

“Exclusion” – the Only Way?

Under the dark blue sky, Emma, Peter, Tammy, Emmett and Angelino walked and walked, in silence. Nobody could think of anything to say to one another, all anyone could do was to occasionally look up at the sky and be somewhat comforted by the tiny little star that seemed to lead the way.

Angelino was the first one to say that perhaps they all needed to rest a bit, when, as the sky gradually turn lighter and lighter, the little guiding star disappeared. Finding a little shady spot, all five sat down and took their rest.

As soon as they sat down, Angelino, Emmett and Peter immediately fell into a deep sleep, while Tammy and Emma tossed and turned in both sitting and lying positions. The rabbit and the deer soon gave up, got up from their spot and walked a short distance to sit at a nearby pond, so as not to disturb the others.

"Tammy," Emma began, "I'm not sure why Gordon had to die or why we couldn't trust Cassandra when Peter was convinced that there was plenty of evidence that she was not a killer anymore. But I have a feeling that that is not even the heart of the matter. I think each of us somehow has to figure out what makes us trust and change our heart so readily, and that could be the beginning of understanding this whole mess. And because of this, I'd like you to tell me how you saw me after Cassandra came and before we told you to leave the healing center. Please tell me exactly how you perceived things and never mind whether or not I'd be hurt."

"Well," Tammy replied, "I'm not sure if I know the whole truth. After I arrived at Emmett and Angelino's house, we talked for weeks so perhaps they would have a clearer picture of the situation because they were outside of it. Perhaps they could tell us more when they are awake. But I'll tell you how I felt when I left. Cassandra came to the center and told us that she needed to learn our healing method. Then she not only caused you to lose all faith in our more subtle and empathic way of healing, but also got you so excited about being with her as a new friend that you put everything and everyone else on hold—including what you and I used to share together. It hurt me deeply to see that you abandoned our way of healing, so readily and so completely. And it broke my heart to see that you had to kill an old friendship in order to establish a new one—"

At this point, Emma cut in, "But I never meant to kill our friendship. I have always loved you, even at the time when I was convinced that our old way was ineffective and we were wasting everyone's time. It was just that it seemed that you and I had nothing to talk about anymore, because of your insistence on the old method. With you still being there, I felt a great pressure to conform to the old ways so I felt that you had to leave. I cried every night for months after we told you to go. I missed you terribly. But I didn't see any other way. Plus Cassandra did take up all my energy and time by changing everything in the center and trying to help me master the new method, even before you left—"

Out of character, Tammy interrupted Emma this time, "I understand that. But I had not imagined that you would have to do the 'all or nothing' thing all the time. You seemed to think that in order to learn a new way, you had to abandon the old way altogether, while I thought Cassandra's new way could be a good alternative for people. Especially for those who didn't want to understand how they became the way they were and gradually develop a new and better way to lead their lives. It could be like a quick fix so that they could immediately get on with their lives, until they figured out that they really needed a long and lasting fix and had time for it, if ever. I thought both could coexist in the same centre. But you two saw it differently—it was 'either or' in your eyes. And then you did almost the same thing with friendships, it was either Cassandra or me, you felt that you had to choose. I am not sorry that you chose her. That was your decision. But I don't see why you had to pick one or the other. What hurt me most was the sense that you felt that you could handle no more than one friendship at a given time...."

A long silence followed.

Both Tammy and Emma somehow felt more injured after their talk.

Tammy had the sense that Emma still didn't understand the concept of living in peace with different ways and sharing one's life with different people, including allowing different methods of healing to work at different times, with different people.

Emma thought that Tammy still didn't get what her pain was all about - she tried her best to learn and to grow and she couldn't see why Tammy could not understand that, at the time, there was just no way that she could have Tammy around, as long as Cassandra was there.