

N. Aboulenein is a German-Egyptian therapist, coach and teacher for personal growth in Germany. In her free time, she enjoys writing poetry and stories, reading, photography and music.

This book is a collection of little poems and short stories, written over the course of one year starting with a serious diagnosis and leading the reader through the author's journey of overcoming the crisis. It is an invitation to surf the waves that life throws at all of us. The author intertwines her teachings as a coach and therapist into this book, offering the reader guidance and wisdom for the adventure called life. This book is honest, thought-provoking and invites the reader to self-reflection, self-acceptance and self-empowerment. It is inspiring, insightful, encouraging and motivating.

I dedicate this to my son.

And to life.

Nora Aboulenein

There is no time. Only change.

Poems & Short Stories

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There is no time. Only change.

... was created earlier this year.

I spent some time in a homeopathic clinic in Switzerland, seeking treatment for a tumour illness I'd been diagnosed with a few months earlier, and writing (poems and short stories) has always helped me cope and still does.

Spending time in the clinic was a very humbling experience. Humbling in many ways. Seldom have I witnessed people so dedicated to and passionate about what is obviously not a job, but rather a vocation.

Doctors and nurses, dealing with seriously ill people day in and day out, always with a kind word and a smile on their faces.

Modest and humble in the face of disease, mortality and death. A deep sense of gratitude for the gift of life. Absolutely admirable.

Witnessing that approach was a healing experience in itself.

The homeopathic treatment re-ignited the poetic spark in me, resulting in a new collection of poems I have written; clearly reflecting my inner state at that very moment.

Some of these poems are light, some are heavy, all of them come from the heart. This is my way of dealing with my thoughts and feelings and the events of the last months of my life.

May some of these words reach your soul, brighten your mood, strengthen your spirit and lift you up.

Safety Zone

"Safety Zone" was written on a sunny Tuesday in February.

Art Therapy is highly recommended in the clinic and while I greatly admire the art of painting, I'm a lot better at the art of playing with words.

I remember being late, because my daily appointment with my doctor stretched a bit and it took me a moment to find the art therapy room.

The minute I stepped into the room, I felt so out of place I wanted to step right out again, but decided to comply, since I knew it meant much to "my" doctor for me to do this.

The art therapist welcomed me, explained the procedure, showed me where to find paint, paper, and brushes and retreated to a corner.

For a tiny moment, I again considered leaving the room, but then decided to be a compliant patient, just this once, and stay.

So there I was, in this room, along with quite a few other patients, who were busy filling their papers with more or less bright colours, and the only thing I could come up with were thoughts like:

I'd rather be somewhere entirely different. I don't want to be in this room, I don't want anyone to suggest I let my thoughts and feelings flow into a brush and onto white paper, I don't want anyone to ask questions about the colours I chose and why did I paint this picture, just leave me alone, all of you, please ...

I, too, retreated to a corner and sat there by myself, first staring at this huge sheet of paper I was supposed to fill with images of my most inner core (fully aware of the fact that the others were doing exactly that and I was the only one who wasn't), then staring out of the window at the mountains and the lake (beautiful scenery – undoubtedly very inspiring for painters, I'm sure of that), then back at the still empty whiteness spread out in front of me, and wondering what on earth I was doing there and then.

This inner struggle was amusing, really. Do what the therapist wants me to do or be true to myself?

I did what felt right. Wrote a poem. One of my favourites. I had it printed out and hung it on one of the walls in my practice.

Before me
The Sea
Crystal Waters
Surrounding my body

Behind me
The Desert
Warm Wind
Playing with my hair

Above me
The Sun
Golden Rays
Caressing my skin

Beneath me
The Sand
White Velvet
Running through my fingers

Beside me
The Palm Trees
Green Leaves
Granting me shelter

Quiet Mind
Light Heart
Levelled Senses
Lowered Defences

Letting go
Leaning back
Breathing deeply
Drifting away

Feeling safe

Before me
The Sea
Crystal Waters
Surrounding my body

Behind me
The Desert
Warm Wind
Playing with my hair

Above me
The Sun
Golden Rays
Caressing my skin

Beneath me
The Sand
White Velvet
Running through my fingers

Beside me
The Palm Trees
Green Leaves
Granting me shelter

Quiet Mind
Light Heart
Levelled Senses
Lowered Defences

Letting go
Leaning back
Breathing deeply
Drifting away

Feeling safe

Stronger

Most of my poems consist of 11 words only.

It's a challenge, packing emotions and thoughts into just 11 words. And calling it poetry!

Now maybe you think it's no big deal. We are talking about 11 words only, after all.

Try for yourself!

11 meaningful words.

Make something good out of them.

This eleven-words-format is something my son learned at school. It's called "Elfchen" - Elf is German for "11".

Grade four it was, if my memory serves me well. He came home complaining about his homework and we sat there together, he hardly able to concentrate, because all he wanted to do was put this behind him somehow and dedicate the rest of the day to playing; I, getting more and more enthusiastic about the idea of limiting poems to 11 words.

His poem turned out beautiful – I hung it on the kitchen wall, where I can see it every day and where it's been for the past years; still making me smile.

Of course, there are strict rules as to what the precise structure of an Elfchen should be. I remember reading them somewhere ... It's not likely you will find them here.

These two poems were also written on a Tuesday. Not a sunny Tuesday, but worthy of remembrance, nonetheless.

I wasn't feeling well when I wrote the first poem. As you can see, the choice of words speaks honestly of my condition at that very moment. Shortly after this poetic excursion, I was given a homeopathic remedy. Within less than 30 minutes, I wrote another poem. This second poem should erase all doubts as to the effect of a well-chosen remedy.

Body, mind and soul are connected. They influence each other. If one is lagging, the other two will surely do the same.

I don't believe in any attempts to heal only one level, leaving out the other two. Building up all three should be the primary goal of any given treatment. It's a comfort to know that there are therapists who share this attitude.

Weary

This Body

Mind and Soul

From Sailing Rough Seas

Shipwrecked

Strong

This Spirit

Hard To Bend

Rising Again And Again

Unbreakable

Trust

There's not much I want to say about this.

Surely you have your own opinions and ideas concerning trust. And surely you can look back on experiences related to trust. Your own and those of others, who shared their thoughts and feelings with you, because of the trust they put in you. So, the next words don't really come as a surprise, do they?

Trust.

It takes time and patience to build up.
And nothing but a few seconds to crush it.
Trust is a tender sapling, in need of care, grooming and nourishment for it to grow strong roots.
You cannot expect something to carry fruit if it's not provided with all it needs to do so.
A simple question of input and output.

This is a gentle reminder.

Trust

A Seed

Tender And Fragile

Planted In Fertile Ground

Gardening

Free

People in my situation are showered with many questions. Questions that give rather sobering insight into some people's approach to/fear of disease and death/mortality. Questions that left me shaking my head at times, laughing out loud at other times, but always wondering what on earth is wrong with people.

And one of the standard questions people like me are asked is along the lines of:

Is there anything you still want to do before ...?

Yes.

There are lots of things I want to do before ...

And one of the things I would very much like to do before ...

... this incarnation is over (and I may decide to stand in line for a new body) is see orcas. Free orcas.

That would be a dream come true.

This is for Tilikum.

And all the others.