

Empathy is a very important skill in our daily communications. We need it more than ever as we are exposed to many different cultures and lifestyles. We are expected to accept others ways and still maintain our own. The crisis about the EU is perhaps a very clear symptom of our deep human need for identity and autonomy and we are finding our way rather clumsily. Rights and entitlements battle daily with duties and responsibilities.

This poem was written in 1895 by Mary T Lathrap. It inspired the iconic photograph by Lee Marmon. It is more often known by the title "Walk a Mile in His Moccasins" but it was originally called *Judge Softly*. That is the title of the book I am writing to be published in 2019. More news about that in early 2019 on my soon-to-be-launched website judgesoftly.com.

Judge Softly

Pray, don't find fault with the man that limps,
Or stumbles along the road.
Unless you have worn the moccasins he wears,
Or stumbled beneath the same load.

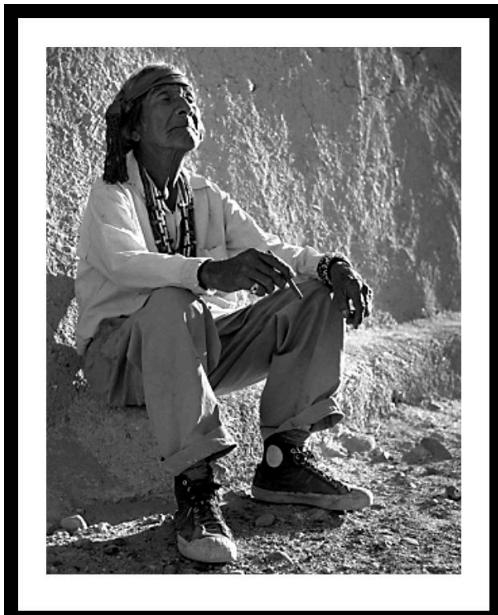
There may be tears in his soles that hurt
Though hidden away from view.
The burden he bears placed on your back
May cause you to stumble and fall, too.

Don't sneer at the man who is down today
Unless you have felt the same blow
That caused his fall or felt the shame
That only the fallen know.

You may be strong, but still the blows

That were his, unknown to you in the same way,
May cause you to stagger and fall, too.

Don't be too harsh with the man that sins.
Or pelt him with words, or stone, or disdain.
Unless you are sure you have no sins of your own,
And it's only wisdom and love that your heart
contains.



White Man's Moccasins by Lee Marmon



For you know if the tempter's voice
Should whisper as soft to you,
As it did to him when he went astray,
It might cause you to falter, too.

Just walk a mile in his moccasins
Before you abuse, criticize and accuse.
If just for one hour, you could find a way
To see through his eyes, instead of your own muse.

I believe you'd be surprised to see
That you've been blind and narrow minded, even unkind.
There are people on reservations and in the ghettos
Who have so little hope, and too much worry on their minds.

Brother, there but for the grace of God go you and I.
Just for a moment, slip into his mind and traditions
And see the world through his spirit and eyes
Before you cast a stone or falsely judge his conditions.

Remember to walk a mile in his moccasins
And remember the lessons of humanity taught to you by your elders.
We will be known forever by the tracks we leave
In other people's lives, our kindnesses and generosity.

Take the time to walk a mile in his moccasins.

Mary T Lathrap

