



Carrot the Parrot *Conversation Starters*

Conversation Starters are prompts, prayers and questions you may wish to ponder in personal quiet time or in community with others. An overview, as well as series of questions related to each chapter, follows.

As in any contemplative listening practice, allow and welcome what appeals or stirs you to come closer, and loving let go of what does not. And also, please know that I welcome your questions and comments along the way.

I pray these prompts, prayers and questions bring a deeper and more joyous peace to you.

*May you dare to step into
bold reckonings with your past,
and even bolder dreams for your future.*

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Overview

The story of Myra's journey to the Island of Letting Go is written with a desire to meet you where you are – in the mood for whimsy, or open to a deeper experience in healing a tender heart. Or both!

The text and illustrations are presented, hopefully, with enough detail to portray the spirit of the story while also leaving room for imagination and discovery of your own story, words and images.

Yes, there are intentional themes and references weaved throughout the journey – some subtle and some not. For example, you may notice the ongoing general theme of horizons throughout the story (I love the mystical line between heaven and earth), or the more specific reference to “as far as the east is from west” as found in the Psalms.²

You may be reminded of certain faith traditions when reading that Christopher said a little prayer and offered Myra saltines. You may be delighted, or perhaps confused, when Christopher announces that he has many names. And ask:

*Why does Christopher say that?
What feelings or thoughts come up for me when I hear this?
And why don't I ever get to see his face?*

These are some of the questions that I hope you will allow and explore—authentically and with love for yourself.

For folks in 12-step recovery, you may recognize the healing principles of the steps in Myra's journey on the island of letting go.

When Myra is lovingly invited by her grandmothers to look for and pay attention to “what still hides in your heart as hurts,” she sits down, listens with her heart, and finds she is able to identify and release what was indeed stealing her joy. This process of encouragement to review our past hurts, with safe people who love us unconditionally, reflects the spirit and the action we take in working the fourth step: *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

Other subtler references weaved within the story may be conversation starters for some while not so much for others. That's okay, and in fact—it is more than okay!

In my experience, the best stories seem to change their messages from one reading to the next. Or they show up with an uncanny sense of timing and personalized hope for each reader. For these reasons, I do not believe any of these stories are of themselves the one final answer for all and for all times. I believe it is the Love and the spirit we call upon and recognize within our own stories and in ourselves that transforms static, ordinary words into dynamic instruments of change.

² As high as the sky is above the earth, so great is his love for those who respect him. He has taken our sins away from us as far as the east is from west—Psalms 103:11-12, New Century Version

And finally, you may ask: is this a storybook for grownups or young adults?

Yes.

Entering the story as a “grownup” and allowing the imagination of our child within us can be a loving way to help heal our past and celebrating our present. Myra being given permission to pick who she wants to have in the boat with her is one example of a loving invitation to ask both the child and the grownup:

*Who do you want in your boat?
Who do you already love having in your boat?*

In community or in our quiet time, asking questions and listening to our soul desires is possible with love.



*Conversation Starters
Book Studies
Speaking Engagements*

Contact Theresa if you would like to visit about hosting a Carrot the Parrot book study group, speaking engagement, or more about Conversation Starters.

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