

Ruth Scott
Slipstreams for Healing Souls
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"Working together as wounded healers is what creates community."
Using three recurring themes: ABC - self Awareness, Breathing space and Community, Ruth Scott proposes that when people come together and help to heal one another, there is hope for us all.

Throughout the book, the onus is on us, on the individual, and the self awareness that is so crucial to healthy and compassionate relationships. She quotes Emmanuel Kant: " We see the world not as it is, but as we are", and acknowledging our inherent myopia, suggests that only through the lens of this self awareness can we be truly effective healers. She writes: "Our capacity to heal is proportional to our depth of awareness."

While the book is full of glimpses into various dilemmas that have beset the lives of others, the author skillfully uses these anecdotes to invite our personal reflection. Her psychological insights illumine our own dysfunction which all unwittingly keeps us defended from our own and another's pain, rendering the pastoral encounter anything but effective.

Each chapter focuses on the different experiences of our human condition such as the burdens of our past history, trauma, depression and the cost of caring. Some of these topics are illustrated with a Gospel character whose story of brokenness represents a specific area of human pain. The issues raised are explored with questions and insights which are relevant to our present day human distress. The author has "...come to believe that (these Gospel stories) can help us understand a great deal about the way in which we hurt today and the kind of healing spaces we need in order to find restoration."

The book is a treasury of memorable aphorisms and I highlighted many a gem. I offer just one which encapsulates the essence of the book for me: "Being human is not about being whole but about evolving in response to new experiences and insights."

I heartily recommend this book to anyone involved more formally in pastoral practise. Yet whether we find ourselves as counsellor or counsellee; whether relating as Sisters and Brothers in intentional Community; whether living alongside a chosen partner in a family setting, interacting with colleagues or simply among friends, the author's clear guidelines for reflective practise can help to steer all of us through the complexities of human relationships. This book's simple yet profound wisdom will assist any one of us in our life long endeavour of healing and being healed. Scott hopes that by the end of the book we will have discovered a little more about our own pain and that of our fellow travellers and the different kinds of sheltered space that can heal and

help us on our journey. As someone involved in pastoral care, and myself a pilgrim on the road to healing, I found her work immensely valuable.

Catherine Joy CSF