

# THE BEACON

## No Stone Left Unturned

There's a cut glass bowl on my kitchen counter filled with beautiful stones polished to a high gleam: pink, turquoise, amber, spotted, freckled, striped. They're the type you can buy in a pouch from trading posts, gem shows, theme park souvenir shops. They remind me of people.

You see, some time ago I was having, *ahem*, a small interpersonal conflict with a young woman who saw some things and did some things differently than I. Nothing nasty: we just had differing views on certain matters in our organization. We both thought we were right. (Obviously!)

One day when I was mulling over my inability to connect with Becky and our polite but strained interactions, I had a vision of sorts. I believe it was from God, and he reminded me of my aunt's lapidary shop. As I remembered it, she would put these raw, ugly stones into a machine about the size of a large bread maker, and add some sand. She would then flip the switch and the machine would start up with the sound of many boulders tumbling in a clothes dryer, only a couple of decibels quieter. (No doubt that's why her shop was in the basement.)

Some time later she would change the grit in the tumbler to a finer grade, and begin again. And again. And again. Until finally, many days and sand changes later, the ugly stones emerged polished and beautiful.

Uh-huh. I get it. Sometimes we're like these ugly stones – nothing to look at, seemingly not valuable in their raw state. But the Lapidary sees something worth working with, and puts us in a tumbler with other rocks. Then he throws in some gritty circumstances, and sets the whole thing whirling around.

And wonder of wonders! As we bump up against each other in the grit, the rough places get sanded off, smoothed, polished, and we become a thing of beauty, maybe even a gem. Who knew?

Interestingly, I just happened to have this pouch of rocks. You see, I'd bought them after attending a farewell party at Becky's house. Someone from our organization was moving across the country, and Becky had a batch of similar stones from which we all chose one, and then explained to the honoree why the stone reminded us of one of her wonderful character traits. It was a very moving morning, and I determined to buy a pouch of stones to keep on hand in case I ever had the opportunity to give someone a similar sendoff. When I needed polished stones to put in the bowl on my counter, behold! There they were, all because Becky did a beautiful thing for our friend. She has many lovely traits. The stones remind me.