

Bifurcation or Bust!

...thoughts from the path of personal evolution and growth
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We've just completed facilitating another series of our spectacular personal evolution experiences. Imagine the joy of spending 16 days working with people who are deeply committed to becoming more, to discovering just how much potential they carry, to learning from and letting go of all those events and choices made earlier in their lives that caused them pain, suffering, heartache, despair and even disease. Imagine the delight of watching their moments of insight and discovery, moments when life changes profoundly and forever ... in a heartbeat. Imagine the sacredness of being present to someone as they let go of memories that have haunted them most of their lives. What an incredible, unbelievable life I have created for myself.

And here I sit, 3 days after it has all finished, restless, unsettled and cranky (some might even say bitchy!): huge waves of energy continuing to move through my body; insights about myself and how I move through the world surfacing from time to time as I play yet another game of Spider because I'm unable to settle down to any "meaningful" work. The book I'm writing pushes through to mindful awareness from time to time; amidst this swirl of energy I can feel it pressing up against me and yet I know that I'm too unfocussed to write. Thoughts of unwritten e-mails and marketing to be done for future programs assail me from time to time. I have spurts of "meaningful" activities but they don't last long: quick phone calls, short e-mails. Nothing seems to satisfy. Even Spider is boring, except I can't seem to stop. It soothes my body while allowing my mind to remain blank so that I can process all this swirling of energy and information.

This unfocussed restlessness is a pattern that I recognize in myself and that I know many others experience when they have moved through an experience that gets the juices flowing. I used to fight it and beat myself up relentlessly for wasting time, for lacking drive and willpower. I used to believe that these periods of swirling, churning, unfocussed, unsettled, restless, crankiness were active proof of how lazy, purposeless and selfish I was.

But time and a growing acceptance of how I move through my life with a brilliance that is all my own has helped me to see these periods of flux differently. I now celebrate them because I know that they are the launching point for a new and magnificent unfolding of my life into more. I know that when I give myself permission to simply be present to me in these times of uncertainty and churn that I am simply in the midst of a bifurcation process ... who I have been has been invited to become significantly more by being in the presence of these seekers who are themselves committed to becoming more ... what has held meaning, in the way it held meaning, is now being reexamined at some fundamental level. And when the chaos subsides, if I simply breathe into it, relax my body and don't press for resolution before the process is complete, I will discover a whole new Me ready and eager to step into the next phase of my life. I don't know who the Me will be, but I have the certainty of knowing from previous experience that I will like the new Me and that I will get to experience my life as an even more profound and sacred voyage of growth and evolution than it has already been. I know that I will have even more to offer to my family, friends, clients and colleagues.

For those who are unfamiliar with the concept of a bifurcation point, here's a lay person's understanding of the concept as originated by Ilya Prigogine, a chaos theory scientist. Any dynamic system (such as a human being) is meant to be in a state of motion and change rather than remaining static. Over time, if the system becomes static or if the motion becomes too erratic, the system will reach a point of bifurcation ... a point where it will descend into chaos for a period of time. And if left alone in its chaos, the system will do one of

two things: dissipate completely and its energy will shift into something else in the universe or it will re-order itself into a higher, more complex system.

What this means for us as humans is that if we get “stuck” in a way of living or a set of beliefs about ourselves and world that doesn’t allow for growth and evolution we reach a point where we either go into decline (physically, emotionally or spiritually) or we discover that we can become more than we’ve ever been told we can become. The decline process is the chaos associated with what we’d typically call disease of mind, body or spirit. The chaos of potentially becoming more typically involves the feelings of restlessness, unsettledness and crankiness I talked about earlier. Nothing fits the patterns of the ‘old me’ anymore but I haven’t yet ‘clicked into’ the higher, more complex Me that I’m becoming.

In my experience the really hard part in our driven, results oriented society is giving myself permission to just stay with that restless agitation; to be okay for a few days or weeks with not having all the answers, with not being in productivity mode, with not doing all the socially correct things; to just let myself be present to the chaos of my experiences in the moment -- *to relax into the chaos of it all.*

Imagine! A quantum leap in becoming more of the potential that I am from relaxing into seething agitation! Ten years ago I wouldn’t have thought it possible. Today millions continue to believe that it isn’t; that profound personal change only comes from lots of hard work over extended periods of time. That may be true in their world, but in mine (and that of thousands of others who’ve discovered the trick of relaxing into it), massive personal evolution and transformation is fast, painless and allows time for fun ... anyone for a game of Spider?

About Gwen McCauley: Coach, educator, writer and veteran of the 'employee to entrepreneur' transformation process. With wit, wisdom and worldly experience, Gwen invites her clients on a journey of self-discovery, gaining clarity of purpose and increasing self-awareness and resourcefulness. Gwen brings a strong background as a corporate executive with extensive management experience to her work. She founded Odysseys Unlimited Inc. (OUI) in 1997 and is a co-founder of the WEL-Systems® Institute. Gwen has an MA in Human Systems Intervention from Concordia University and a successful track record as a coach, program leader and businesswoman. In addition to being a WEL-Systems Educator™, CODE Model™ Coach and Quantum TLC™ Facilitator, Gwen has studied Open Space Technology, Myers Briggs, Appreciative Inquiry, Generative Leadership and Total Quality Management. Gwen published her first book “The Alchemy of Energy: Exploring The CODE Model” in 2004 and co-authored “Sekhmet Rising: the restlessness of women’s genius” with 17 other women in 2006. She is currently working on her third book.

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