



## A PLACE FOR POETRY \_\_\_\_\_

### THE TRUE PROFESSIONAL

—MARGARET WHEATLEY

“The true professional is a person whose action points beyond his or herself to that underlying reality, that hidden wholeness, on which we all can rely.”

—Parker Palmer

### *Illusion*

Too much of our action is really reaction. Such doing does not  
flow from  
free and independent hearts  
but depends on external provocation.

Such doing does not flow  
it depends on external provocation.

It does not come from our sense of  
who we are and what we want to do, but from

our anxious reading of how others define us  
our anxious reading of how others define us  
our anxious reading of how others define us  
and of what the world demands.

When we react in this way we do not act humanly.



The true professional is one  
who does not obscure grace  
with illusions of technical prowess,  
the true professional is one  
who strips away all illusions to reveal  
a reliable truth  
a reliable truth in which  
the human heart can rest.

Can rest.

Unveil the illusions  
unveil the illusions that  
    masquerade  
the illusions that masquerade  
as reality and reveal  
the reality  
    behind the masks.

Catch the magician  
deceiving us  
    get a glimpse  
    a glimpse of the  
truth behind the trick.

A glimpse.

Contemplation happens anytime we get a glimpse of the truth.

### *Action*

Action, like a sacrament,  
is the visible form of an invisible spirit  
an outward manifestation of  
an inward power.

An expressive act is not to achieve a goal outside myself  
but to express a conviction  
    a leading, a truth that is within me.



An expressive act is one taken  
because if I did not  
if I did not  
if I did not take it  
I would be denying  
my own insight, gift, nature.

Action, like a sacrament, is the visible form of an invisible  
spirit  
an outward manifestation of  
an inward power. But as we act,  
we not only express what is in us  
and help give shape to the world.

We also receive what is outside us  
and we reshape  
our inner selves.

When we act, the world acts back.

The world acts back  
and we and the world,  
we and the world are  
co-created.

Right action is a process of birthing that cannot be forced  
but only followed.

### *Surrender*

When God's love for the world pierces our armor of fear  
it is an awesome experience of calling and accountability.  
When God's love pierces our armor of fear  
it is awesome  
it is awesome to be pierced by God  
to be called to accountability  
to be called by God's love  
for the world.



The true professional is one  
who does not obscure grace  
with illusions of technical prowess,  
the true professional is one  
who strips away all illusions to reveal  
a reliable truth in which  
the human heart can rest.  
Reveal a reliable truth.  
Let our human hearts rest.

*\*This is a "found poem"—all phrases are taken from, i.e. found,  
in Parker Palmer's book The Active Life. I then played with  
them and hopefully extended them beyond Parker's original  
prose. I wrote this in tribute to Parker Palmer for the profound  
influence he's had on my work.*