

Uncertain Times: Traveling the Road of Sufficiency

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By Shea Adelson

Trusted Advisor + Facilitator

Seven Stones Leadership

Sufficient Transitions: Change (Part 1 of 7)

Posted on Tuesday, October 6, 2009 at 4:52 pm

Category: Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

Transition is the way we come to terms with change, the process of ways of being and behaviors that move us forward in our lives from the time before the change to the time after, like a bridge. Generally speaking, any transition has a beginning, middle and end, though we start with an ending, and end with a beginning. In the middle is the neutral zone, the gap between our life before the change and our life after the change, and it can be a time when we often feel disorientated, disillusioned and perhaps lost – the future is unclear and we feel uncertain.

The neutral zone, or gap between the old way and the new way, is also a very fertile time for creativity. We can see that in current events: as the economic crisis ensues, there is an acceleration of renewable energy industries and awareness programs about consumption practices. We may see it in ourselves, perhaps in a slowing down, an evaluation of our lives and work. And, like an artist looking at an awaiting canvas, or a writer at a blank screen, transitions can be confronting. They require relinquishing our expectations, trusting in ourselves, perhaps beyond what we have done before, and accepting a new status quo.

As you can imagine, it could be easy to bail from the transition process and instead look to make a new change!

I know all about that. For a long time I thought, “I am always in transition,” and believed I was even good at it. But I was really someone who was addicted to change, never quite going all the way through the process of transition, or crossing the bridge all the way so to say. For example, some change would happen, the process of transition would start, I would get uncomfortable and seek out a new change to interrupt the process of transition. I was a serial change artist.

Relationships were like this for me, so you may imagine that marriage was a brutal transition. When I finally stayed in one, I went through the somewhat challenging and at times excruciating process of transitioning to a wife in a committed partnership that had vows and a shared house and resources. Though it was what I said I wanted, it was painful to give up the parts of myself I enjoyed from being single. It took me considering my fear of commitment, of settling down and letting go of all the things I would not be able to do if I said I was going to be married and be in a family.

Having been married five years this week, I can now claim to have made it through the initiation of marriage (though of course it continues to be a process, a challenge and a joy). In this way, for me, I have begun to experience one of transition's greatest gifts, the opportunity for personal growth. Its power is that it is an opportunity to learn about ourselves and others, to see reality more clearly, and to become more a more authentic presence. The act of letting go and the process of acceptance are in many ways spiritual actions, and they can bring us to a new place of understanding the world. Transition can help heal us, make peace with past wounds, and focus on our passions.

Making a conscious transition is an act of sufficiency. Transition is inherently an act of trusting, of allowing, of creativity. Transition is about flow. The Tools of Sufficiency can further our awareness of making transitions through the art of easeful action, honoring ourselves and others, listening to our inner voice and being grateful for what is, especially when times feel so uncertain.

Consider what transitions you are in right now. It's helpful to first identify the change that happened. Then, ask yourself what expectations you have about the change, the before and the after. What feelings do you have about those expectations? What behaviors and ways of being do you notice in yourself? Then, go further and ask: What nurtures you when you are crossing the bridge?

Sufficient Transitions: Mourning Our Losses (Part 2 of 7)

Posted on Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 4:00 pm

Category: Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions, Uncategorized

Consciously moving through a transition is an act of Sufficiency. If we flow through our change – accept the end, the murky gap, and the beginning of what is new – if we allow the change and all our feelings about it, if we do not resist, but honor what occurs as our unique process and response, then we are in Sufficiency. It's easy to want to turn back and scramble for status quo – to what life was like before the change occurred. This often happens in the beginning of a transition and early parts of the neutral zone where we are disengaged from our life before the change and when we become uncertain of the future and of the outcome of the change. Becoming disidentified with our former life is quite disorientating. I can feel this now, the yearning to have another baby because I feel sad, and a little lost, that my first child is going to school and needs me less. There is a literal gap for me, and I want to fill it. To fix it. When we choose to flow, accept and to dream, rather than fix, we are in Sufficiency. Plus, having another baby from Sufficiency sounds better than having one from Scarcity, doesn't it?!

