

You Must Meet the Outer World with Your Inner World

By Mark Nepo

There is a wind that keeps blowing since the beginning of time, and in every language ever spoken, it continues to whisper, "You must meet the outer world with your inner world or existence will crush you.

If inner does not meet outer, our lives will collapse and vanish. Though we often think that hiding our inwardness will somehow protect or save us, it is quite the opposite. The heart is like a miraculous balloon. Its lightness comes from staying full. Meeting the days with our heart prevents collapse.

This is why 90 year-old widows remain committed to tending small flowers in spring; why 10 year-olds with very little to eat care for stray kittens, holding them to their skinny chests; why painters going blind paint more; why composers going deaf write great symphonies.

This is why when we think we can't possibly try again, we let out a sigh that goes back through the centuries, and then, despite all our experience, we inhale and try again.