



Poems for...the wall

Why "Self at Sea" ?

In general, it's an important issue : how best to name and address our mental and emotional and spiritual states and experiences that range so vastly through "unwell" to "well" ? It's actually very difficult.

And at the "unwell" end, perhaps especially so. What title is best, or least bad, to use ? What does each possibility suggest or say or do ? "Mental Illness" ; "Mental Health Problems" ; "Mental Ill-health" ; "Mental Health Issues" ; "Mental Health"

In my case, I find myself least uncomfortable with the term "mental disturbance," because that is how it often is, either as an experience, or as a set of behaviours, or both. A disturbance. One's more-or-less sufficiency of balance fails to work. It becomes imbalance, in some way, to some or other degree. It is disturbing.

One reason I am wary of the word "illness" is that it can imply that the experience is "just" physical, something you catch, something you "have," a possession from which you can remain essentially detached, a being still intact. In many cases, I think that the phenomenon that I shall keep calling here "mental disturbance" goes deeper in than that. It is not something I "have," almost at random, a runny nose, or a head-ache, or pneumonia, while "I" stay more or less whole and separate, however distressed or in pain.

This gets right into my being and disturbs my whole experience and way of perceiving, it interrupts and confuses who I am, and my ability to keep seeing rightly who you are. In a sense it becomes me and loses me, it consumes and replaces me. It overwhelms the poise and order of my inwardness, my point of vantage.

So that's where the title comes from - "Poems for... self at sea."

Rogan Wolf