Which brings me to mourning. Mourning is quite uncomfortable, as you may well know, and traveling the road of transition includes mourning. Mourning is the action of letting go, the active rewiring in our brain and of our habits. I assert that mourning, like any part of the transition process, is an act of sufficiency.

What are you having to let go of right now?

The stages and sensations of mourning are rather parallel to the stages of transition and include denial/isolation, anger/bargaining, depression/sadness/pain, and acceptance, and we will likely experience periods of disorientation/confusion, disidentification, and disloyalty.

Where are you feeling about the loss?

Mourning's function is to make room for something new to arise. It makes space for discovery, creativity, learning, integration, adventures of the heart ... and more. Mourning helps us make sense of our loss, to make meaning of our loss and of what the transition calls us to experience. To do this, we investigate and unpack our associations with the person, place or thing that we are letting go of and let go of those too.

What are the hopes, fears dreams and beliefs that were connected with that loss?

I know myself to be someone who stalls at good-byes, whether I'm on the phone with a local friend or saying farewell to a long distance dear one I see once a year. I cope with my distress for letting go in two ways: I resist by making plans and multi-tasking or I rush to get through it as quickly as possible by talking fast and furious. Then after the person is gone or off the line, I feel as if I missed the chance to have experienced something heartfelt and meaningful with her.

Even in such a small moment as this, I am mourning the relationship ending. All my past experiences of good-byes, my yearning for closeness and connection and my ambivalence about how to have it and keep it (hoarding is a Weapon of Scarcity btw) come up in this short exchange. And I need to let them all go.

Sufficiency tells us to flow, to accept, to receive, to be present and to allow and to trust and honor ourselves and our truths. It guides us into community with others who love and understand us and our experience, and from where we can draw nourishment from. Last week for the first time I had a magical send-off with my best friend who lives far away and who I now see only once a year. I was able to stay present to my feelings, the grief of her departure as well as the joy to getting back to my routine. I cried and I loved and I let her go when it was time. I felt complete, without any regrets. This was a first for me and a gift of Sufficiency.

How do you say good-bye?

How do you nurture yourself when you are faced with letting go?

Because letting go – or mourning – is hard for most of us, we may avoid it and keep making changes in our life to interrupt the transition process. We do this in big (e.g. having another baby when pre-school starts) and little ways (e.g. talking too much and too fast at a good-bye). If we thought of transition like a person, we would see that we

are sending this “person” who bears an important message for us, away. In *The Guest House*, Rumi declares: “Welcome and entertain them all! Even if they are a crowd of sorrows, who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture... [this 'unexpected visitor'] may be clearing you out for some new delight.” And, either way, Sufficiency rests in the assertion that “your guest” will return, and return again, until you get the message.

What are you making room for? What do you imagine will arise from your letting go? What do you need to unlearn to allow that new thing to come forth, if anything?

Note: Mourning is distinct from grieving, though they are linked of course. Grieving has a more feeling-based association, the sadness and depression that comes with loss; the root word is ‘heavy’, like an emotion. Whereas mourning’s root is ‘remembering’ and deals more with the way the mind works on the broken connection. It is the process, the rewiring, of how we associate to ourselves and the person, place or thing we’ve lost. Mourning undoubtedly includes grieving, sadness, upset, tears, for many of us.

Sufficient Transitions: Assets Inventory (Part 3 of 7)

Posted on Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at 12:36 pm

Category: Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

“What you appreciate, appreciates.” This is a popular quote by Lynne Twist, the inventor of the Sufficiency movement, and much appreciated by those of us in the conversation of sufficiency. If you have a gratitude practice, you know all about the power of acknowledging the best parts of yourself, others and situations. How putting your attention on what is working already can turn around a mood, a perspective, a process, and can shift the current in a more positive, life-giving direction.

What do you appreciate about yourself, right now?

An Asset Inventory is taking stock of our non-monetary or intangible assets, the resources we have internally in ourselves including: spiritual, psychological and physical, as well as the resources available to you from your family, your community, previous experience, alliances and networks. Often when we do this, we discover sources of support we were not yet aware of or parts of our life had not yet considered something to appreciate.

