



# LUMUNOS

FAITH & LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY

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## *Relationship Paradoxes: Joy and Sadness*

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Doug Wysocky-Johnson

*"We've been through births, deaths, estrangements, confusions, and just about everything life can deal out, but have maintained our friendship through it all. Part of our bond is having had fuzzy haired bookworm childhoods. Also she is one of the few people I know who can tolerate a lot of silence and stillness; they are central to her spirituality, as is the joy she finds in music and dance. She loves God in the guise of kindness and nature, although she calls God "Howard," as in "our Father who art in heaven, Howard be thy name...." (Ann Lamott, Traveling Mercies)*

I love the writing of Ann Lamott, in part because she makes me laugh. A good laugh is worth a lot to me these days, but that's only part of the story. Lamott is able to be funny while simultaneously dealing with very real and often painful issues. She writes honestly about the hardest of issues—the death of friends, addiction, the challenges of parenting and aging, broken relationships, and spiritual desolation. She addresses these issues head on, and somehow, I still end up laughing. For me Lamott's writing is a concrete expression of a deeper truth—that pain and play both are a part of our life. More on that in a moment.

### Our Theme This Year

In 2020, Lumunos is focusing on relationships. That much is hardly newsworthy. We have been doing that since 1927 when Sam Shoemaker gathered spiritual seekers hungry for honest relationships. Since then, the need to strengthen the relational fabric of our society has only grown. Now in 2020 we are more starved than ever for authentic, vulnerable, real connection with each other.

# Finding Joy, Bearing Pain

Which leads back to our theme for the year. We are focusing not only on relationships, but also about the contradictions and paradoxes within relationships. According to Oxford, a contradiction is a statement containing elements logically at variance with one another. A paradox is a statement which seems self-contradictory, but on investigation may prove to be essentially true. Relationships are full of paradox and contradiction. For instance, relationships require both self-care **and** self-sacrifice; listening well to the other **and** speaking as truthfully as we can about our thoughts and feelings; engaging one another in conflict **and** at other times letting it go. We think there is much to learn in these paradoxes.

### Joy and Pain

In this issue of the newsletter we explore the paradox of joy and pain. Relationships ask that we be with one another in pain, to bear one another's burdens. At the same time, a relationship without joy or play becomes stiff and lifeless. And not much fun.

Speaking now out of my own tradition as a Christian, I notice that we speak often of being with each other in hard times. (Whether we actually do that is another story). We talk less often about being playful or joyful in relationships. You have to look hard to find anything that resembles playfulness in our sacred texts, but it is there if you search for it.

For instance, I love the fact that Jesus spent much of his time after the resurrection playing games with his best friends. Disguising himself as a gardener, acting like he had no idea what just happened in Jerusalem, ("Wait, you said that they just crucified who?"), and pulling off slight of hand at every turn. Every time he shows up, he pulls out the whoopee cushion in one way or another. One of the things Jesus is doing in these resurrection appearances is reconnecting with his friends and rebuilding relationships that recently had been torn. Play and laughter can be healing in that way. And what better way to say that Love is more powerful than evil? As Kristen Stehndahl, wrote, "Joy is closer to God than seriousness. Why? Because when I am serious, I tend to be self-centered, but when I am joyful I tend to forget myself."

### Turning Play Into Work

The further into the adventure of aging I go, the more serious I seem to become. I do not see this as a positive development. So, it would be just like me to turn the invitation to be more playful into something serious, like a project or something for the 'To Do' list. If you recognize this in yourself as well, here is an invitation—don't work hard at this. In fact, don't work at it at all. Rather than working at being more playful, start by simply paying attention. Look around you and see where joy and playfulness are already happening.

I gave this a try the other day while on a long layover in the Houston airport. Airports are generally not a place of joy or play for me, but it was there once I began looking for it. I saw the adult willing to wear silly cartoon pants in public—clearly, he wasn't taking himself too seriously. I saw the sisters playing hide and seek at Gate 34. Then came the shuttle driver using his own voice for a horn and clearly enjoying it. I got so caught up in it I couldn't help myself, engaging the United Airlines employee wearing the Green Bay Packers lanyard in some good-natured banter about the Bears and the Packers. In a small but not insignificant way, that kind of play creates connection and strengthens relationships. It is true with those closest to us, as well as brief encounters at the airport.

