

Seed

By Mercedes P. Kobrin

As a seed held tight inside my own closed hand,
I did not grow; could not grow
Until I took a risk and dropped onto the ground.

At first, I moved further into myself
Frightened of the darkness
Frozen in the unknown
Then something began stirring inside of me:
A secret wish for beautiful yet painful change

When the warmth of the sun came
Making the hard earth softer
And bringing gentle rain
I swelled with hope and my seed's shell split

String-like roots reach downwards
Quenching unrealized thirst
And receiving nourishment from outside myself
I grew larger and deeper, anchoring firmly into the world

With new strength and confidence
I reached a cautious finger to the sun
The wind caused the delicate tendril to sway
But my roots held me in place

Tenacity and Will had pulled me from both ends
No longer a seed, I unfolded into nothing
But a truer version of myself

Hungry creatures gnawed at me
Blistering summer suns burned my leaves
In droughts, I turned to my inner reserves
Until the strong rains came, threatening to loosen my grip and topple me

Over and over, I face these challenges
And I endure!

Now a tree, I marvel at how I've grown
Stronger with every hardship; wiser with each experience
I discover that I do not stand alone; I have never stood alone

NAMI NJ Dara Axelrod Expressive Arts 2016 Mental Health Poetry Contest - 5th Place

Other seeds, plants and trees – We form a forest
As unique as the challenges we face
All of us sharing this common ground
I bloom in compassion
I bear fruit in love
Here I will remain, always changing
A companion in Empathy
A testament to Hope