

# Allegory of the Room

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Imagine for a moment a large room. In the room are a few hundred people. The room has doors and windows and is like any other room except for the fact that it is cold, so cold that everyone in the room has on several layers of clothing to insulate from the bitter drafts. The people, let's call them the **cold people**, are crouched on the floor. Huddled in groups, they are desperate for any warmth they can get.

Nobody really knows how long these cold people have been in the room, just that it has been a long time. Suddenly however, one of the cold people, let us call them Jagar, looks up from their cold huddle and sees that everyone in the room appears to have a contraption on their back. Jagar looks to see what it is and as they do they notice a string attached to each contraption. Jagar strains to look at their own back and sure enough, there is a contraption and a string. Hesitating for a moment, Jagar decides to pull the string to see what will happen. A soft humming emanates, but nothing else. Confused and a little befuddled, Jagar sits back down in the huddle.

A few moments pass with nothing, but then suddenly, Jagar notices a change. Jagar realizes that the air around them doesn't feel as cold anymore. Looking up, Jagar notices they can no longer see their breath! Looking again at the contraption, they realize it is a personal energy source—some kind of heating system, long dormant, now awakening. For a moment they ponder why nobody has seen this before, why nobody has pulled the string, but their reverie does not last long because the air around is heating up fast and it is becoming uncomfortably warm. Excited for the new reality, Jagar begins to take off some clothing.

Seeing Jagar's excitement, the people huddled closest look up and anxiously ask, "What's going on?" Jagar explains about the heater and the string. Smiling, Jagar suggests if everybody would just pull the string they could warm up the room even more. A few try and sure enough, after a few moments, the ambient temperature begins to rise even faster. As it does, more and more people find themselves anxious, uncomfortable, and wondering... "What's going on." As the air warms and people clue in, more and more begin to turn on their heaters and more and more begin to take off their clothes. It is an exciting and joyful unfolding. Soon, it seems, the room will completely transform.

Unfortunately, total transformation of the room does take time, much longer than you might reasonably expect because inexplicably, no matter how warm the room gets, no matter how uncomfortable they feel, some of the cold people simply refuse to adjust their behaviour. Though increasingly uncomfortable, they refuse to remove their clothing. They resist. Some resist only a little; for these, growing discomfort is enough to get them to adapt. Others resist quite a lot. Huddled for so long against the cold, they are afraid to look up, afraid to shift their position, afraid to make change. Some gentle coaxing and loving reassurance helps a few, but many more scream and rage and stop and lash out, but that just makes it worse. As the room continues to warm they begin to boil in their own clothes until eventually they snap and run screaming from the room. Those that can be restrained are gently held until they are calm. The new reality is explained and their clothes are gently removed. Those that flail too violently are left to themselves until the inevitable consequences ensue. It's a sad outcome for many, but really what else can you do? The world is changing. The warmth is rising. You have to trust—trust the warmth, trust yourself, trust there are good people willing to help... trust that what's emerging is going to be so much better than anything that has come before.