

# AWAKENING CREATIVITY: SESSION 4

## PRAYER:

Created to be creative  
We enact our destiny  
Embracing the energy of the Spirit  
To risk making beauty  
With our whole lives  
Amen.

## NAVIGATING RESISTANCE

*"When are you going to get a 'real' job?"* Driving down a road weaved into the Sierra Nevada landscape this question reappeared for what seemed like the millionth time. On this particular occasion it floated off the lips of my dad as we drove up to the mountain house we were building. It wasn't the first time, nor would it be the last, that either he or someone else in my life would ask me some form of this question. I had heard it from parents, siblings, co-workers and friends. It's as if they're asking, *"When are you going to grow up?"* or *"Why can't you live a life that makes sense to me?"*

Exasperated, I sat trying to ignore I heard it, but as the seconds grew so did the internal agitation.

Breaking the silence, I sarcastically replied, *"Why would I do that?"* An internal monologue began as I let my response sit between us: *'Why indeed; and why was he asking me this question, yet again. Why do I continually need to explain myself to him, why do I feel the need to do so. Thing is he doesn't want "a real job" either, in fact he wants to live like I do.'* Before he could respond, I decided to re-open a discussion I'd had with my dad more than once before. It was familiar territory for us; both the conversation itself and the shared struggle of living in tension with cultural norms. I reminded him of the intentionality behind the choices I was making in my life direction. Reminding him that my "life mission" necessitated an alternative life path. I simply could not accomplish what I felt like the voice within was saying to me if I were to live differently than I currently was. As the conversation carried on my feeling of internal agitation turned into one of resolve and peace. I had been here before and the answer was something living inside of me.

As I mentioned last week, I began having conversations and making choices in grad school that set me in a particular life direction - one that just so happened to be a little different. As a result conversations where I was questioned about my choices occurred with some frequency. I think we all want to be

understood. We want those around us to understand why we do what we do and to provide us with encouragement and healthy correction along the way.

However, what about those times when we aren't understood? How will we respond to those instances when we are challenged? When our life's direction, purpose, or a even a particular choice are brought into question? How we will navigate resistance?

If we are going to live artfully then we must recognize that we will encounter resistance along the way. Ignoring this fact will only deter from us fully expressing that which resides within. Often this resistance will come from those closest to us and can come in minor increments or in a deluge. As important as cultivating our voice, and our means of communicating that voice, is our development of tools that will enable us to meet the resistance in our lives and move through it.

One tool I found particularly helpful was creating my own purpose statement. A simple sentence or two that encompassed the mission driving the decisions in my life. Having this would allow me to remind not only myself but those around me of why I was doing what I was doing. It's what I employed during that mountain drive discussion. I knew why I was making choices and could speak directly to the inquisitive resistance that came my way. What forms does resistance take on in your life? How have you encountered resistance? What methods or tools did you use to ensure that the resistance didn't take you off course?

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This week we are taking some time to reflect on how Jesus navigated resistance—which was a major theme in his development and work. He was misunderstood by his family and rejected by his community. His friends and relatives gave him bad advice and resistance. He faced public criticism and humiliation. His family and critiques thought he was crazy and accused him of being demon possessed, and he was ultimately abandoned by his friends, mocked and publicly executed for the cause of love.

If this is what happened to Jesus in the pursuit of his destiny, then it is expected that those who seek to be apart of the revolution of love would face similar resistance from family, community and society. Of course this doesn't imply that all of the resistance we face is due to our altruism—but it does acknowledge that resistance in fulfilling your destiny is to be expected.

You choose what you do with the resistance you encounter. You can let it discourage and defeat you or strengthen your resolve. You can react in bitterness and anger and lose momentum or offer mercy and forgiveness and learn perseverance.

Finesse, tenacity and elegance are required to navigate resistance—learning how to be firm, resolved and contrastive without being mean spirited or retreating into passivity.

## SMALL GROUP:

**CHECK-IN:** about creative practices: journal-keeping, weekly walk & creative adventure.

**SHARE:** What you did for your enacting destiny.

**FUTURES PORTRAIT...** if you have time, process what this exercise prompted in you and the reasoning behind the poses & costumes you chose.

## HOMEWORK:

**WORK ON ART SHOW TEAM:**

**PROMOTE THE ART SHOW:**

**FINISH YOUR BOOK:**

**MAKE A CURIOSITY/SHADOW BOX:** that contains at least 5 things that symbolize elements of what you need in your life to sustain you— to maintain momentum toward your destiny. Use an old cigar box or other old and interesting container and arrange the antique/ol worn items/pictures in a creative manner.

**POTLUCK NEXT WEEK.** Bring a tasty meal item to share. We will be having a finishing night and will do some processing together with food and drink. Make sure you bring your unfinished projects.

**RESPOND TO EMAIL INQUIRIES FROM DARIAN & MELODY.**

**Give \$20 to Melody if you haven't contributed for the art show**

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS:

- Navigating resistance— what breaks your momentum? How can you avoid or minimize the things that break your momentum?
- What is your happy place?
- Is your life mission clearly defined?
- What activities provide you with clarity and refocus?

- List: Ten things that refresh me?
- Three people who warm my soul and recharge my batteries? When do I get to spend time with them?
- What makes me laugh?
- What do I need to hear 10 times a day to keep my confidence & flow?
- Who are the people in my life who are unsafe for me to be around when I need resolve?
- What are the internal voices that I need to ignore or drown out to pursue my destiny?
- How can I process and graciously hold the fact that some of the people in my life can't understand my motivations and choices?
- List: 5 healthy habits that raise my mojo and keep me motivated.
- Are there any relationships that I need to renegotiate because they are codependent, negative or abusive?
- Who do I need to forgive? Do I have bitterness or resentment that I need to release or let go of?
- Is how I spend my time in alignment with my destiny?
- Do I tend to live more in the past, the present or the future? How would I like to change where I focus my mental/psychic energy?

## DAILY READINGS:

### DAY 1: JESUS EMBRACED & THEN REJECTED BY HIS COMMUNITY

"All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.' "

"I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy[f] in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian."

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. Luke 4: 22-30

### DAY 2: JESUS THOUGHT TO BE CRAZY BY HIS FAMILY & ACCUSED OF BEING DEMON POSSESSED

"Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebub[c]! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."

So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house. I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin."

He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit." Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

"Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." Mark 3: 20-35

#### **DAY 4: JESUS SUGGESTS THAT APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEPTIVE**

"What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

"I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

"Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

"Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The first," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him. Matt. 21: 28-31

#### **DAY 5: JESUS CONFRONTS BAD ADVICE OF HIS BROTHERS & FRIEND**

After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life. But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, Jesus' brothers said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil. You go to the Feast. I am not yet[a] going up to this Feast, because for me the right time has not yet come." Having said this, he stayed in Galilee. John 7:1-9

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Matthew 16:21-23

#### **DAY 6: JESUS BETRAYED, ABANDONED & DENIED BY HIS FRIENDS**

Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

"I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.[c] But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same. Matthew 26:31-35

#### **DAY 7: JESUS MANAGES PERSECUTION HUMILIATION & DEATH**

At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you." He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' Luke 13:31-32

"Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:9-12

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.[a] But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. Matthew 5:38-42

"The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating him. They blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" And they said many other insulting things to him." Luke 22: 63-65

"When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." [a] And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One." Luke 23:33-35