### In Closing

In the following pages you will find explorations into the paradox of joy and pain in relationship. Some of our voices draw from the Christian tradition that form Lumunos' taproot. But you will hear other voices as well, from other religious expressions, or no tradition at all. That is on purpose, as we seek to learn and make room for stories other than our own.

Later in the year we will address other relationship paradoxes. I hope you will join us in this conversation—on a LumZoom call, a retreat, or online at our website or Facebook page. Share a painful story or a good joke, since both are a part of our relationships.

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# My Relationship with Laughter

By Matthew Perry

*Matthew Perry and wife, Betsey Finn, quit their jobs, sold their home, packed two bags each, and started traveling around the world in July of 2019. They've spent time in many countries, including Portugal, South Africa, Vietnam, New Zealand, Fiji, Australia, Singapore, and Borneo. Betsey's sister, father, and his partner visited them in January while they were staying in Fiji. In addition to the fun and adventure of deep-sea diving and tasting the local euphoric drink known as kava, the crew encountered a few mishaps (some serious), including sweltering heat, hurricanes, monster bug bites, sporadic electricity, and nasty MRSA infections for Matt and Betsey. But they managed to laugh through it all. Though they are healthy and happy, Betsey and Matthew are currently waylaid in Ireland as the globe faces the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Sadness and joy are often seen as opposite emotions, as with the smiling and frowning emojis we all have on our phones. As we know, though, the feelings sometimes overlap, like at a high school graduation or a memorial celebration of someone's well-lived life. Both emotions bring us to tears.

A third emotion can also bring us to tears: laughter. I guess the actual emotion is probably amusement, but laughter, like memories and realized dreams, is what causes the tears to flow. I remember a few movies, comedians, silly animal videos, and stories told by friends and family that have made me cry with laughter. Sometimes the laughing tears are colored with joy—videos of kittens playing—and sometimes they're tinged with sadness—a stand-up comedy routine about the dark side of human nature. The fact that all three experiences unite in tears tells us that sadness, joy, and laughter are united in some fundamental way.

I recently spent two weeks traveling with my wife Betsey and her family. We laughed a lot. We laughed when things went according to plan, we laughed when plans went haywire, we laughed when we were happy, we laughed when we were at our wits' end. We laughed at each other's contributions and foibles. If there's one thing that keeps family trips from embodying the stereotype of a miserable debacle, it's laughter.

I was married once before, and my first wife's family didn't laugh much. Their culture and their personalities were extremely serious. We got along well enough, but they didn't stay in touch after the divorce. I think when you laugh a lot with someone, you're probably more likely to want that person in your life even when circumstances change. Betsey's family is half-Irish, but I'd say their personalities are about 90% Irish. They laugh like the Irish, with healthy doses of irony, realism, truth-telling, and humility. The Irish know pain, and Betsey's family has known its share, but they keep laughing. It's incredible to be around. Betsey and I have no plans to go our separate ways for



Matthew Perry with wife, Betsey, and her sister, Maria

the rest of our lives, but if we did, I'm sure her family would keep me in their lives.

For the first 38 years or so of my life, I was more serious than I am now. The divorce started me on the path to Irishness, and meeting Betsey a year later just accelerated that trend. I grew up in New England surrounded by the Protestant work ethic in which you're always working hard toward some goal, whether it's spiritual or psychological. Having embodied that worldview, and being a socially awkward introvert, I had a hard time laughing. I laughed with my immediate family, but not much with others. I either walled myself off from or clung to them, but either way, I maintained a highly serious approach to relationships. I know now that this made maintaining those relationships difficult. I drove partners away, I exhausted friends, I had a hard time fitting in at work. I constantly judged and envied people, and it's hard to laugh with someone whom you're secretly scoffing at or jealous of.

