

## Lessons From Our Learners

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### The Roses

Jo Marie Reilly, MD

Pink, orange, peach, yellow

The petal colors change daily expressing the fullness of the Gift

Their subtle fragrance fills the room with a sweet perfume...

The scent of love

The scent of giving of oneself

The perfume of oneness with the Creator

The smell of connection, of healing, of inner peace.

She trudged down to the FlowerMart at 4 am to get them.

It took her three buses in the dark.

She is 87 years old.

A woman of persistence and vision.

She wanted to pick the perfect flowers.

The flowers that symbolized the rare connection in relationship.

A special gift.

“I wanted to give you something to celebrate our shared birthday,” she begins, “I have such a deep affection for you and it is a small token of friendship.”

I give her small wizened body a gentle hug.

I feel her many layers of home sewn clothes,

her persistent tremor,

the crumbled pan dulce crumbs on her jacket,

the wispy white hairs flying from her bun.

I feel her love. It is not the medicine she comes to me for, nor is it the professional advice. It is the healing power of a kindred spirit.

“Feliz cumpleaños,” we say to one another smiling.

I remember the gift.

The gift of one another.

The humanity.

The generosity of a faith-filled, kind-hearted woman.

The roses open slowly, filling the room with the sweet fragrance of connection.