

APWA: I have a prior submission on file with you, but I want to replace it with this one. Thank you.

Judith [REDACTED]

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LiT-uPP is a transformational program based on "The Lioness Tale," a powerful little allegorical book about a Lioness who spends her entire life in captivity and yet moves toward the light of forgiveness, acceptance, and love anyhow. The Lioness learns how to take this journey with the help of her friend, the Panther. She can then turn inward to face memories, floating away when the pain was too much, teaching herself to tolerate the fears and pain, and moving finally to understanding at the "gateway to her soul."

This is the journey of LiT-uPP, the dark and difficult route I followed until I emerged at the other side of that gateway into light and peace. I remember being shocked when I realized that the darkness had been replaced by compassion for myself and my pain, empathy for the grief of others, and forgiveness for my mistakes, and for that which was done to damage my heart by others. This realization arrived as a stream of sudden consciousness, a ribbon of lovingkindness that wound its way into my heart, tied itself around and around me until I felt held closely in safety and the knowing of my own greater truths.

This was a homecoming for me, a return to my essence, that part of me that had been buried for decades, lost amid the anger, the abuse of the system, the fear, and the lonely devastation that comes with the loss of everything familiar and all things held dear.

I was no longer alone. I was no longer lost. I suddenly had a road map for my life and I could step forward with a new energy, this one based on trust and hope and safe ground. I reached out for others and was met with warmth and support. Others reached for me and I stretched out my arms in welcome and deep caring. Wrapped in this kind of acceptance, I knew I could move forward to the rest of my years from a place of gentle and tender lovingkindness for my true self and others.