What character attributes and capabilities, what relationships and connections do you rely upon?

Look around some more: what is available that you have not considered yet?

Taking your Asset Inventory is not an action of “up”timism, nor is it anti-pessimism. It is an action of Sufficiency, which is about being in reality, and relating to reality with a sense of appreciation. An Asset Inventory is all about telling the truth about yourself, your life, with a focus on the assets, as if the flashlight you were using to see in your basement was a beam of love and appreciation and lingered a little longer on what works in your life, rather than what is broken and needs fixing. Liabilities are important too. Notice your liabilities with love and appreciation as well (and be grateful you have stuff to work on, fodder for learning). The thing is, we do that – notice what’s wrong – a lot already, have to tend to our voices of criticism, competition and comparison already a lot. Looking at your assets is ... well, refreshing.

Lynne Twist: “If ... you can put your full attention and appreciation on what’s there, then you experience the bounty available in the moment. You experience sufficiency, and that’s what you’re about.”(The Soul of Money p. 131)

Beyond refreshing, knowing and appreciating our nonmonetary assets is critical. It’s what allows you to have the heart to move forward in the face of real, material scarcity, and in the face of “scarcity’s problem-based assumptions, and the spiraling diagnosis and chase for solutions beyond our grasp.” (The Soul of Money, p. 131) Because scarcity is the assumption and such a strong mechanism in our society and in our world, in Sufficiency’s call to assess your nonmonetary assets we broaden our view to include all that is available to us. From this place of counting our blessings, “we can begin to generate effective, sustainable responses to whatever limitations of resources confront us.” (The Soul of Money, p. 76)

What challenges are you facing, and how would reconnecting with your nonmaterial assets assist you dealing with your challenge?

What if you knew you were – and had – enough already?

Sufficient Transitions: Dreaming a New Dream (Part 4 of 7)

Posted on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 at 6:03 am

Category: Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

Telling the Truth is an act of Sufficiency. Being in this conversation is an invitation into rigorous honesty about ourselves, about what we have, about where we are precisely, and about what we desire – where we want to go. On this journey of discovering the art, anatomy and gifts of Transitions, we find ourselves in the middle, literally of the course, and in the middle of a Transition, otherwise known as the Neutral Zone.

The Neutral Zone is no where. In the poetic words of the master teacher of transitions, William Bridges, “[The neutral zone] is a season of dormancy when life withdraws back into the root to get ready for a long, cold season without whatever had given warmth and meaning to life-before-the-ending. It is a strange no-man’s-land between one world and

the next. It is a zone where you pick up mixed signals, some coming from the past and some from the future. Sometimes the signals jumble into noise, while at other times they cancel each other out, leaving only an eerie silence. It is a low-pressure area, where all kinds of heavy weather is drawn into the vacuum left by the loss. It is a dark night of the heart – or, maybe a long dark twilight that refuses to resolve itself, into either real day or true night.” (The Way of Transitions, p. 156)

What Neutral Zones are you in?

Dream in the Neutral Zone. Anything is possible. This “gap” between events – of endings and beginnings – is some of the most fertile and open terrain of our lives, waiting for cultivation and ripe of creativity. It can also paralyze a lot of us. We are apt to want to return to the old ways, the comfortable norms of our life before whatever change dropped us in the middle of this desert. We are hopeful and afraid. And that is Ok. Whatever we are, is Ok.

What are you dreaming about?

We start by telling about our truths. It’s chaotic in the Neutral Zone. It’s hard to see, as if at twilight, and we are not sure which direction to go, so much is possible. So we start with what we know now. Some of us might focus on what we want. Some of us might focus on where we are currently. Either way, start with being honest, rigorously real with yourself. Get specific. Be precise. And get to know both, the crystallized dream – your vision, and exactly where you are, right now.

What do you desire? Really dream about?

What is your current situation?