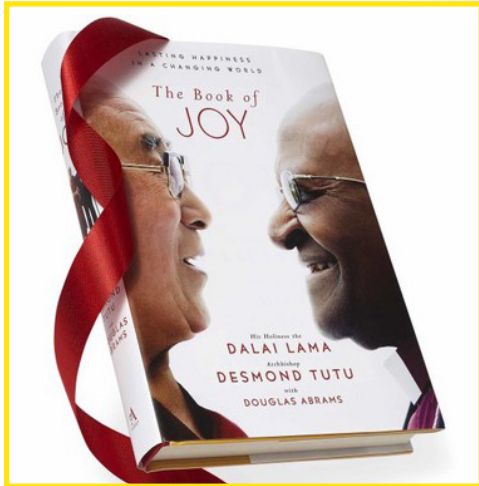
Now I know how easy it is to laugh. Well, it's only easy after learning a lifelong series of hard lessons. First, it helps to accept yourself and your own imperfections. Then, to accept others and their imperfections. At the same time, though, always strive to improve at being human, and to try through example to help others be better humans. Know that joy always eventually follows sadness. Cry when you need to but laugh even when you don't think you need to. And always be ready to laugh at yourself.

You can't avoid sadness, and you won't ever have as much joy as you wish for. The presence of sadness and joy in your life are largely a matter of luck, but laughter is a choice. Seek out circumstances where laughter is the norm, find and cherish people to laugh with, and be ready to laugh at the painful turns life takes, not just the joyful ones. I know that my relationships have strengthened and my life has felt much richer since embracing laughter. Start with a funny TV show, try being a little sillier every now and then, and notice a few more of the many ironies that are present in everyday life. Then will come a smile, a giggle, a chuckle, a full belly laugh—and maybe a tear or two to remind you just how precious it is to laugh.

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**Matthew Perry** is a teacher, tutor, writer, and birder traveling around the world with his wife, Betsey. He tries to help everyone he meets find ways to express their passions in everyday life. He is hoping to publish his first novel in the next year or two.





# The Power of Joy

By Dan Quinlan

I'll begin with the shortest book review in history. If you haven't read "*The Book of Joy*", I'd suggest getting a copy and setting aside a couple of quiet and slow afternoons to read it. You'll get to listen in on a conversation between Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama about joy, and all the mysterious paradoxes that surround it. It's a beautiful book—full of ideas and stories that made me smile, and perhaps someday will help me become wise.

Okay – that's it – done. Saying more is like asking me to touch up the Mona Lisa after a few drinks while wearing a blindfold. It's not going to go well. So, my first thought for the rest of this article was some photos of my daughter's dog doing acrobatic things—and maybe I'd also doodle a bit—but my colleagues suggested that you might not get the same pleasure out of that that I would. So, I'll try another route – a walk through some thoughts about joy from actual wise people. Off I go, whistling along on perilous cliffs, interpreting musicians, mystics and revered wise people. What could possibly go wrong?

Bruce Springsteen is a mystic. If any of the ancient mystics were still running around, I think they'd stand in line to see him. I think they'd like the storytelling – parables that hover around pain, anxiety, and the redemptive power of love. As I started writing this essay, these lines from the song *Human Touch* popped into my head:

*Oh girl that feeling of safety you prize  
Well it comes with a hard hard price  
You can't shut off the risk and pain  
Without losin' the love that remains*

I think joy is the *love that remains*—buried deep, part soul, part "true self." Best I can tell, a life really well-lived has three wildly powerful attributes tied to joy and love: 1) Joy and sadness are inextricably intertwined; 2) Joy is gratitude, and vice versa; and 3) Joy is unbreakable. Along with quotes from a few wiser than myself, here are few thoughts on each of those topics.

## Full-on joy

Happiness and sadness pop up in my relationships all the time – with family, friends, in communities, and even in my evolving relationship with myself. I can't escape these tensions (much as I'd like to). And I've sure had paradoxical emotions at the same time – like when I left home for college and then when my kids did the same. Best I can tell, full-on joy means welcoming experiences like that in peace and with open arms.

David Steindl-Rast: *Joy is the happiness that doesn't depend on what happens. We don't think of that, but there is a deep inner peace and joy in the midst of sadness. If we feel our way into it, we know that. For instance, losing a friend, a dear friend, there's a deep sadness,*

but there is also a great joy. A celebration, a joy for all the love that we received and gave. Happiness is not steady, but joy can be steady, and that's what we really want. We want the happiness that lasts.<sup>1</sup>

Brené Brown: Joy, collected over time, fuels resilience - ensuring we'll have reservoirs of emotional strength when hard things do happen.<sup>2</sup>

Mary Oliver: We shake with joy, we shake with grief.  
What a time they have, these two  
housed as they are in the same body.<sup>3</sup>

## Joy is gratitude, and vice versa

I suspect we've all had the experience where you decide you need to slow down for a second and take the time to express gratitude for an unexpected kindness. In that moment, my perspective shifts from whatever was on my mind to something bigger and intrinsically better. It's a move from being wrapped up in small thoughts about some fault, anxiety, or hurt to a place that's altogether different. Being very intentional about gratitude for an hour or a morning or a whole day gives me all the evidence I need to know the joy of gratitude.

