



# Showing Up As Love: A Journey Through The Landscape of Connection

Insights from the Poetricity Live Experience

# Our Journey is Guided by Three Poems

Relationships are built on more than just logic; they are built on feeling, perception, and what often goes unsaid. We will explore three poems that act as maps for three crucial territories of connection:

1. **Our Point of View:** How we see the world and each other.
2. **The Ellipsis:** The silent spaces in our communication.
3. **The Walls We Build:** The internal barriers to true intimacy.

Each poem unlocks a profound conversation about how we can show up more authentically and lovingly in all our relationships.



# **The World Through Different Glasses**

# Point of View

hopeful is my view  
the only way is up  
in line with my expectations  
that's how it is for me

abysmal is my view  
hopes dashed against the wall  
of my expectations  
that's how it is for me

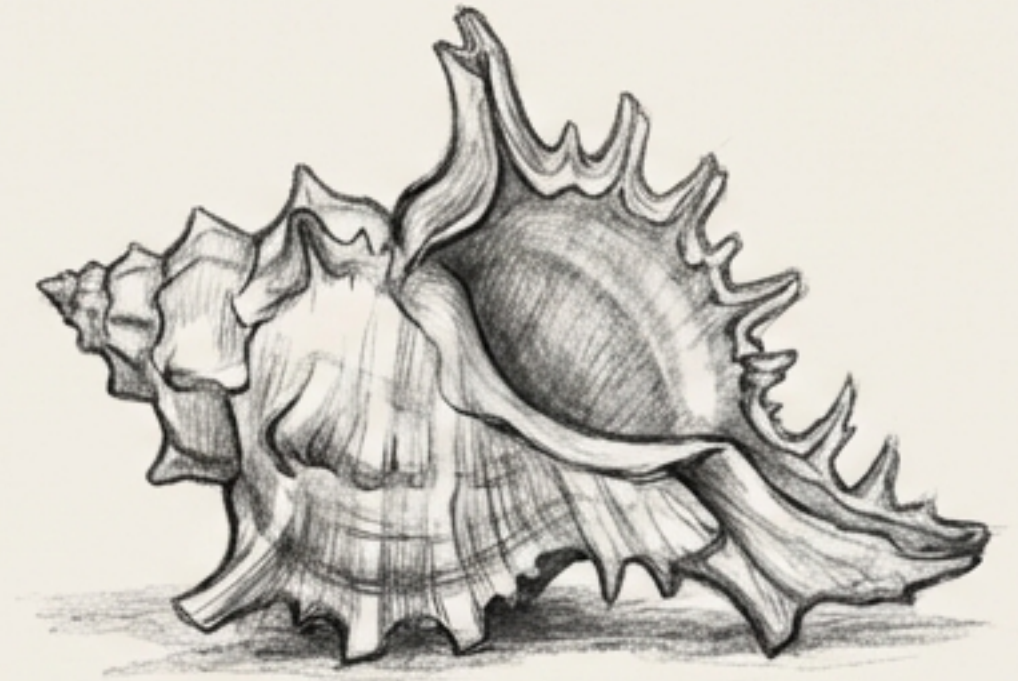
can't you see what I see  
how are we side by side  
yet so confused  
here try these glasses  
it's the one my brain used  
to create this point of view

# The Perception Gap: We Are Both Right

The most common conflicts arise not from a shared reality, but from our profoundly different interpretations of it. We are often looking at the **same set of facts but seeing completely different things.**

*Our minds have been trained to think one is right and one is wrong when a lot of time you're both right.*

Our “glasses” are the filters created by our **unique mix of culture, past experiences, conditioning, and beliefs.** The conflict isn't about truth vs. falsehood; it's about failing to see through another person's lens. As one participant noted, our own filters have “too many bits and pieces of ourselves in that.”



# Path Forward: Crossing the Divide

To bridge the perception gap, we must move from convincing to understanding.



**Ask Questions for Clarity:** Move beyond assumptions. Actively seek to understand how they arrived at their conclusion.



**Withhold Judgment:** The fact that their truth isn't true for you doesn't make it invalid. Accept that it is true for them.



**Create a Safe Environment:** Signal that different points of view are welcome. Make it safe for them to share without fear of being dismissed.



**Realign Expectations:** Recognize your own expectations, especially those that were never communicated or agreed upon. Adjust them based on the shared reality, not your private hopes.