Allow the tension of the truths to exist. Do not fudge on what you want, do not lower your expectations and change your desires for any reason. At least not yet. And do not lie about where you are. Not about your money, your sex life, your job, your parenting. Telling the truth will set you free.

This is how paradigm shifts occur. This is the starting point. Like the invisible bridge that you can only see if you step across it. You create the way as you go, from where you are to where you want to go. You don’t think your way. You don’t talk your way. You walk. You move. You make it happen as you go. You invent the process as you proceed. You are motivated by your vision, you are grateful for where you’ve been. You trust in your assets, you call for the resources. Your actions will line up in service for your dream. It feels like magic because you are seeing the results (you want) without seeing the entire process leading to those results.

Sufficiency offers us the trust we need to be in reality about our life and in reality of what we desire. That is creative tension that will be resolved if we are clear and honest with ourselves about our realities. We practice deep and brutal honesty with ourselves to cross

through the uncertainty towards that which we declare we desire. Telling the truth is a Tool of Sufficiency and a tool of the art of the paradigm shift.

Excessiveness in the face of Uncertainty

Posted on Wednesday, November 4, 2009 at 6:23 am

Category: Coaching, Culture, Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

Over the weekend the weather was so beautiful. I pulled my bike out of the shed and mounted the trailer, and my daughter and I set off to grocery shop and meet friends for brunch. It had been a long time since our last trip like this, where we opted out of the quicker pace of the car to do more in a shorter period of time. Biking takes a long time, for so many reasons. Just the locking up and de-gearing is laborious, never mind the poundage pulling on my muscles. As I pedaled my 35-pound child in about a 30 pound trailer, it started to occur to me that I had no idea what it cost to do this trip by car. I have no concept of my carbon footprint. How much does it cost the earth in energy for me to have done that loop of shopping and brunching in my car? I started to wonder if knowing would make a difference in my choices.

More than that, having facilitated last week's session on Dreaming a New Dream in the Uncertain Times telecourse where we discussed the potency of knowing our current reality, I started to wonder what my reality really was. I proposed the concept of creative tension (as defined by Robert Fritz) that when we declare our vision of something we desire and we are very clear about where we are currently, that the laws of nature say the tension will resolve towards the set point of the vision, our actions and behaviors will align, not in a linear path, but will flow towards the declared vision. If I don't know what impact my behaviors are making, beyond the consequences to me and my family for instance, can I really move forward towards something I am dreaming, especially when what I dream about is bigger than myself?

I brought this question to a conversation with Jen Cohen and one of Seven Stones' advisors, Roger Burton, who reminded us that the current reality is always changing, always shifting, inconsistent and totally uncertain. Part of what is being called for in this time, and in the sufficiency conversation, is our being with – acknowledging and accepting that reality of ever changing-ness with nonattachment and an open heart. Roger initiated an experiential, an experiment in being present, to listening to the moment as it was, and expanding that presence far, far beyond myself, my concepts, my ideas, my associations. We did this in the middle of Teele Square Cafe, laughing at ourselves at one point – who are these weird people meditating during lunch rush? And it didn't matter. We were experiencing the globe – listening to humanity and to the biosphere – as it is, in all its sufficiency.

In our course series, we discuss Recess from Excess next week. I can feel the continuity of the course's flow, the invitation to inquire into what is the too-much-ness of my life, of our collective lives. I had been fairly focused on the material, but what of this ever-changing-ness that I so want to control? What excessiveness am I bringing to that? Like overeating because I am tired, or talking too much because I am nervous; do I over-think, over-plan, over-practice, over accumulate knowledge, friends, money or things to protect myself from the uncertainty?

Consider for yourself: What is excessive in your life? And, rather than thinking about what you have to give up, what do you have to gain by letting go?