Brené Brown: We're a nation hungry for more joy: Because we're starving from a lack of gratitude.<sup>4</sup>

David Steindl-Rast: What we experience when we are grateful is that something lifts up our hearts, that joy that is gratitude. And we are made for that. We all know from experience that moments in which this gratitude wells up in our hearts are experienced, first, as if something were filling up within us, filling with joy, really, but not yet articulate. And then it comes to a point where the heart overflows, and we sing, and we thank somebody. And if you do that, if you try practicing that at this moment, we will already be happier people, because it has an immediate feedback of joy.<sup>1</sup>

Dalai Lama: Every day, think as you wake up, 'I am fortunate to be alive, I have a precious human life. I am not going to waste it.'<sup>5</sup>

## Joy is unbreakable

The 3rd idea is the big kahuna. It sounds like pure joy is the embodiment of pure love—the foundation of a healthy and fully human relationship with ourselves, our families, our friends, our communities, and all living things. Joy becomes the fabric of who we are and what we do. A heart woven from such fabric absorbs life's pain, deforming to dissipate the negative energy but never breaking. And, if we can get there, the mystics say we'll find the place where the mysterious relationship with God (broadly defined) is fully lived now, while we're still walking around on the planet. That sounds pretty good, but of course, getting there is no walk in the park.

Dalai Lama: Sadly, many of the things that undermine our joy and happiness we create ourselves... The suffering from a natural disaster we cannot control, but the suffering from our daily disasters we can. It simply depends on the attitudes, the perspectives and the reactions we bring to situations and our relationships with other people."<sup>5</sup>

Desmond Tutu: It is the hard times, the painful times, the sadness and the grief that knit us more closely together.<sup>5</sup>

Desmond Tutu: "Discovering more joy does not, I'm sorry to say, save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily, too. Perhaps we are just more alive. Yet as we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We have hardship without becoming hard. We have heartbreak without being broken."<sup>5</sup>

David Brenner: Tears may be intermixed with joy. But whatever emerges in silence and stillness before God emerges in the place within you in which you are held within God.<sup>6</sup>

## Concluding thoughts....

I take solace in the idea that the pursuit of joy is a lifelong journey that's not easy even for the spiritual masters (or Bruce). Little by little, it means fighting like hell to hold onto hard won ground.

Dalai Lama: It does not matter whether one is a Buddhist like me, or a Christian like the Archbishop, or any other religion, or no religion at all. From the very core of our being, we simply desire joy and contentment. But so often these feelings are fleeting and hard to find, like a butterfly that lands on us and then flutters away.<sup>5</sup>

Parker Palmer: "I went to a friend at one point. And I said, 'I've been on this wonderful Quaker journey, and I've been sitting in silence, and I've learned to pray, and I have been feeling so much closer to God than I ever did when I was just clinging to doctrine. Why am I now feeling so full of death?' And she said, 'Well, I think the answer is simple: The closer you get to the light, the closer you also get to the darkness.'... I understand that to move close to God is to move close to everything that human beings have ever experienced. And that, of course, includes a lot of suffering, as well as a lot of joy."<sup>7</sup>

David Steindl-Rast: I believe that every one of us is a mystic, because we have an experience of belonging. But what we call the great mystics, they let this experience determine and shape every moment of their lives. They never forgot it. And we humans, the rest of us, tend to forget it. But if we keep it in mind, then we are really related to that great mystery, and then we can find joy in it.<sup>1</sup>

In the end—these fundamental truths—are they really things we don't know? Or, were we born with this knowledge but have forgotten it along the way? The poet William Stafford seems to have it right when he says, "The things you do not have to say make you rich. The things you know before you hear them, those are you and this is the reason you are in the world."

