



Words from the Heart
Pam Lewis, PhD
A Reflection on Betty Adam

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SHE HAD THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SOUL!

Since learning of the death of Compassionate Houston's beloved founder, the Rev. Betty Adam, I have received and read many tributes to her. A large number of those contain the phrase above.

Betty was very humble, but she would want us to learn what we can from her life. What from her example might we each cultivate in our own unique ways to support the collective mission she helped established for us in 2011?

Betty's life force was one of great generosity, radiant kindness and contagious energy. Significantly, she also really listened. To quote a phrase from Karen Armstrong, Betty "always made place for the other". My first interactions with her were just a short 8 or 9 years ago. I learned that she was offering Houston's first class in Cultivating Compassion Training and tried to register. She gently broke the news that her class was at its limit. I implored her with some frequency to please reconsider. Rather than see me as an annoyance, she took my pleas to heart. She invited me to meet face to face to hear why the class and timing were so important to me. Her decision to let me enroll was life changing.

Betty was gentle, also strong and confident, like compassion itself. Her decisions and actions came from a place of discernment and love.

While many of her gifts were likely innate, Betty worked hard to further develop herself. She regularly practiced compassion meditations along with other contemplative practices of her faith tradition.

I believe we can all aspire to her examples of practice and "making place for the other". And in those ways, we will surely honor the beauty of her life and being.

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