

## Shande Means Shame There Is None

We read the preamble then Susan opened the meeting by giving over a teaching. We usually begin the meeting with a teaching or a prompt of some kind then we go around the group and check in. Not everyone checks in but it feels like the group has become more cohesive since the pandemic and now everyone checks in.

The meetings have been extra weighty lately no doubt due to the intersection of the pandemic and the politics and fatigue.

We usually talk about ways to bring healing to ourselves and to the world. Sometimes that's all we have, one of the group said, our response, to grow. We all have a load of *tsouris*, what to do with it? What a double kick in the pants to have been where we have been and not to search it for what it means, to grow from it. It doesn't feel like such a big deal. To make meaning. Gotta do it. I suppose that's a healing.

I saw some heads go up and down on the screen, including my own.

It always helps me to help someone else. Again the heads nodded in agreement. Sometimes I don't know what to do about this about that, but I sure can find someone else to lift up and I've been somewhere, I know some things. Someone told the a story about falling into a hole then someone passes, can you help me? That person jumps down into the hole. Now what? We're both in the hole. Yeah but now that I'm here we can help each other get out. Nods all around.

I know what this feels like, I know the pain you're feeling, I know about doctors and medicines and who helps and who doesn't, I know all about that, someone offers.

Heads bobbing up and down on screen; a whole screen full of heads who know about this.

I always feel better after the meeting than before the meeting. More heads.

Hour's up, did we solve all the problems? [laughter]

If we had just a little longer, maybe we could.

jsg

For Shande means Shame, There Is None  
working the mental health-mental illness borderline  
1 minute