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<sup>1</sup> Anatomy of Gratitude, On Being podcast, December 2017

<sup>2</sup> The Fast Track to Genuine Joy, [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com), November 27, 2013

<sup>3</sup> We Shake With Joy, "Evidence Poems", Beacon Press, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> The Gifts of Imperfection, Hazelden Publishing, 2010

<sup>5</sup> The Book of Joy, Cornerstone Publishers, 2016

<sup>6</sup> Spirituality and the Awakening Self, Brazos Press, 2012

<sup>7</sup> The Soul in Depression, On Being podcast, 2018



# Being in Relationship

By Becca Perry-Hill



*Through the years, Faith at Work/Lumunos has remained vibrant in an ever-changing world because of the community of people who have been part of our work. We have been blessed by these “Lumunaries”. Lumunaries are people who embody the values of Lumunos – people who are using their gifts and living their call; people who value authentic relationships and continue to grow spiritually. Lumunaries are also people who have supported Lumunos and advanced our mission in one way or the other. In this issue, we’re featuring Dwayne and Kathy Odvody who have had a long history of involvement with and support of Lumunos.*

Dwayne and Kathy Odvody live in the picturesque town of Waynesville, North Carolina, tucked between the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains. The mountains have been a current running through their lives together, as they first met on a chance encounter on a ski lift in Colorado. They started their journey with Faith at Work (FAW), however, in the flatlands of Lincoln, Nebraska where they lived for many years while raising their son, Lance, and daughter, Amber. They now have five grandchildren—three grandsons in Durham, NC and a grandson and granddaughter in Colorado Springs, CO.

Before retiring, Kathy worked as a dental hygienist in the first half of her career, before going back to college for nearly 10 years, and then working as a social worker in the second half of her career. As a hospice social worker, she helped people understand that it is okay and normal to die. She also taught social work classes at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. Dwayne spent over forty years working for public education institutions as a business manager. In the last five years of his career, he also

worked for Appalachian State.

Since retiring, Dwayne and Kathy have been active in both leisure and volunteer pursuits. Together, they enjoy hiking, “grandparenting,” running an Airbnb out of their house (the profits of which they donate to nonprofit organizations that provide housing assistance for those in need), and facilitating small groups for their local church. Dwayne also does a bit of golfing, volunteering with the church, and mentoring small business owners. One of Kathy’s major life goals—to hike the entire 2,190-mile long Appalachian Trail—was fulfilled in 2019 after 16 years of hiking sections. She continues to live her current calling by serving on the board of Outdoor Mission Community, a local non-profit whose mission it is to provide wilderness experiences for people to grow in relationship with each other and their Creator.

On February 17th, I sat down with Dwayne and Kathy to ask them a little about their journey in life and with Lumunos. They told me how they became involved with Lumunos and what impact it has had on their lives.

On the suggestion of a friend, Kathy first attended a FAW conference at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lincoln, NE in 1975. Through this experience she got to know the Nebraska FAW team members and became involved in their small group meetings at the church. Though Dwayne was not involved in the church at that time, he ended up coming to a small group meeting on the promise of free pizza. As it turned out, free pizza and meaningful small group discussion changed his life. Dwayne and Kathy continued to interface with the small group at Westminster and eventually joined the FAW Nebraska team

in the late 1970's. While on the Nebraska team, they had many experiences with FAW, participating in and leading small groups, workshops, and women's events.

Kathy and Dwayne both say that FAW impacted their way of thinking and shaped their sense of calling. Through Kathy's career, this sense of calling was as a "co-creator of purpose and service in the world." FAW modeled how small groups can support building community among very different people. It was an example of "Relational Christianity." The FAW small groups weren't just something you did on Sunday. Instead, they helped to guide you day to day in finding "a way to live." The idea of being in relationship through the small group experience is something that Kathy and Dwayne strive to carry on in their community today.

Dwayne says his involvement in FAW set him up on a different life course. In Dwayne's own words, "There are the rare occasions where opportunities come along that you recognize will change your life. For me that something was FAW and it brought a perspective to my life that was revolutionary. The combination of Christian love, wrapped in a relational and community-based package set my life on a different course and I have been forever grateful for that."

Dwayne describes his "calling" as not just what he does, but who he is. In his words, calling "directs my life's course. It is the person God created me to be." He came to understand this more deeply when he and Kathy took part in a prison ministry at a maximum-security prison with two other Nebraska FAW team members—Steve Gehring and Tom Pappas. During this weekly fellowship with some of the men at the prison, they did Bible study in small groups. The men from the prison saw themselves in these stories. When they read scripture, they read their own story. According to Dwayne and Kathy, these men were already enlightened in so many ways and taught the FAW members a lot about life and purpose.

