

Beyond Answers

Think of a place in your life where you are feeling stuck. On the top of a page, write a word or phrase, no more than that, that symbolizes this stuck place.

Read “Ask Me,” by William Stafford.

Go outside with your paper and pen and walk till you find a place that you stop walking. Notice where your eyes keep returning—to a drain pipe, a weed, a tree, something glistening in the gutter. Ask it a question about whatever it is that you have been wrestling with. See what it has to say. You may hear actual words. You may hear only yourself. You may intuit something. Be as honest to the interaction as possible in your writing about it.

Ask Me

—William Stafford

Some time when the river is ice ask me
mistakes I have made. Ask me whether
what I have done is my life. Others
have come in their slow way into
my thought, and some have tried to help
or to hurt: ask me what difference
their strongest love or hate has made.

I will listen to what you say.
You and I can turn and look
at the silent river and wait. We know
the current is there, hidden; and there
are comings and goings from miles away
that hold the stillness exactly before us.
What the river says, that is what I say.

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