Sufficient Transitions: Recess from Excess (Part 5 of 7)

Posted on Wednesday, November 11, 2009 at 6:35 am

Category: Coaching, Culture, Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

The phenomenon “Additive Fallacy” is what often happens when we avoid endings. To avoid facing the grief of mourning, the surrendering of what had before, we keep adding to what we have, often with vigor. We believe that if we just keep adding and adding to what we have, that we will end up with something new and avoid the need to make any endings. (from *The Way of Transition*, William Bridges, 1998)

Taking a “recess from excess” is a particular kind of ending, because in this case, it is by design, by your design, to actively participate in the choosing of what you need and what you don't. To clean out your closet or the many drawers and underneath places and storage spaces. To face the relationships, and the associations, the sentimentalities and the attachments, to our habit of hoarding. I hoard all kinds of things, like clothes, money, and even relationships.

If we can avoid an ending, we can seemingly avoid the feelings of aloneness and emptiness that are native to a transition's neutral zone (which is investigated more deeply in *Dreaming a New Dream*, Part 4 of this blog series). And we fear these feelings so much – largely because of childhood fears of abandonment coming to bear – that we work hard to avoid those endings, and we keep creating, we keep making more, we unknowingly enlist ourselves into one of Scarcity's three primary myths: More is Better. (Lynne Twist, *The Soul of Money*, 2003)

Since most of us live and engage in modern society, and since most modern people are not in tune with nature on a regular basis, we forget, on a somatic and psychological level (and spiritual) that those fallow times, the neutral zones of our lives where a brush fire wipes out a meadow or a hillside, that winter itself, is not so much dormant, as it is a time for renewal. We experience the fact that nothing has happened yet, or the state of pure energy flowing as a chaotic jumble or nothingness. These feelings we often

experience while in a neutral zone make us feel a little crazy and out of control. And to deal with those feelings of uncertainty, we go back to gaining, to succeeding, to earning and to doing. (Neutral zone images from *The Way of Transition*, William Bridges, 1998)

There are times for this doing – for earning, for achieving, for creating and for gaining. It is just that in our culture, at this time, we are excessive about it. “Building wealth” (aka hoarding) beyond what you need is what defines success and happiness for most individuals in this country, and the global economy is based on More is Better. Our entire existence is organized and orientated around attaining the next best thing, the newest, more improved, bigger and faster. For some of us, we might even see this in our relationships with other people.

How does that feel to you? How do you relate to our culture’s habit of more – newer, better, bigger and faster – is better?

How do you express your wealth?

There are some problems associated with More is Better, namely that most of us do not experience greater happiness as we accumulate more stuff or the bigger houses we need to contain it. After a certain threshold of income and quality of life, money and things have no statistical impact on the degree of pleasure or joy a person experiences. (Though, let it be noted that under a certain level of income, having more or safer/healthier food, heat, space, clothes, education, resources, etc. would make a material difference in a family’s experience of pleasure or joy.)

More is not always better because it has the exponential impact of having to take care of those things – to dust them, to clean, repair, store and use them, and then to eventually replace or get them to Good Will. Having more and more means contending with the reality of that space is finite. I know many families that have to pay to have storage spaces in addition to their homes in order to house all their stuff. It’s an extra expense as well as something to tend to, to track, to take care of. And I am not talking about temporary times of storage. I am talking about the stuff – the valuables – that are not part of our everyday lives. We have a clutter of material things, and many of us have a clutter of acquaintances, relationships, that need tending. Have you ever felt burdened by socializing?

Notice what you are feeling about More is Better, now.

What if Sufficiency was not about giving up anything? For many of us, Sufficiency is not only not sexy, is not only sobering, but it feels like an invitation to self-deprivation. As if to be in Sufficiency you have to give some things up in order for everyone to have enough. I think, in some ways and areas of life, that that might become true, but I am not sure – we will soon find out as the collective conversation continues. For now, though, I invite you to consider that Sufficiency, in many ways, is a slowing down, a noticing of where the mind is attuned to.

Experiment with attuning to what you have already, what is working in your life already, what you know to be true and whole about yourself and the people you love.

When we have less to take care of, we are able to slow down. And in this fast, and ever faster, paced society, the ability and experience of slowing down itself is an asset, (with health benefits according to recent research about stress and relaxation). Some things I thought of that cause me to slow down are having a dog, biking or walking rather than driving, preparing my meals, having a child in my life to care for, doing a yoga practice each day and taking a breath before I respond in a conversation. What are the ways you are already helping yourself to slow down?

