile to the helper. He thought how wonderful his life because people could be helped through his efforts.

The word spread among the people that there were good feelings to be found at the helper's house. More people visited the windows and more people felt good after being with the helper. Some people brought gifts, some awards, and some immense praise. The helper filled his house with these reminders of his life and felt that this surely was the way people should live. The helper then began to describe a set of seven rules people could follow to feel good and eventually become helpers themselves. He shared this 7-rule program with others, and they took the program to other homes and found it useful. The helper's notoriety spread, as did the application of the 7-rule program by others. The helper thought, "How glorious is my life, how fortunate I am to share my home and this 7-rule program with others."

Then one day an old man walked up to one of the five windows and said, “Did you know that there is a hole in the roof of your house?” The helper exclaimed, “That’s impossible! I have lived within this house nearly all my life. I do not see a hole in the roof.” The old man left without saying anything else.

The helper tried to forget what the old man had said but he could not. As time passed the helper’s curiosity began to nag at him. He kept looking at the ceiling checking for some indication of what the old man had said. But he saw nothing. He stuck his head out one window looking for any evidence. He looked out all five windows and saw nothing. He felt all the walls, checked all the corners, and even talked to his closest friends and still he found no evidence to support what the old man had said. Having checked all aspects of his world and finding no proof of what the old man said, the helper discounted it and returned to viewing life, and helping others, from the five windows in his house. He said to himself, “This is my home and it is also pleasing to others to visit here. This is good and I know this to be true”.

The helper settled into his housebound life of window visions sharing his 7-rule program with others. He began to add to the program. He had learned how to categorize all the experiences of his life, including the meetings with all his window visitors. This was a very complex project that took many years to complete. Sharing this way of window-viewing with other home dwellers expanded the helper’s fame and he received more accolades for this work. The window visitors would say, “What a brilliant man” and “He has helped me more than anyone I have ever met”. The helper heard these words hundreds of times and he knew them to be true. How wonderful was his life.

One day the old man came for a second window visit, but the helper did not recognize him from before. The helper and the old man talked for hours. The helper was so excited to talk with another who knew of his 7-rule program, the categorical nature of things, and the relationship between these concepts and helping others. The helper was moved by the old man's depth of understanding. Never had he met such a perceptive person. Upon leaving, the old man said, "Did you know that you have a hole in your roof?"

The helper was almost in a state of shock after hearing this. He knew this old man to be wise so it was almost impossible for him to discredit his viewpoint as a misperception. But how was he to resolve the problem? He still did not see the hole in the roof. In addition there was no place to even put the idea of a roof hole within the 7-rule program or the categories of concepts he had developed because it would have meant that there was something missing in the home he had built. And even worse, it was something he had failed to recognize. He was facing a serious problem. Either he had to say that his perception of old man's wisdom was inaccurate and the old man was lying, or he had to accept the possibility that a roof hole existed and there was something wrong with his perception. In accepting the idea that a roof hole existed, he had to accept the idea that he could not see it from where he was. This meant he had to accept the idea that **he had to travel to somewhere else** in order to see the roof hole. This was an idea so revolutionary that it shattered his comfortable window-viewed life into shards of anxiety cutting his soul with every touch.

Fear filled every fiber of his being. He no longer felt sure of himself, his life, his view of truth, or the help he was offering others. He refused to see others. He paced the floor of his home, hour after hour, day after day, questioning his own usefulness, and his purpose in being. He spent hundreds of hours trying to figure out how to travel, how to begin the journey, how to find out if there was a hole in his roof. He tried to fit out the windows but they were all too small. He tried to open the doors but they were all locked tightly and he had no keys. He pushed upon the walls but they did not budge. For the first time he felt trapped within his own house -- a house he had built with his own hands and had believed was a place of solace for others. Trapped, nowhere to move, he fell to the floor and in deep remorse was flooded with tears. He was broken and deeply humble.

Lying on the floor in the middle of this pain and looking up at the ceiling he saw in the darkest corner a small light not much bigger than a single distant flickering star. "What is that? I never saw that before!" he said. Excitement grabbed him as he ran for a chair and stood on it to get a better look. As he focused his attention upon the light and moved closer it became larger and he could see it was a hole -- a hole in his roof! He was so excited. Elation and euphoria filled his entire being.

He threw back the shades, opened the windows and called to his friends. He told everyone what had happened but there was no one who could understand why he was so elated. Some people said that he was suffering from some form of delusion. But the helper kept exclaiming that this was an important discovery and perhaps more important than all the work he had done before. His enthusiasm was so high

that he spoke of this new vision to everyone. But people wanted the 7-rule program. They did not want to hear some gibberish about a hole in the roof..

As time passed, the number of visitors decreased. His fame dropped to almost nothing. Very few people came for the window visits. He was again faced with another choice. He could return to talking about life the way he had before, with window visits discussing the 7-rules, and it would be likely life would return as it was. His other choice was he could continue being true to his new vision and face the loneliness. He chose his new vision.

At times the loneliness was bearable and at other times the helper felt trapped. There were time when he thought he saw that flickering star but there were also many times when there was just darkness. Occasionally he would look into the dark corners of his ceiling and see the flickering light and try to go toward it, but it would just disappear. Sometimes it would be annoying and he wished it were not there. He would get angry and try to ignore it. Other times it was comforting, almost like a friend calling him.

The helper struggled for years with these opposing feelings. Then he eventually let go of the struggle and resigned himself to being true to his feelings about the flickering light. Then, almost magically, he heard something coming from the tiny roof hole. This time he put a box on top of the chair so he could be closer to the roof hole. He climbed up and as he did he could hear birds singing and the voices of others. He also could see that as he got closer to the hole he noticed it was clearly big enough for him to climb through. He found this to be quite amazing.

How could such a thing have remained hidden in the darkness of his home for so long? He climbed out the hole and found himself sitting on the roof of his house. The view was beyond description.

This was the beginning of his journey

He was now **the traveler**.

Split into fragments and cast into the eternal darkness  
We send our voices of reality in order  
To begin to see

## Reality

If when and why become first, if common sense fades  
Then we lose knowledge of being  
And we become lost

A man looking right is blind to that on the left  
But left still represents reality  
Even when rejected

Absence of proof is not proof of absence  
Logic alone is cold, waiting for fact  
Death in the darkness

The totality of our universe has no definition  
Nor understanding, nor proof  
But it can be known

Sitting in a room can define reality  
A window's vision believed truth  
Lost in the partial order

An old broken sofa can be comfortable  
Falling through holes to avoid change  
Sofa survival

Facts are friendly, truth revealed is reality  
But walls block the beauty  
And darkness prevails

And how shall one man see the truth of his life  
It is in the radiance of a sunrise  
Or a single dewdrop

To see is to open the mind to many views  
Not getting lost in the conflict  
Truth battles dogma

## **Changing**

Actions through time place the bricks in the wall.  
Using the same we can remove them  
Brick by brick by brick

Move too rapidly, too slowly, and the vision's gone  
Too comfortable and it's gone  
Be without doing

A shovel and a seed know a potential yield  
Persistent patient hand touching nature  
Bringing us to harvest

A new awareness requires death to give birth  
Metamorphosis pierces through  
Harmony in unity