

The Choice

So much depends upon whether we see everything that we meet with as an opportunity for compassion or with hopelessness, isolation, and stagnation. We can listen and receive with the heart and engage and connect to another's story; or we can see the experience as reactive and hopeless, and observe and manipulate the dialogue toward our own "right" position.

How we move through this life depends on whether we view everything we meet as self-contained, or as containing life's mysteries. We can see a stone as merely an object in our way, or as having its own story that we can notice and compassionately think about how to hold the stone's experience.

We are drawn into a limited way of living that is often governed by a need for problem-solving: *this fits here, this does not, this will help me get what I want, this is the only way, this is in my way*. While being so directive may shorten your to-do list, it does not open you up to the mystery. With no sense of how things are connected, we may move along without ever touching the passion of faith in the presence of mystery. We cannot hold the stone with enough presence and attention to realize its journey over the centuries, how it wasn't always solid. We are to listen deeply, beyond our own experience to empathize with another as an opportunity to grow.