

Yes, my dear patient.

Providence, the universe, the Lord, fate, the muses, it matters not what you call it, him, her? You HAVE been chosen!

To suffer.

Yes, you! Who would have thought that you, me, we, carry this burden.

In the old days there were prophets, soothsayers, shamans, witches, wizards, wandering minstrels, those who "spoke in tongues", madmen, devils, muses, each carrying a message from "the other side". But, now that we have banished all those denizens from the other side in our modern life, we are left mostly that which can be observed, that which can be measured, and studied under the microscope or the MRI. So my news to you is that without prophets and soothsayers, without holy men there are still those who are chosen to carry messages from the divine; those chosen to suffer—these prophets are in fact my patients. Yes! In your pain, your suffering, your brokenness, your and my broken life, our pasts, our dis-eases, our illnesses, our abuses, our victimhood AND that which we carry of guilt, our own past abuses, our perpetrators, all this baggage of suffering IS NO ACCIDENT.

No, it has ultimate meaning for not only the fact that YOU have been chosen to suffer, but also the particular illness, disease and symptom is specific to you, containing the message that (when deciphered) will ultimately bring healing to you and your family to your ethnic religious group or fellowship and to our cities, our villages, our country and even to humanity. As carriers of this message our responsibility, yours and mine, patient and physician, is to work together. My responsibility is to listen to the message and discover its meaning. Each symptom is a message. Each illness a scarlet letter containing the clues to the meaning behind why you were chosen, what you must hear, and what is the soul's desire from you that you have not as yet responded to. And you my patient are responsible to deciphering, to listen, to journal, to meditate, to follow, and to discover what is being asked of you. So let us begin this journey together, a partnership in discovery, each of us participating, each of us doing his or her own inner work, mine to listen, to interpret, to bring my own suffering to bear in empathy, to protect you and to provide a container a safe space by which you can unfold in safety and you to do the inner work necessary to discover the meaning behind your suffering, the message behind you illness.