

## TAKE A BOW

Take a bow, my weary wounded friends - take a bow, take a bow.  
I don't know if your heart will allow you to, if you will allow yourself to open your mouth  
or eyes to see all those around you that are suffering just like you but try.  
Take a bow.  
Some of us have heavy hearts and our head need hands to hold them up as they have being lowered so many, many times  
to say farewell, to show respect in admiration and in solidarity to fellow injured workers.  
Try to open your eye to see all those other sisters and brothers around you that have walked a mile in your shoes,  
that have been where you are too.  
Take a bow if you can or are able to stand.  
Many of us are wounded and physically unable but we are understood by the rest of those who understand  
and can sympathise when all we need is a word of hope and compassion.  
Take a bow and salute your fellow comrades who went to work to earn a living but got wounded  
and are now isolated, betrayed and have been kept waiting for years some for many years.  
There is seldom any reason for celebrations or accolades from employers, or protectors.  
There is never a reprieve from the causes for the pain we feel.  
We feel like our lives have become a waiting game without much support.  
We have been in a waiting game that causes shame and blame to lives that are already suffering with pain.  
We feel like the forgotten lost in battle and no matter how we explain the state of our circumstances  
it's as if our information is written in a different language - one easily understood but it's a struggle for them.  
We wish they could comprehend without the need to offend us or our need to defend the truth about our injuries.  
We communicate but there is no one who will contemplate the fact that we have rights in this society; we are owed justice.  
Our struggles are about justice and our rights to have a better quality of life better than we are offered.  
We are referred and pass on to other services and agencies that place us in difficulty, leaving us to struggle.  
Yes, we have become victims of a system that has a policy of denial making us into rivals at odds without an end in sights.  
Take a bow.  
We are not unlike a soldier with weapons to fight in a war against injustice. Our fight is for access to a better life and justice.  
We fight for a better way and for respect to rise above poverty.  
All we have are our words and we hope we will be heard and believed.  
Our war is psychological and financial as we fight for the lives of our families and ourselves.  
It's a fight that gets placed under scrutiny and alleged assumptions that condemn rather than complement

the possibility that we are humans.  
We are placed on trial and there isn't any one you can rely on to promote reasonable communication to allow for accommodation or compassion.  
Wounded on our jobs, we lose all that we had and are left without the ability of any earning potential in a stalemate with those whom were supposed to protect us.  
Some of us will never be able to be self-sufficient, ever without assistance or the courage to fight for our rights to be heard.  
Take a bow, take a bow, fellow injured persons, its your right today.  
No-one knows how we could survive amidst all the alliances that oppose and have imposed the stresses of life upon us.  
It's like being continually on life support; however we still must live and survive.  
Many of us still have unfulfilled dreams that we still wanted to fulfill and families that are left bewildered and sad.  
We will lament over the opportunities that we might have had and the chances for a better quality of life that we have lost as a consequence of our injuries.  
These are the facts that are the complexities of our lives - a life that was and will never be coming back.  
Our bodies are under attack from the medicating we must do to stay alive, so is our repatriation if we must remain credible  
and not get labelled unstable or whatever titles we are given.  
It's never about being compensated for being injured; it's about explanations that lead to frustrations in our lives not being  
taken seriously as we fight for our survival.  
We need a chance to be affirmed as worthy of being accepted and not rejected by prejudice; we hope for collaboration rather than frustrations.  
We have had to be strong among the wrongs that complicate our lives.  
Amazing we can stay alive so celebrate, celebrate, appreciate the journey you have taken for as long as we have had to.  
Take a bow.  
Wow, your victory is about refusing to give up and staying in the fight.

**Barbara Fischer-Stewart (written for Injured Workers' Day, June 1<sup>st</sup> 2008)**