



# Walking down another street

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You may be familiar with the poem (and book) by Portia Nelson (Nelson 2016), 'There's a Hole in My Sidewalk'. It starts:

1. *"I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the  
sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost... I am helpless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find  
a way out."*

You may agree with the parallel that this is true for organisations and society, even though it is written for personal journeys. The second verse is still about being 'lost':

2. *"I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the  
sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same  
place.  
But, it isn't my fault.  
It still takes me a long time to  
get out."*

Continuing the parallel, the third verse is about people and organisations who have started to reflect, by looking honestly at what is around them. Perhaps this is the point at which people start visiting our website or even risk coming to one of our meetings. This is where our local groups have a vital part to play, and where the groups need to reflect the best of our Network values, specifically as we say 'we provide a safe forum for the critical and open minded discussion of ideas...' and are 'sensitive to a plurality of viewpoints'. At our main meetings, we need to look out for and fully support people who are dipping their toe in the water for the first time.

3. *"I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the  
sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in. It's a habit."*

*My eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault. I get out  
immediately."*

The fourth verse is, I believe, where the majority of our loyal members are. This requires an active participation in life, watching out for the pitfalls, misdirections and even untruths that surround us, while actively exploring new thinking and participating in dialogue. I believe this is supported by our meetings, our online resources (e.g., recordings of past talks), and our new online discussion forums.

4. *"I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole  
in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it."*

Of course the final verse is the clincher! But how many of us actually do this? I do though believe this is what the SMN stands for. Our new draft vision, reported in the May 2016 editorial, clearly articulates this and concludes with: 'We invite you to join us in co-creating new paradigms to bring truth, beauty, health and well-being into harmony, and so help heal our fractured culture'.

5. *"I walk down another street."*

I would encourage everyone to participate in some small part in helping deliver our vision, in order to help change organisations and society. Whether you forward an article on our Facebook page to a friend or attend a local group meeting, you help! And also we would appreciate it if you would update your profile on our web site. (Your profile can be found under your name, via the drop down menu, when you are logged in.) This allows us all to communicate and be involved in searching and building together.



## On a different note...

It was my honour to make two presentations at our Annual meeting in July. We thanked Martin Redfern for many years' service as a director and vice chair, and wished him great joy with his new wife Kirsten, in their new home. Martin will continue to have an active part in the Network, recording our meetings and supporting wherever he can. The second presentation was to Chiara, our Office Manager, to celebrate her recent marriage. We send our best wishes to Chiara and husband Alekos.

**To comment on this editorial**, please visit our web site, and when logged in, click on 'Forums' under 'Network', and find the 'Editorial' group.

## Reference:

Nelson, P (2016) There's a Hole in My Sidewalk, <http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/536859-there-s-a-hole-in-my-sidewalk-the-romance-of-self-discovery>, 1/9/16.

*“The highest reward for man's toil  
is not what he gets for it, but what he becomes by it.”*

*John Ruskin – 1819-1900, Art Critic and Philanthropist*