

Three Poems
shared by Rev. Alan Claassen
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Being a Person
William Stafford

Be a person here. Stand by the river, invoke
the owls. Invoke winter, then spring.
Let any season that wants to come here make its own
call. After that sound goes away, wait.

A slow bubble rises through the earth
and begins to include sky, stars, all space,
even the outracing, expanding thought.
Come back and hear the little sound again.

Suddenly this dream that you are having matches
everyone's dream, and the result is the world.
If a different call came there wouldn't be any
world, or you, or the river, or the owls calling.

How you stand here is important. How you
listen for the next things to happen. How you breathe.

Stand
Ruth Forman
from *Prayers Like Shoes*

why so afraid to stand up?
someone will tell you
sit down?

but here is the truth
someone will always tell you
sit down

the ones we remember
kept standing

Start Close In

David Whyte

from *River Flow: New and Selected Poems*

Start close in,
don't take the second step
or the third,
start with the first
thing
close in,
the step
you don't want to take.

Start with
the ground
you know,
the pale ground
beneath your feet,
your own
way of starting
the conversation.

Start with your own
question,
give up on other
people's questions,
don't let them
smother something
simple.

To find
another's voice,
follow
your own voice,
wait until
that voice
becomes a
private ear
listening
to another.

Start right now
take a small step
you can call your own
don't follow
someone else's
heroics, be humble
and focused,
start close in,
don't mistake
that other
for your own.

*Start close in,
don't take
the second step
or the third,
start with the first
thing
close in,
the step
you don't want to take.*