

THE GUEST HOUSE: ON BEING WITH CANCER

Poster Presenter: Valerie Salter (vmsalter@xplor.net.ca)

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice.
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.
Be grateful for whatever comes.
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

— Jellaludin Rumi

Discussion Questions:

1. On your own journey with serious illness, loss, trauma, pain, or other hardship, who did you get to be?
2. What did this journey teach you?
3. What are you grateful for about this journey?
4. How did you bring “play” on your journey?
5. If there was no play, how could bringing play have eased your journey?