

Weekly Meditation by Rev. Teri Lubbers

Unrehearsed Living

In real and tender ways, unrehearsed living means that we dare to let whatever floats or sinks or rises find its way to touch us, without pricking it with explanation, without dousing its pain. It means that we dare to make a cup of what we don't know and let the heart spill it. That, when spent and unsure, I can ask to be held and not regroup. Then, all this softness, all this yearning that makes the heart open like the throat of a baby bird, will deliver us into meaning.
~Mark Nepo, "The Exquisite Risk: Daring to Live an Authentic Life."

As I watch my father recover from his knee surgery, I see first-hand that the painful thing that he wants to avoid is the very thing he needs to do. Waiting for it to stop hurting will not make it better. The most painful thing right now – exercising his new knee – is the only thing that will eventually deliver him to a new mobility, a freedom he hasn't known for years. The physical therapist told him yesterday: "bend it until it is uncomfortable and then hold for 10 seconds...now bend it further and hold...one more time, bend and hold." No quick bending here, no rushing past the pain into a position that's more comfortable. The only way is through.

This idea of "unrehearsed" living is a powerful one, but it makes me a little nervous. I am not sure how much capacity I have for unrehearsed living, how much patience for letting whatever comes come, how much willingness for releasing whatever must go. But I know how it feels to be a hungry baby bird. Hungry for food, hungry for warmth, hungry for hope, hungry for meaning. Yearnings of the heart are the most direct voice of Spirit I have ever heard. It is an act of deep faith to trust life to unfold without rushing to control, or explain, or maneuver. We honor life by being fully present...bend and hold.

Prayer: Beloved, satisfy the yearning of my heart with your love, the uncertainties of my life with your presence. Then I will sing you as no one ever has. Amen.