

Healing Meditations

MP 34

3-31-12

In the last issue of Mindfulness Bell (prisoners gratefully receive this magazine free), the theme was healing past hurts. Very appropriate for any prisoner (in or outside the prison walls). One of the practices asks us to picture ourselves as a one year old and feel what it is like at that age (sights, sounds, feelings, smells, touch). Then subsequent meditations move up year by year. The first year was quite potent for me.

I imagined myself at about 1 and half years old (after I have begun pulling myself up but not walking all that much). I am in my room, in a crib standing at the edge looking around. It is dark, well not totally dark. The early evening light bathes the room. I since that I have called out complaining about being left in the room alone. I see an empty rocking chair.

Funny. I don't remember being in the rocking chair with my mom. I don't remember seeing my mom sitting in my room looking at me. I am sure I had to be, but I don't have an image or physical memory.

(All through childhood I rolled back and forth in the crib to settle myself down for sleep. I will continue to rock...to this day...much less violently, but still rock. Not to get to sleep, but as I am sitting concentrating on something I will find myself gently swaying.)

I look at the empty rocking chair.

What do I feel? I need the holding, the touch. I need to be touched by hand, arm, and eye.

Rocking chairs are one of the regular features in my childhood memories. I remember the porch swing at my grandma's. We would spend lots of time just rocking on the porch. I will have one in my first house. My grandma had a rocking lazy boy too we loved to sit in watching TV. I remember the sight of a room full of rocking chairs at the Highlander Center's main room. I loved the image. I brought it to a mural several years later. At an activists workshop, we created a mural with images of cultural strength. My contribution was a pair of rocking chairs. They were chosen to center the entire mural by the artist. A rocking chair sat on my back deck the morning I went to prison.

I look at the empty rocking chair.

I made the mistake of how I voiced the need for touch to someone. It came out before I could censure it. After sex, I said to my partner something like what I desired was touch with someone (implying touch from anyone not necessarily only her). But the meaning was from somewhere deep. It was an old wound rising to the surface. It was from my 1 year old self. Please hold me. Please see me.

So the rest of the meditation is to respond to your hurt at that age. So I see me -man Allan- opening the door. Going to the crib and picking the boy Allan up and going over to the rocking chair. The man sits down and places the boy on his lap; the boy's head rests on the man's chest; arms around the boy's shoulders. Rocking. Holding. Feeling safe and secure in the man's arms. The tears are rolling down the man's cheeks as he rocks. I can't speak. I can only hold and rock. But that is enough. The boy falls asleep. The man lays the boy in the crib and sits to watch the him sleep. The boy opens his eye, sees the man in the chair and closes his eye again. The boy falls into a deep sleep. The man listens to the contented breathing.

That is what I needed. Right then. Right now.

I come out of the meditation, wiping the tears from my eyes. Yes I needed that. Right then, right now.

mindful prisoner
allan lummus
betweenthebars.org