



## Spiritual Poetry Meetup

*Poems to take home with you*

*July 16, 2022*

*Evening Flight /Ars Poetica 2 – Gabriel Chávez Casazola*

*Hold Out Your Hand – Julia Fehrenbacher*

*Our Real Condition – Agnes Martin*

*People Like Us – Robert Bly*

*The Widening Sky – Edward Hirsch*

*The Best Poem Ever – Brian Doyle*

*Another Way of Being, Another Way of Knowing – Michael Leunig*



The next Spiritual Poetry Meetup is Saturday August 20<sup>th</sup>

To join the Spiritual Poetry Meetup Group, go to

<https://www.meetup.com/Spiritual-Poetry-Meetup-International/>

For more Take-Home Poetry Packs, poetry, and the Intrinsic Heart blog, go to

<https://intrinsicheart.com>



## Evening Flight / Ars Poetica 2

by Gabriel Chávez Casazola

translated from the Spanish by Morgan Harden

Today the axis of the world has moved ten centimeters  
to the left or right who knows  
but tonight the poets wander unsettled

and throw off their shoes  
and enter the river  
and lay themselves out

to capture the splendor of the stars  
to capture them with their hands  
in the water.

[Photo by Phil Botha on Unsplash](#)

# Hold Out Your Hand - by Julia Fehrenbacher

Let's forget the world for a while  
fall back and back  
into the hush and holy  
of now

are you listening? This breath  
invites you  
to write the first word  
of your new story

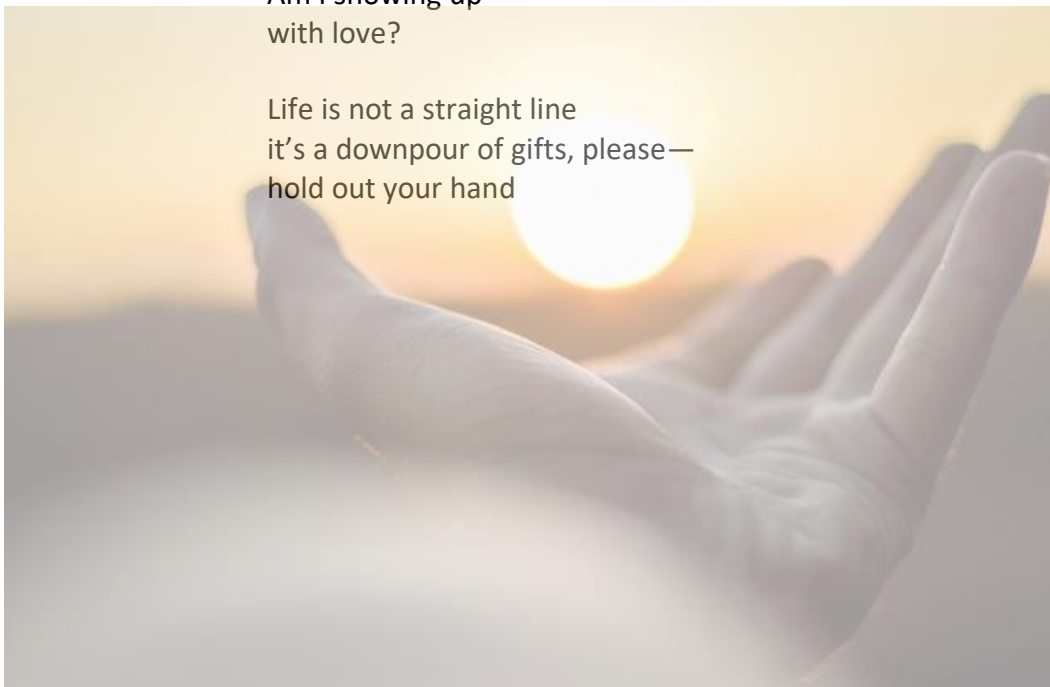
your new story begins with this:  
You matter

you are needed—empty  
and naked  
willing to say yes  
and yes and yes

Do you see  
the sun shines, day after day  
whether you have faith  
or not  
the sparrows continue  
to sing their song  
even when you forget to sing  
yours

stop asking: Am I good enough?  
Ask only  
Am I showing up  
with love?

Life is not a straight line  
it's a downpour of gifts, please—  
hold out your hand



# Our Real Condition

What we really want to do is serve happiness.  
We want everyone to be happy, never unhappy even for a moment.  
We want the animals to be happy.  
The happiness of every living thing is what we want.  
We want it very much but we cannot bring it about.  
We cannot make even one individual happy.  
It seems that this thing that we want most of all is out of our reach.  
But we were born to serve happiness and we do serve it.  
The confusion is due to our lack of awareness of real happiness.  
Happiness is pervasive.  
It is everywhere. And everywhere the same.  
And it is forever.  
When people are really happy they say:  
'This will last forever even after death', and that is true.  
When we are unhappy it is because something is covering our minds and we  
are not able to be aware of happiness. When the difficulty is past we find happiness again.  
It is not that happiness is all around us. That is not it at all.  
It is not this or that or in this or that.  
It is an abstract thing.  
Happiness is unattached. Always the same. It does not appear and disappear.  
It is not sometimes more and sometimes less.  
It is our awareness of happiness that goes up and down.  
Happiness is our real condition.  
It is reality.  
It is life.  
...  
When we see life we call it beauty. It is magnificent - wonderful.  
We may be looking at the ocean when we are aware of beauty but it is not the ocean.  
We may be in the desert and we say that we are aware of the 'living desert' but it is not the  
desert.  
Life is ever present in the desert and everywhere, forever.  
By awareness of life we are inspired to live.

