

## Decade in Madness

*By Ger Murphy*

For a decade I steeped in madness,  
every week those high walls,  
guarded gates,  
barbed wire fencing  
keeping them in keeping us safe, so we were told.  
Inside the shell of fear, danger and stigma,  
I met the beating heart of despair, salted wounds of regret, longing for redemption.

The woman who had drowned her child, the man who hacked his mother,  
Told by Jesus to do it,  
-all came to stretch and pray,  
The smell of anti-psychotic meds everywhere-perfuming an asylum.

We met in Namaste, that age old greeting where we honour the god within each of us.  
All seeking the epiphany of redemption.  
For some only death would be the merciful redeemer.  
Others facing depths of cruelty, given and received opening the spell of madness blooming to  
fresh innocence.  
We learned the first great article of faith together:  
when all hope of escape is lost and going out is impossible, going in is another possibility.

Thank you for showing up.  
You gifted me more than you will know,  
-the treasure of service, the gift of freedom and the communion with what is within us all.

Then I was released, my own madness safer for having walked with you,  
Having dared look over our common chasm to the shared rocks of insanity far below-  
gaping wounds of splintered humanity, fossils of hatred, distrust, and indifference viewed a  
little more kindly  
As the poet says  
“What is madness but nobility of soul at odds with circumstance”  
softening my looking,  
melting my high walls, guarded gates and barbed wire fencing around my heart.

*(In gratitude to the patients and staff of the Central Mental Hospital, Dundrum Dublin with  
whom I worked from 2007-2017)*

Ger Murphy is an IAHIP accredited psychotherapist, who founded *Inside Out* and IAHIP in  
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madness in ourselves, our communities and our relation to the earth.