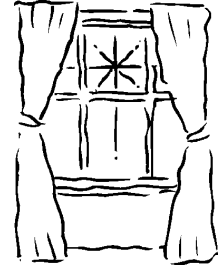


Looking Out My Window, May 20, 2022



A statement by James Hillman, Jungian psychologist, keeps rattling around in my noggin, but I can't document it or confirm it without my library available, so the best I can do is paraphrase. Hillman observes that illness or crisis can initiate us into another realm of experience and gift us with the capacity to be present to others suffering similarly that we otherwise would lack.

My journey has involved almost no illness. Other than athletic injuries (broken leg, torn ACL, and rotator cuff surgery), my brushes with pain and suffering have been almost totally in the lives of others.

Now, however, prostate cancer and the diagnosis and treatment process have been a rite of passage, an initiation into another realm of experience. If a sense of vulnerability ever was lacking, that can no longer be said. The daily trek to Fox Chase and the daily joining of others in the waiting room and the interactions with the health care team—every aspect of this has ushered me into a new realm and established new connections.

How can I respond creatively? I find myself wanting to slow down, be very self aware, and be very present to others I encounter. It's not a matter of being self-absorbed with illness. That would make all of this about me in a dramatic way. Rather, it's about wanting to be real about my illness and being fully in the moment in ways that point me toward healing and that connect me with other sufferers.

You have been very present and caring with your loving comments in person, your phone calls, notes, and texts. Having eased through life without serious illness, receiving the care of the faith community has been a new experience. It feels like part of the initiation process, better understanding the aloneness and uncertainty of illness and the power of the love of the community to sustain you through the journey.

Peace,

David + **Interim Rector**