

Dear Howard

There are many good teachers and a good teacher is an amazing thing. Someone who can train people, move them forward, point them in the right direction and watch them grow. I have been very lucky throughout my life to have been taught and inspired by a number of very good teachers and I appreciate all that they have done for me. Whatever discipline or subject they taught.

And then I came to you and I discovered something new. I discovered a great teacher. I have learnt that a great teacher is someone who, rather than imparting knowledge, shows you something within yourself you didn't know was there. Who removes the forests of bindweed, and allows you to grow. They are the person on the top of the mountain who can see the way and tell you there are more fruitful pastures.

And that makes it sound so easy! I should add that as well as being at the bottom of the valley we are also unaware that there is a better place over the mountain. And we don't know there is a mountain. Showing someone an option which is outside their understanding of the world is not an easy thing. We learn by experience and what we know and when those don't help we are alone. Greatness doesn't quite cover it. It's an exceptional thing. The most courageous and selfless path I can think of. I am writing to say thank you.

I wanted to write to you a week ago but I couldn't find the words. I'm not sure I can now but I've also realised that I can write things I could never say and so I am pushing on. Fighting to find a way to express something that is beyond where our language can go: I know you know what that feels like because I've seen you battle the same thing. Trying to explain to our obstinate, over-institutionalised brains what the body already knows.

I am also stuck because I don't know what you know. I think you know everything. I'm pretty sure you know that you have changed my life. I am forever and completely changed and it is like the walls have fallen away and I can now touch the world. That sounds so odd but I think you know what I mean.

I think you know too that the things you have shown me are things I take with me everyday. Every situation I go into, every element of my life; I am

aware of the flow, the breath, the channel and the core of Lisa moving through that. It is my guide and it shows me the way. And it is you.

I think you also know that you are my rock. You are the thing that keeps me moving on. That reminds me that there needs to be movement and flying and openness. When things close down I think of you and what you'd say. Maybe rock is a bad word – guide is better. Because it's not tying down – it's flying. Flying alongside or ahead or in the distance or right next to me pointing out when my wings have stopped flapping.

Of course, I am also not changed. It's more like I've found the essence of myself; the core of who Lisa is. It's a revolving core at the centre of everything. I guess it was always there I just didn't know. But you set it free and made it spin.

I am far less scared of the world than I used to be. A few core things remain which are so precious that you can only be scared for them. Most terrifying of all is the thought of all the things I would not have known if I hadn't knocked on your door eleven years ago.

Reading back I see that this letter is all about me. But it is what I have of you. That, and a direction: A path flying into the horizon, and the flow of the breeze.

With love  
Always