

Living Persistence

Creatively:

Elizabeth Gilbert chooses to dedicate an entire chapter to the topic of persistence in her book, *Big Magic*. Gilbert defines the persistence necessary in the creative process as what keeps you hammering away at your idea even when the enchantment starts to fade. At the point, when what seemed clear starts to blur, is exactly when the effort must be made to,

“seduce the Big Magic and it will always seem to come back to you the same way a raven is captivated by a shining spinning thing.”

Persistence comes from the heart of that deep love of what we do, it is our core, our willingness to move all obstacles just so that the work we are called to do can continue. Persistence is honoring the time you set aside to write, draw, build, or make whatever is your heart's desire, despite all odds. It's about finding a place and time you call your own and honoring it with a reciprocal agreement.

Most of the time this works... and then there's going to be the morning in which every possible obstacle seems to get in your way. Persistence is when in spite of all obstacles you still pick up your tools and put them to work right then and there for however many seconds you are granted. That my friend is real persistence. It is essential ingredients to lead a creative life because guess what, it isn't always going to be pretty and clean and served up to us so we can partake. Sometimes, and actually many times, we need to plow through it all to get to the good stuff.

Six years ago I had to do just that as I was led by an idea

that stalked me day and night. It would not grant me a moment's peace and before long I could not see straight through my obsession. I was, at this point in time, in the midst of passing along to new owners the bootstrapped gluten free baking company that I had lovingly nurtured all the way to the shelves of Whole Foods and was ready for a new challenge. I knew what would be required next for this homegrown business to profit was more than I was willing to invest on many levels and above all the call to work in natural health care was beckoning.

This beckoning became rather loud and annoying when I learned of the imminent closing of a boutique practitioner cooperative. Soon to be stranded were some of Austin's finest practitioners from a rich variety of backgrounds. While the cooperative model they had followed for years was not financially viable I had an idea for another model, one I had come across in California. On paper it was beyond brilliant and would provide a new home for those practitioners who still sought a community along with a few others that could be handpicked to allow for a range of therapies. The intensity of this idea was such that I was compelled to take action and so began to meet with each individual one on one and to hear out their personal goals and began to form a collective vision.

While I had years of personal experience with Homeopathy and Gemmotherapy along with mentoring by my German homeopath while living in Europe, I only dreamed that in another lifetime I would indeed practice. Surely the thought of it would rise up often enough but only to be quieted by my logical mind. The idea of it seemed too far out of reach, and I accepted that the best I could possibly do was to support those who did practice become more visible and accessible to the public. Besides, in this planned clinic there already were plenty of practitioners but what was missing in the equation was someone who held the big picture and kept the vision moving forward. So in the formulating of this natural health clinic,

interestingly enough, I envisioned myself stepping into an administrative role.

Once the group of practitioners was finalized we began regular meetings to create our mission statement, objectives and value propositions. Let me just reiterate here how my obsession with this idea grew with each step we took as a growing team. I could so clearly see the huge gap in health care that this creative endeavor would fill. In my exuberance I shared this vision with literally everyone I met in the months of our planning process and created an enthusiastic following along the way. All progressed beautifully from winter into the months of summer. We even took the steps to assemble an advisory board of key leaders in business and health and seek their input.

While looking at properties had been saved as a final step, now in August, the time had come and to no surprise one came available instantly right in the neighborhood of our choice. How perfect could it get? After viewing it and sketching out a possible layout we gathered as a team to take these next important financial steps together. However, once we were all assembled in the same room we had harmoniously gathered for months, something was tangibly different. The gentle buzz and hum of creativity was gone and instead there was a distinct metallic feel of tension that was so strong you could taste it on your tongue. There was a brittleness that had never before been present. Not until much later did it become clear that what showed up that day was FEAR.

One of the key practitioners took the lead for that meeting and from the start everything began colliding, like the start of bumper cars, all it takes is one to begin a continuous chain reaction. Suddenly this compatible group, who had gathered to form a shared vision for six months, began to push up against each other's edges and egos. The bumps experienced turned into roadblocks by the end of the meeting and no action could be taken on the pending lease. Everything was

stalled.

Check back in a week when I share what transpired next and how my persistence was truly put to the test.