

MYTHIC PASSAGES
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
MYTHIC IMAGINATION INSTITUTE
A NON-PROFIT ARTS & EDUCATION CORPORATION
COPYRIGHT 2005

*Life Lessons:
In Honor of Anne Myer*

Editor's Note: This poem and essay were written by my dear friend, Anne Myer, who died this year on February 22. Anne was a young woman who was a teacher of children all of the time that I knew her, most recently teaching at Paideia School in Atlanta. She was a good friend to many of us in our community. Anne and I (with her dog) took many long walks together during our respective divorces, when we discussed marriage, divorce, love, hate, forgiveness, dreams, the meaning of life. It was only at a service in her memory this summer that I heard this poem and essay, written by Anne and shared by her sister, Jeannie Peterson, printed here with Jeannie's permission.

This poem was written after Anne knew that she was ill, and the essay was written after Anne started piano lessons again. Both works speak to her journey and her story, Anne's relationship to the Big Story of life and death, which we all share and which is often the "stuff" of mythology. The essay speaks to the role of "practice" in our daily lives.

Mary Davis, Editor

Untitled Poem

What if at the edge
of the light
there is actually
more light?

What if
beyond the known
there is a
deeper, richer knowing?

If I can keep
breathing at the boundaries,

I will cross over
and be free.

Anne Myer
3-27-04

Playing the Piano

It's all about attention — attention and commitment...showing up at the keyboard... sitting there and paying attention to what I am doing. Why is that so hard to do?...It has something to do with not being able to go back far enough, to be slow enough, to be exactly where I am. This is really about practicing...To start where I am and put in time with a commitment to the process I am in. To decide to spend time learning how to do something that takes a long time to learn. To do the same little bit over and over, paying attention to the subtle nuances of it.



Actually, it's all about love. Loving something enough to spend time with it, to hang out with it, to nurture it and tend it, to accept it just as it is but help it get better. To love something is to give it time...You don't really know what's going to happen in that time, but at least you will show up with the thing you love for a certain amount of time everyday. I will do this with piano...I am changing my fundamental habits of being. It is terrifying, but all I have to do is show up and spend the time...I don't have to know what will happen in the time.

I bring myself into communion with the piano...and I stay there long enough to allow something new to emerge. I hold the tension of the opposites — my desire and my resistance — and I allow something new to be created. I am not the creator. I am the midwife. I attend the birth. So, what happens at the piano?...

I have to practice allowing myself to be changed...to get used to being changed...It is about a direct confrontation with reality...For now, all I have to do is keep my commitment to...the discipline...Life will take care of the rest. So, this is really about trust, trusting that if I show up with time and love and attention, then Life will take care of the rest. Life will make something new happen if I will allow it.

— Anne Myer