Sufficiency invites us not to get rid of stuff but to allow our stuff to be part of our flow, the in and out of our lives. The gifting, the exchanging, the transferring, so that our stuff, our relationships, our ideas and our love can be part of the back and forth rhythm of life.

A Sufficient Future (Part 6 of 7)

Posted on Wednesday, November 18, 2009 at 6:56 am

Category: Coaching, Culture, Jen Cohen, Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

Three recent experiences helped me start to think about A Sufficient Future:

One – It occurred to me as I was doing yoga this week and making a transition from one pose to another and then my wanting a block and moving towards the block and coming back to my mat, that not only was that a transition, but those moves led to my future, the future of the now of being on my mat. Insight 1: How we make transitions has a lot to do with how our future is going to look.

Two – Today I watch my daughter play with Legos; she is tired, no nap, and will eventually sprout a fever later in the night, but her drive to play is potent. She flows into play naturally, no matter her state. Insight 2 (perhaps a leap, but this is what arose): What draws me into flow will be the path of least resistance into sufficiency.

Three – Jen (Cohen) and I have another mind-blowing conversation with Roger Burton (a Seven Stones Advisor). We start to uncover our assumptions (about anything we talk about), and I begin to see that I feel a sweeping sense of entitlement to anything I want – wealth, health, happiness, peace, even sufficiency. When I don't get these things, I feel betrayed. Insight 3: The possibility of being in sufficiency is through, at least in part, a process of releasing and overcoming the obstacles and the layers we've accumulated – the scarcity voices that are embedded culture and ancestral relationships – to return to the assumption of sufficiency.

The truth is – I don't know exactly how to have a sufficient future. I'm inventing my future with each breath, each step, each choice and that includes uncovering my assumptions, what draws me into flow and being present to each word I utter and every product I purchase. These things add up to my future. They all rest on my assumptions. If I am embedded in the assumptions of Scarcity then my choices will reflect that and will have little impact towards flowing me towards the freedom of Sufficiency.

For your Sufficient Future practice, consider:

What does the future mean to you?

How do you relate to your future?

How much time do you spend thinking about it?

What meanings and assumptions do you make about the future?

Reflecting on Our Way (Part 6.5 of 7)

Posted on Wednesday, November 25, 2009 at 5:09 am

Category: Culture, Shea Adelson, Sufficiency, Transitions

As we are in the last leg of our series journey, let's review a few of the principles we've discerned so far:

- * Letting go – mourning our losses – makes space for something new to arise.
- * Acknowledging, celebrating and appreciating what we have already – the intangible, non-monetary assets – gives us strength and power and resources to creatively move forward and to make transitions.
- * Our experience in the now – our current reality – will resolve to that which we declare we desire, or our dreams, through creative tension. Being with the tension is the path; we cannot necessarily plan our way there.
- * Sufficiency invites us not to get rid of stuff but to allow our stuff to be part of our flow, the in and out of our lives. Attuning to what you have already, what is working in your life already, what you know to be true and whole about yourself and the people you love are acts of sufficiency.
- * Each choice we make adds up to our future. For a sufficient future, our choices would have to be made from the assumption of sufficiency, that we are, have and do enough.

Sufficiency is not right, but it is a right that we can harvest, a truth that exists for us to realize for ourselves. There's no road down scarcity or road down sufficiency. For most of us the path of sufficiency is checkered with both the assumptions of scarcity and sufficiency at different times or moments. Our goal, my goal, is to lean into sufficiency more of the time. To exercise those muscles and to eventually respond – to stressors, the stress of transition in particular – inside of sufficiency the majority of the time. That's 51% of the time. To that end, we practice sufficiency.

May this Thanksgiving be a sufficient one, just as it is.

Uncertain Times Standing Together

Relax into your stand for sufficiency within community.

And as I think of what it means to Stand Together, and as the tagline for this session is to relax into sufficiency, I am drawn to what makes Sufficiency possible – what the cornerstones of sufficiency are so that we may relax into it.