Life is consciousness of life itself.

~ Agnes Martin, excerpts from a set of notes set of notes prepared for a 1979 lecture at the University of New Mexico, Santa Fe, included in [Agnes Martin: Paintings, Writings, Remembrances](#) by Arne Glimcher.

This excerpt is copied from <https://beautywelove.blogspot.com/2022/07/our-real-condition.html>  
(this site also has a lovely 7½-minute video with the artist Agnes Martin)

Much fuller excerpts are at <https://www.themarginalian.org/2017/03/22/agnes-martin-happiness-river-of-live/>



## People Like Us

by Robert Bly

*for James Wright*

There are more like us. All over the world  
There are confused people, who can't remember  
The name of their dog when they wake up, and  
people  
Who love God but can't remember where

He was when they went to sleep. It's  
All right. The world cleanses itself this way.  
A wrong number occurs to you in the middle  
Of the night, you dial it, it rings just in time

To save the house. And the second-story man  
Gets the wrong address, where the insomniac lives,  
And he's lonely, and they talk, and the thief  
Goes back to college. Even in graduate school,

You can wander into the wrong classroom,  
And hear great poems lovingly spoken  
By the wrong professor. And you find your soul  
And greatness has a defender, and even in death  
you're safe

Robert Bly was born in Madison, Minnesota (1926). He served in the Navy during WWII, and then entered Harvard, where, he later said, "One day while studying a Yeats poem I decided to write poetry the rest of my life." He is author of over 30 books of poetry, in addition to his prolific work as translator and anthology editor.

[\(Photo by Mia Anderson on Unsplash\)](#)



# The Widening Sky

By Edward Hirsch

I am so small walking on the beach  
at night under the widening sky.  
The wet sand quickens beneath my feet  
and the waves thunder against the shore.

I am moving away from the boardwalk  
with its colorful streamers of people  
and the hotels with their blinking lights.  
The wind sighs for hundreds of miles.

I am disappearing so far into the dark  
I have vanished from sight.  
I am a tiny seashell  
that has secretly drifted ashore

and carries the sound of the ocean  
surging through its body.  
I am so small now no one can see me.  
How can I be filled with such a vast love?

From *Lay Back the Darkness* by Edward Hirsch.

## The Best Poem Ever

What if, says a small child to me this afternoon,  
We made a poem without using any words at all?  
Wouldn't that be cool? You could use long twigs,  
And feathers, or spider strands, and arrange them  
So that people imagine what words could be there.  
Wouldn't that be cool? So there's a different poem  
For each reader. That would be the best poem ever.  
The poem wouldn't be on the page, right? It would  
Be in the air, sort of. It would be between the twigs  
And the person's eyes, or behind the person's eyes,  
After the person saw whatever poem he or she saw.  
Maybe there are a lot of poems that you can't write  
Down. Couldn't that be? But they're still there even  
If no one can write them down, right? Poems in  
Books are only a little bit of all the poems there are.  
Those are only the poems someone found words for.

- Brian Doyle

<https://www.afirstsip.com/2020/01/the-best-poem-ever.html>

## Prayer – Another Way of Being, Another Way of Knowing

- Michael Leunig

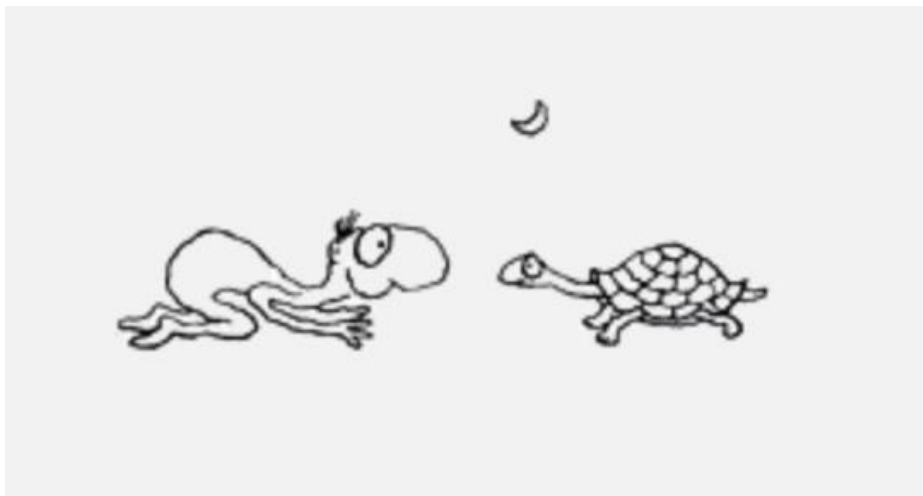
Dear God,

We pray for another way of being:  
another way of knowing.

Across the difficult terrain of our existence  
we have attempted to build a highway  
and in so doing have lost our footpath.  
God lead us to our footpath:  
Lead us there where in simplicity  
we may move at the speed of natural creatures  
and feel the earth's love beneath our feet.  
Lead us there where step-by-step we may feel  
the movement of creation in our hearts.  
And lead us there where side-by-side  
we may feel the embrace of the common soul.  
Nothing can be loved at speed.

God lead us to the slow path; to the joyous insights  
of the pilgrim; another way of knowing: another way of being.

Amen.



<https://www.leunig.com.au/works/prayers>