In more recent years, Dwayne and Kathy have continued their involvement and support of the Lumunos community. In 2004, Dwayne joined the board as treasurer and served for about 10 years. Kathy was a facilitator for both the North Manitou Island Women's retreat in 2013 and the Appalachian Women's Retreat in 2018. They have both continued to contribute to Lumunos over the years. For Kathy, it is Lumunos' commitment to experiential spiritual learning. And for Dwayne, it is that "the concept of partnering with Jesus in caring for each other and the world is more relevant than ever and Lumunos continues to show the world how to give hands and feet to that ministry of love."

In the spirit of our current newsletter theme, I asked Dwayne and Kathy to tell us a bit about play and joy and grief and sadness in their life and relationships.

Kathy defines play as "an activity or experience that brings joy—defined as lightness, lighthearted, loving the small and big wonders of nature, spontaneous smile-on-your-face experience." She finds joy in being out in the forests and on the trails, and in focusing on being in the now with yoga practice.

She says, "Our grandchildren bring a playfulness to our lives—their simple wonderment at new discoveries about the world and people"—like watching the grandbaby put her feet in her

mouth for the first time. She also says, "Contra dancing is pure joy," though they don't do it as much as they used to. In addition, Kathy found play in her experiences at FAW and Lumunos retreats. The playful parts, involving music, dance, and art, helped participants through the parts that involved hard inner work. She admits, though, that it can be hard at times to find the space for play and a community with whom to play.

According to Kathy, she and Dwayne have a different ethic when it comes to work and play. Though Kathy works hard, she greatly values time for play and sees it as separate from work. Dwayne says this difference provides a good balance in their relationship, since she encourages him to play and he makes sure tasks get done. He says, "For my whole life I had fun working and have considered it a blessing that I have always found joy in what was defined as work. Now that I don't have 'work' to do, I can still have fun working at playing or playing at what some might call work. The term 'play' is more defined by the joy than the activity. I find joy in finding new friends and providing assistance and guidance to those who ask for it."

Aside from Kathy's encouragement, Dwayne says there are a couple of things that help him play and have fun. The first is community—whether it be through church, golf, dance, or hiking. The second is travel. Dwayne and Kathy usually take one big trip every year. Last year was Dwayne's very unusual 53rd high school reunion in the Netherlands. His class had an exchange student from the Netherlands who kept in touch all through the years and hosted the reunion.

Though play and joy are an important and intentional part of their lives in retirement, the unexpected paradox of joy and sadness was especially apparent in 2019. There was the great sadness that came with the death of both of Kathy's parents—her dad in February and her mom in November. Yet, the year also contained the birth of their first granddaughter and the completion of Kathy's goal to hike the entire Appalachian Trail, which she did over 16 years alongside all women hikers. It was difficult for Dwayne and Kathy, who were both very close with Kathy's parents, to find a balance between honoring her parents, experiencing the grief process, and moving on.

Like all who experience a loving, long-term relationship, Dwayne and Kathy say that they have experienced the paradox of joy and pain in their own marriage. Kathy says, "Our marriage of nearly 46 years is an evolving, alive living thing; not perfect by any means, but evolving to increased health, understanding, commitment and compassion for each other." Dwayne adds, "Being in relationship allows the potential for experiencing great joy while opening yourself up to loss and sadness. The grief that comes to all of us is inevitable if we are brave enough to love. It comes in small ways. 'There is something lost and something gained in living life each day'; and it comes in major blows like the death of a loved one. I have been lucky enough to see many seasons of life and although many things change the Truth seems to remain as relevant today as it has ever been."

