

Prophetic Memory and Imagination

Mary Watkins PhD

I am beginning to believe that we know everything, that all history, including the history of each family, is part of us, such that, when we hear any secret revealed, a secret about a grandfather, or an uncle, or a secret about the battle of Dresden in 1945, our lives are made suddenly clearer to us, as the unnatural heaviness of unspoken truth is dispersed. For perhaps we are like stones; our own history and the history of the world embedded in us, we hold a sorrow deep within and cannot weep until that history is sung.

Susan Griffin, A Chorus of Stones, p.8

(It may help the process of imagining if you close your eyes.)

1. When you were a child or teenager what did you know--or what have you come to know--about the reality of your community at that time that was not talked about or addressed.

If it were to be painted on the walls of your town as a mural, what would we see? Allow the images to arise and then work with their details to express your silenced knowing.

2. How did this excluded knowing effect people? Did it give rise to any symptoms that were suffered individually or collectively?
3. Presently what is something you deeply know about your community or your country that is not being talked about sufficiently or adequately addressed? If it were to be painted on a wall of your hometown, what would it look like?
(3")
4. What are the symptoms of this excluded knowing?
5. In council format briefly (less than a minute) describe one of your murals.
6. As a group, take a few minutes to name some of the common themes of the murals.
7. Focus on one of the themes that has emerged that you are moved by, that you feel a resonance with. We are going to practice a small entrance into utopic/prophetic imagining.

Imagine it is 30 years from now, 2036. Do not let your own mortality deter you. In the intervening years much work--reflection and action--has been done to address the issue you have chosen. What people yearned for 30 years ago has borne fruit, and the situation you felt resonance with has transformed.

With eyes closed, and hand held over your heart, use your deep desire to help you imagine what your community, nation, or world looks like now in 2036 vis-à-vis this issue. As you explore, use all of your imaginal senses, such as sight, sound, smell, to experience how things are in their particularity.

8. What is one piece of this image you have imagined 30 years hence that you could now embody and bring into your daily living now in the present?
9. In council format, briefly describe what you saw.