

Prelude

When I was thirty-one, I came out of a depression that I had been in since I was five. The very air seemed different; the world expanded and became more intimate at the same time. Life felt new, was new. Then I grew depressed again as I mourned all that had been absent from my life. But I decided I would experience life as fully as God intended, no matter how much pain, how much unraveling was necessary to be able to do that. A year later I wrote the following poem:

And I Shall Dance this Way Again

I have walked this way before,
but then the sun was hidden
the earth was frozen
the air was stiff and dead.

I walked enclosed in winter
through which I had not chosen to travel
into which I had been thrown
unclothed, broken, five-years-old, alone.

A winter of years, not days,
A winter of years to teach distrust,
of loss to teach emptiness,
of terror to teach silence.

A winter peopled with icicles of anger
snowdrifts of pain engulfing,
survived, not felt.

The desire to destroy that which had hurt so much
refused entry to my heart
but controlling in a frozen fight.

But not quite.
At the core of my heart a spark of love

responded to a voice at the core of my soul
a voice I held onto in faith and believed
even when I did not believe in myself.

The voice I held to spoke of other things
I listened-
I followed-
hesitating, frightened, but accepting the help I was shown,
help readily given which slowly transformed my life.

At thirty-one I awoke one day
hearing a song so new I cried with joy-
the song of life that we were born to hear-
that we were born to sing.

I have walked this way before, but-
not with so light a step upon an earth
breathing with rain-washed life,
not with the sun warm upon
my back and shining in my heart.

And I shall walk, no-run, no- dance this way again.
For I have let people love and heal and touch me-
For I have learned to love and touch and grow.
And if the sun does not then shine,
No Matter

For I will have it glowing within me
singing and healing and growing in joy.

As you may have guessed, I had a really nasty
childhood. Part of me was embraced by God's love when I
was five and stayed connected to that experience ever since;
another part experienced great abuse and hid.

For quite some time, I have worked to unite the two parts, as the promise of God's love has become more real to all of me and has vanquished the fear and anger bequeathed to me by my childhood. This book is a gift for anyone who may be afraid, filled with writings I have done to express my journey of healing. It is my way of saying thanks to God – and to those people God placed in my path to remind me that people also know how to love. Written at different times as my first attempt at a book was in 1989, they show the opening up of my life as the darkness that I once lived in withdrew. I pray that they chase away some of the darkness that inhabits your life

The presence of God is singing in my heart this day. That presence of God has asked me to share my stories with you, and I do so. I share my stories of my life and my stories of fiction that hold more truth in a different way. I share my meditations that lead towards light and away from fear. I share my poetry and my prose poems, all of which underline the confidence I have in the presence of God's love in the substance of my life.