# While it Was Still Dark

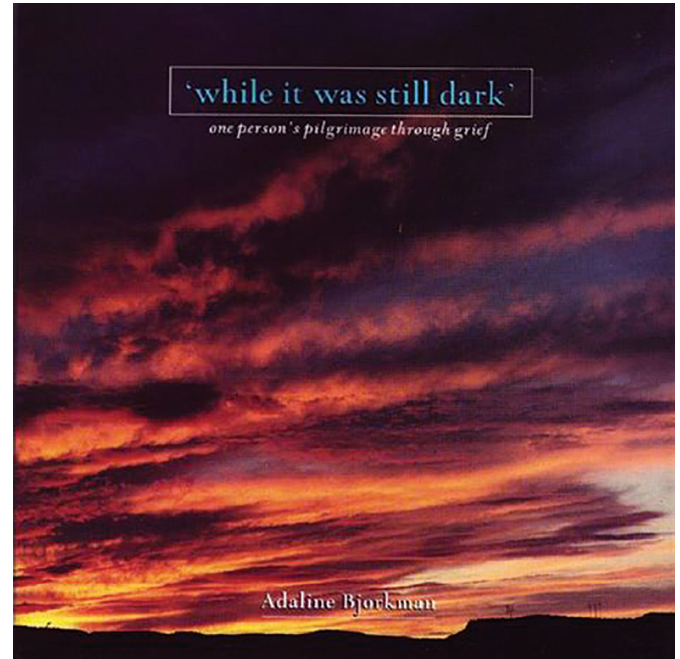
By Adaline Bjorkman

*Adaline Bjorkman served on the board and wrote for Faith at Work / Lumunos for many years. The following poems are taken from the book of poetry Adaline wrote following the death of her husband.*

The event of death has thrust me by jet propulsion  
Into a strange and foreign land,  
Unheard of, unseen events.  
That drawer, that closet, choose clothes for death?  
Those flowers here because A. has gone away?  
Choose a casket, choose a song, choose a verse,  
choose a plot?  
This is a strange and eerie world...a nightmare  
Unmarked and unconstructed roads.  
God, I'm not sure I'll find my way.  
I know thousands tramp this unmarked path but  
This is my emigration.

Your cards of sympathy came  
Pretty, appropriate  
Gold, black, and silver printed.  
He's this  
He's that  
He's there,  
Of this I'm very sure  
He's not here.

How do I describe today?  
Poignant loneliness  
Unloved.  
Unwanted.



**'while it was still dark'**  
one person's pilgrimage through grief  
(Adaline Bjorkman, published by Covenant Publications, 1978 Chicago IL.)

My world is very little  
I want to hold on to 'my thing.'  
She's the best salad maker,  
The best cake baker,  
A good mother,  
A mender of relationships, etc., etc. etc.  
My world is so much bigger this morning.  
I don't have to be any of these things  
Salad maker, cake baker, good mother, relater  
I can let go to let other persons be known,  
Let it go, let it go.

I have thought that my sorrow would make me more  
sensitive to others. But now I have taken my sorrow,  
gathered and wrapped it around me too tightly. Can  
another person's grief penetrate this wrapping?



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Today I love the rain  
Endless waves following  
Endless waves  
Trying to reach me on this beach  
Rain beating in my face  
Rain, and I love it  
Why?  
A mind flashback  
Schevenigen, the North Sea. ....  
Rain.  
We were together  
That's why  
I love the rain today.

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After all these years  
Little bits and pieces of my life  
Of my words  
Are authentic parts of me.  
Gathered as it were from the corners of the world  
Gathered as it were with the tentacles of my mind  
The people  
The books  
The experiences  
The places  
You, Lord.  
The words I say  
The actions now really me?  
It took so very long for this.

There is no shutting out of night thoughts  
Invading sleep  
Provoking dreams  
A tide of memories  
Breaking full and deep.

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Three years now I've traveled with a friend  
We've had great fun.  
We know each other quite well  
God, how I've hoped for that "perfect" one with  
whom to go these roads  
The one to know my moods, to entertain, to please,  
to say, to do the perfect thing.  
So elusive a search. No luck.  
This early a.m. she sleeps. I write.  
The word is this!  
"You're no picture perfect person, A.B.  
You'll never find the perfect one you seek."  
God thank you for the sunlight, this new day  
We take the road, breakfast first of course  
Pancakes or French toast, coffee with cream  
Cereal with bananas, eggs sunny side up  
Route 17 and 26, exit no. 6.  
Your world and we see it together  
Two imperfect people  
That's your perfect way for this day.

