

Being Imperfect Together – 03-05-15

Messages from Snow-Covered Trees

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The tree outside my window is laden with a thick, white blanket of snow. Her branches hold an abundance of silence that calls me into stillness, so I sit and stare into her welcoming softness. I awakened too early on this Sunday morning but I'm grateful for these moments to sit and reflect.

Beyond my tree is a grove of trees whose branches mingle and merge into one mass of snow-covered treeness, no matter that they are oak and locust and maple and pine. Deep beneath the cold, hard earth, their roots likewise intersect with one another. They are all connected in a way that creates support and shares nourishment, while respecting differences.

These thoughts lead me to my family, where each of us is so different, and yet, so connected.

Two days ago, while visiting my sister, I learned of two family members who are at odds and not speaking to each other. Their disagreement, over an issue that has been resolved, is now about hurt, covered by anger that demands distance. Because I love these two individuals, it pains me to watch them ignore each other in a way that nurtures their dis-connection.

I want to fix this and I know what they need to do to re-connect. I can visualize them sitting down together, willing to be vulnerable, talking about what happened, acknowledging their hurt, and saying what they need from each other. Oh, that it were so simple.

I know this is not mine to fix. There are a few things I can do and not do. First, I need to refrain from judging. After all, this can become an experience of learning, of forgiveness, even transformation, for them~~and for me. I will remember that there are two different perspectives clashing, each coming from a different history and each having a different communication skill set. One has an openness to share; the other clams up when feeling hurt because of longstanding un-healed wounds.

What I can do is look at each of them with the same love and understanding, even though I feel like sitting them both down at the table and locking them in the kitchen until they work it out.

When I prepare to leave, I hug each of them with the same acceptance and, secretly pray that they will eventually miss their connection with each other enough, to venture into the process of forgiveness.

Until then, I'll hold my vision of their hearts softening and melting, the way the snow outside my window is beginning to respond to the sun's rays.

Helen Gennari is a retired Licensed Clinical Social Worker/Psychotherapist who leads discussion groups with seniors at the Shepherd Center, does workshops at Woman's Place, is a

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Her passion~~helping people connect in ways that make a difference.*

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