# The Space Between The Words



# Ellipsis

here's a poem  
with ellipses  
in place of what  
remains unsaid

invitation for the reader  
to figure out the rest  
a restbite I welcome  
to find out  
what's in your head

# Why We Stay Silent: The Hedgehog and the Rhinoceros

The things left unsaid are often more powerful than the words we speak. Silence is rarely empty; it's filled with fear, strategy, and self-protection.



**The Hedgehog:** Curls up to avoid conflict, withholding their true thoughts and feelings.



**The Rhinoceros:** Flares up, creating an environment where the Hedgehog feels it's safer to stay silent.

**Insight:** We often go silent not because the other person is objectively unsafe, but because 'in their own head they don't think it's safe.' People are weighing the perceived reaction.

# Path Forward: Making it Safe to Speak

The key to filling the ellipsis is not to demand answers, but to create an environment where the truth feels welcome.

- **Explicitly Create Safety:** Use direct assurances. The two most powerful phrases you can offer are:
  - 1. "This is a safe space."
  - 2. "I am not here to judge you."
- **Practice Reflective Listening:** Show you're trying to understand the gaps. "This is what I think you mean. Did I get that right?" This offers a door for correction without accusation.
- **Use Diverse Questioning:** If one path is blocked, try another. Help them articulate their feelings by asking about their gifts, passions, or what excites them.

# The Walls We Build Within

A dark, textured stone wall with a glowing crack in the center. The crack is illuminated from within, creating a bright, golden light that spreads outwards. The wall is composed of large, rectangular stones with visible mortar lines. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and evocative.

# Brick by Brick

i am here  
can't you see  
must be the wall I built  
brick by brick  
till it obscures me

in the moments of filtered opinions  
in the moment I was afraid to be me  
in the moment I'm people pleasing  
to avoid conflict  
in the moment I stifle my true feelings  
in the moment when I choose the easier path  
not true  
in that moment another brick was laid  
till I'm out of sight

in that moment intimacy was lost  
in that moment  
into me you can no longer see  
the wall now built  
in that moment between me and it  
when I rejected what is  
in favor of what my mind deemed fit  
which was no longer me  
obscured by the wall now built

# “The Invisible Me”

The wall isn't built by a single act of betrayal, but by a thousand tiny concessions. Each time we people-please, stifle our true feelings, or choose the easier, less truthful path, another brick is laid.

The Consequence: Intimacy is lost. As the poem states, “Into me you can no longer see.” We become physically present but emotionally absent—a ghost in our own relationships.

***As one participant asked, “Is it easier to build the blocks or is it easier to tear them down?” The answer: “It’s easier to build the bricks and you don’t even realize you’re building them.”***



# Path Forward: Dismantling the Wall

Tearing down the wall requires courage from one side and safety from the other.



## For the Observer - Ask Yourself

“In what way might I be contributing to making this space feel unsafe?” This question shifts the focus from blame to personal responsibility.



## For the Builder - Reclaim Your Identity

The work is internal. Engage in activities that rebuild self-worth and help you find your voice again—art, music, journaling, or telling your story in a safe space.



## For Both - Communicate with Care

Use nonviolent communication to bridge the gap between *Intention* and *Impact*. Instead of “You made me feel...”, try “This is what happened, and this is how it made me feel.”

# A Toolkit for Showing Up As Love



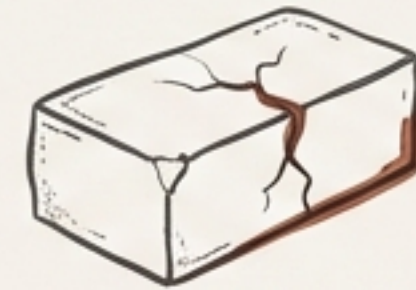
## See Through Their Lens

- **Challenge Right/Wrong:** Acknowledge that two different views can both be valid.
- **Ask Curious Questions:** Seek to understand, not to win.
- **“Try on Their Glasses”:** Actively empathize with their perspective, shaped by their unique experiences.



## Make the Unsaid Safe

- **Build a Foundation of Safety:** Remove judgment to allow vulnerability.
- **Listen to the Silence:** Invite the other person to fill in the gaps without pressure.
- **Reflect, Don't Assume:** Confirm your understanding before reacting.



## Dismantle the Walls

- **Practice Self-Awareness:** Recognize the small moments where you stifle your true self.
- **Own Your Impact:** Use ‘I feel’ statements to communicate without blame.
- **Start with Love:** A genuine desire to connect and resolve issues is the foundation upon which all these tools work.