



# Margaret J. Wheatley

## Women's Prison, Johannesburg

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I have just returned from the Women's Prison.  
I am grateful there is time before dinner  
for a cup of tea,  
a bath,  
to write this poem  
to polish my toe nails.

The water floods into the tub warm, soothing, easy.  
I move into its water thinking of the women who  
had to sleep in their clothes,  
who could only shower rarely,  
who were forced to stand naked in the courtyard,  
who lost their babies,  
who could hear each other's cries yet  
could not comfort one another.

Why did their freedom cost so much?  
Why is mine so cheap?  
And what will I do now that I've asked these questions?

10/07



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### **ABOUT MARGARET (MEG) WHEATLEY, Ed.D.**

*Margaret Wheatley writes, speaks, and teaches how we can accomplish our work, sustain our relationships, and willingly step forward to serve in this troubled time. She is co-founder and President emerita of The Berkana Institute, an organizational consultant since 1973, a global citizen since her youth, and a prolific writer. She has authored eight books. Her numerous articles may be downloaded free at her web site: [margaretwheatley.com](http://margaretwheatley.com). For more biographical information, see [margaretwheatley.com/bio](http://margaretwheatley.com/bio)*

