

Forget Everything You Know

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Love is the energy of the whole person. Love is the power that creates wholeness and bonds the different parts of the human being together.

The care we give has to be love, a love that comes from the center of our own being and in that sense transcends ourselves. It is never something we are in control of . . . nor is it the same as the professional smile or the professional communications techniques that are perhaps sometimes useful and necessary. [. . .] Love is a concern; a compassion that springs naturally, spontaneously, from our own center, from the depth of our own being.

[. . .] There is always a danger of knowing so much, of observing each [individual or group] so objectively, that you look for how well they obey the textbook. Perhaps you have to know your textbook if you are to do a good job, but as Jung said about his work in therapy: know your facts and theories well, but when you touch the mystery of a living person you should forget it all. Forget everything you know.

After meditation: “Easy Pickings” by Kim Stafford in SINGER COME FROM AFAR (Pasadena: Red Hen Press, 2021), p. 124.

Easy Pickings

It’s easy to laugh in the blueberry field,
staccato plink and plunk as berries plummet
into the pail, and you hear children banter
in a dozen languages among the green rows.

It’s easy to forgive there, too—
viewing old betrayals sweetly diminished
by the honeyed crush of berries
on your tongue.

It’s even possible to imagine peace
between people who hated each other
before their children met between these rows
and asked one another, “Shall we pick together?”

Come pick with me, my enemy, my angry self,
come, split couple bickering over money,
come to the blueberry field, Palestine and Israel,
come bow and squint under the sun-splashed leaves,
come peer into these dark shadows for blue.