---

No need for imported joy  
Today it's creative joy—  
Something happened deep inside me  
At the center.  
The day isn't long enough.  
There are  
Words to write  
People to see  
Friends to call  
Cookies to bake  
Garden to plant  
Lovely skies  
Music to play  
Chapters to read  
Prayers to pray  
Lord, what a beautiful day

# LOAVES & FISHES

*Remember or honor those you love with a special gift to Lumunos in their name.*

**In Honor of All the Lumunos staff**

Dan Davis & Adele Schmidt

**In Memory of Harold Anderson**

William Anderson

**In Memory of Ted Baldwin**

John & Betsy Brink

**In Honor of Marjory Bankson**

Susan Johnson

**In Honor of Marjory & Peter Bankson**

Carol & Stephen Visser-Wolf

**In Honor of Marjory Bankson**

Mary Bodenstein

**In Memory of Bob Barber**

Catherine Barsotti

**In Memory of Adaline Bjorkman**

Bjorkman Foundation

**In Memory of Dick Broholm**

Bill & Judy Larson

**In Memory of Dick Broholm**

John & Penny Frabotta

**In Memory of Dick Broholm**

Carl & Barbara Engstrom

**In Memory of Dick Broholm**

Ann Finnie

**In Memory of Mr. & Mrs.  
C Gordan Cantner**

Dick Cantner

**In Memory of Rebecca Cooke Locke**

Annemarie Evans

**In Honor of David Cubbage**

Bill Johnson & Carter Echols

**In Honor of Sheree Dohanyos**

Cynthia Poole

**In Memory of Bob Domrose**

Christine Winter Massie

**In Honor of Maggie Everett**

Michael Murray

**In Memory of Penny A. Fenn Clark**

Christine Winter Massie

**In Memory of Steve Fogel**

Gary Isaacson

**In Memory of Allan J. Fox**

Mary Alice Fox

**In Honor of Steve Ghering**

Carol Visser-Wolf

**In Memory of Bruce Hall**

Libby & John Woodward

**In Honor of Pastor Judy Howard  
Peterson**

Owen & Judith Peterson

**In Honor of Reverend Victoria Isaacs**

Bruce & Jackie Davey

**In Honor of Marianne Johnson**

Anne & Earl Lindgren

**In Memory of Bruce Larson**

Michael Murray

**In Memory of Mary Jane  
& Paul Lentz**

Nancy Kramer-Moyer

**In Memory of Rev. Lois T. Lewis**

Richard Lewis

**In Memory of George Magnuson**

Kelly & Colette Quackenbush

**In Memory of Sandra C. McGee**

Dr. McGee Dan

**In Memory of Gary Meade**

Christine Winter Massie

**In Memory of Gary Mears**

Jacqueline Mears

**In Honor of Rev. Theodore  
& Esther Mefferd**

John & Leah Rodgers

**In Memory of Dave & Pat Minard**

Carol & Stephen Visser-Wolf

**In Honor of Peter & Rene Nelson**

Arthur Nelson

**In Memory of Dave Norling**

Bob & Crystal English

**In Memory of Margot Novikoff**

John Novikoff

**In Memory of Ralph & Dorothy  
Osborne**

Carol & Stephen Visser-Wolf

**In Memory of Fred Shilling**

Marlene Shilling

**In Memory of Jerry Thornell**

Carol Thornell

**In Honor of Robert Ward**

Bruce & Jackie Davey

**In Memory of Margaret Zinn**

Rebecca M. Liskey





## Upcoming Events

### Monthly LumZoom Calls

Check [www.lumunos.org](http://www.lumunos.org)  
for additional dates/times

- **The Joy and Sadness Paradox:**

April 30, 2020 at 8 pm ET

### Denver Area Women's Retreat (Estes Park, CO)

June 5-7, 2020

### The Space Between Us Half-Day Retreat (Denver, CO)

June 2020 (exact date TBD)

### Denver Area Men's Retreat (Allenspark, CO)

October 2-4, 2020

### The Space Between Us Half-Day Retreat (Germantown, MD)

November 2020 (exact date TBD)

For information about these or other future Lumunos events, go to:  
[www.lumunos.org/events](http://www.lumunos.org/events) or email [becca@lumunos.org](mailto:becca@lumunos.org).



## Please consider becoming a monthly donor.

When donations come in monthly, that helps us manage our day-to-day operations and cash flow. It's very easy to set-up - go to the "Donate Now" button on our website, or give us a call at 802.860.1936. Thank You!



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*We shake with joy, we shake with grief.  
What a time they have, these two  
housed as they are in the same body.*

— Mary Oliver

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