Collaboration is a cornerstone to sufficiency. We as individuals cannot be sufficient unto ourselves. No wo/man is an island. It is impossible. What makes sufficiency possible is people coming together to have discussions about what is important to them and to allow the new paradigm of thinking – say, of sufficiency – to arise out of the passion, purpose and love of those individuals.

Love is a cornerstone of sufficiency. Love is seeing ourselves and others clearly and accepting them fully for who they actually are. Love is not limited to the feeling of attraction or liking. Love is showing up when it's inconvenient, uncomfortable and when you are not in the mood. Love is a discipline, like mindful practice.

Mindful practice is a cornerstone of sufficiency. I hesitate to say spiritual, after all, what exactly does that mean? But in William Bridges words, “The creative aspect of being in a transition, namely the neutral zone, is a spiritual discovery, of a knowing that arises in us from being quiet and receiving it.” (from The Way of Transition) How do we receive? By listening. And to listen is a practice. Listening deeply is akin to tuning an instrument, getting a finer and finer resonance with smaller and smaller movements until the chords hum. We can attune our listening in such a way, and we can do it through ritual. Ritual, to me, is a practice that reflects my values. (Just a note that traditionally ritual is rooted in religious rites, and I am reclaiming it from that domain.) Ritual can be lighting a candle and sitting for any amount of time in quiet and listening to your heart beat, your breath and the sounds around you. Ritual can take any form that delights your heart. What rituals do you do now that bring you in alignment with your values, what you love, what you believe in?

In a moment of being mindful – when our practice spreads out into our daily life, we have the opportunity to connect to everyone in the world who is doing what we are doing in that moment – dancing naked in your living room, eating, making love, crying, laughing, fighting – simply through attuning. This is one way to be in collaboration. There was a time in my life when I stuffed my schedule to the point where I felt burdened if someone died or got married. I didn't have time for rituals! I was not available for collaboration.

Allowing is a cornerstone of sufficiency. Allowing is about giving ourselves permission to not get it right, to *experiment* and try on something new, to allow that new thing to be

temporary and to allow it to fail and for learning to arise. It is the invitation to be detached to the outcome and to allow the changes that are occurring anyway, to occur. Allowing includes the art of relaxing, to give up our expectations for the ways in which we think things should go, or how people should be. This includes our idealized visions about the future, the expectations we have for another person or ourselves. Allowing also includes the art of adequacy. Adequacy's etymology is "enough". What would life look like if you worked within adequate? For me it can be vacuuming around the furniture rather than under it, to do a *good enough* job for today with the cleaning because I have other priorities to attend to. When we combine experimentation and adequacy we offer ourselves the gift of playfulness. Play is an integral phenomenon of innovation. If we do not have to have all the answers and do not have to do them perfectly, there is room for something new to arise. This is one the gift of Transition; it is the fertile ground for new paradigms to be born. We can use transition to continually recalibrate towards that which we love and care.

As a recovering perfectionist, it feels important to say how important it is that we allow ourselves to experiment, play and invent, to remind all of us that we don't have to get it all right, right away. In the spirit of transparency, this course was an experiment, a stand in my allowing myself to try something new – to be committed to a group, and to make mistakes. To trust that we would learn together in what I declared this course to be: an learning laboratory, an experiment. So much of life is trial and error and reorientation, and I am so grateful to have orientated with you deeper into sufficiency.

I assert that to be in sufficiency is to grow up, to mature. Being in this conversation is an action of personal growth. It doesn't mean you are a child or less grown up if sufficiency doesn't interest you, but have you noticed that sufficiency is sobering? It's the acceptance of the ever changing reality that is life and being alive in it. William Bridges again: "Maturity is a ripening rather than an attaining... The barriers to this kind of growth are when we stop viewing our flaws as something to fix or get over, but rather as signals to let go of something – the way we have been seeing or doing things – and to initiate a time of transition. Seeing signals rather than problems, transitions rather than solutions." (from *The Way of Transition*)

May you continue your journey into sufficiency.