

Living Creatively: Permission



Now that our week of goodbyes and well wishes has passed, while far from easy, what I feel most deeply is gratitude for the rich and varied experiences of the past years. If you are just joining me, this past week I bid an expected farewell to my longtime loyal assistant Aaron and an unexpected farewell to our storeroom and shipping assistant Aubrey, whose recent health concerns required her full attention.

Here we are, right in the very midst of fall. With the contemplative months of winter in sight, it is clear that a new way of being will continue to unfold. To think that this all began with my early August commitment on a hillside overlooking the vast expanse of the Pyrenees. There, as dawn approached, I welcomed the new and declared that moving

forward I would use a different approach toward my long list of personal and professional goals. I would, from that moment forward, choose an open hearted path. However that would chose to take form, I would see.

Upon my return to Austin, I soon learned I would be traveling the path with new companions. Discovering this certainly brought up a cautious trepidation but peaking out from underneath, a playful curiosity. So, in these past weeks, with this, "new way of being," as my guide, I have navigated these days of transition feeling as if I was wearing a new sweater, a bit prickly and scratchy, but clearly the clothing I was intended to wear.

While there are moments I fear I've lost traction moving my goals forward in this period, with a closer look I touch a deep knowingness that proclaims this is just the new way. A way that is a bit slower, a bit more reflective, and just possibly, a bit kinder and gentler to me. Joining me are two bright shining lights who are more than ready to walk this new path with me. With no shared history of how things were done in the past, there will be no questioning of how I choose to work, all seen with fresh eyes and an entirely new perspective.

So what does all of this have to do with permission? Well, Elizabeth Gilbert had a lot to say about the need to give ourselves permission in her book on creative living, *Big Magic*. There, she discusses the fact that what stops so many from following the enchantment of a new idea is exactly the granting of permission. We, for some reason, are programed to expect a power greater than ourselves to give us the authority to move forward in our creative process.

I suspect some of the awkwardness I have felt these days is due to the concept of permission. I have found myself on occasion hesitating as if there were another authority greater than mine to grant me permission to act on my ideas. Once I

became aware of this, I realized I needed to give myself permission on a daily basis. Permission to allow this new way to manifest as it desires, permission to find joy in this particular time, and just possibly, permission to be a bit playful with it all. And, as Gilbert comments in *Big Magic*, I needed to allow myself to,

"Be the weirdo who dares to enjoy."

To be honest, it isn't completely enjoyable yet... but I'm working on it! It's clear this new way is going to take some getting used to. So, instead of charging forth headstrong into that deep list of projects I created over the summer, I will consciously leave some space for this new way to mature.

Playfulness is a good thing, and the "Gemmo Bar" retail display I shared last week is a great place to begin. A lighthearted approach is just what this needs, no attachments to an outcome, just permission granted to take up the time and space it needs to try one idea and then mix it up with no particular destination or deadline in sight. Yikes! This really is a new concept!

It is interesting to discover myself right smack in the middle of the whole idea of permission. Some days have felt as if I have been dropped into a huge permission swamp and if I wish to move in any direction I've got to allow myself to accept where I am, consider my options, and make some moves, even if it gets messy. What I create now, may go through several reiterations and in knowing and accepting that I've found myself stalled.

So whether my creation involves my wild Gemmo Bar idea, restructuring the work in my practice, or discovering personally a new way of accepting the only stamp of approval needed is my own, and with that permission, I let go of any expectation of perfection. I'll hang on to that scratchy new sweater and wear it until it breaks down into something comfy,

cozy and all mine.

Why not join me in this journey? What might you have put on hold, waiting for permission to be granted?

“If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.”

– Ecclesiastes 11:4