



Greetings!

While thinking about what to write in this newsletter, I was struck by a central paradox emerging in my life and in the lives of those around me.

Welcoming in the New Year included the usual efforts at celebrating and goal making. Jokes popped up all over social media related to distinguishing 2021 from 2020. However, at the same time, the reality of loss and anxiety around COVID present on December 31 persisted. The promise for fresh beginnings ushered in by a new year fizzled in the face of ambiguity about what is to come for each of us.

The Topic at Hand: Difficulty Getting Grounded

Ambiguity affects people differently. For some, not knowing what comes next might be liberating. For instance, if you lost a job you may feel freed from an oppressive organizational structure. For others, uncertainty evokes a sense of danger, overwhelming the senses. Not knowing when life will return to “normal” provokes anxiety and concern. Some respond to such anxiety by finding purpose; others address the drastic shifts that have taken place in society by denying the reality of such shifts.

On top of this, we are all asked to be responsible for finances, for careers, and for others. Addressing personal discomfort while caring for loved ones and children poses a challenge. Some of you have the added pressure of serving as community leaders, working to help others navigate loss and uncertainty themselves. What is asked of each of us during this pandemic is endless.

What I Know: Finding Solid Ground in Your Self

For me, getting grounded means finding a solid sense of my self in the world. Stopping and allowing myself to think, acknowledging how my body feels, recognizing my physical surroundings in any given moment, and visualizing myself as solid, as OK in the here and now, all are part the grounding process. This process takes time and energy.

Sometimes every minute requires grounding. And what grounds us might change. Prior to COVID, physical exercise served as my primary grounding technique. Not now. Now exercise is an emotional outlet, a need. But it does not ground me. So, I found some other techniques.

A trick I use to help this process is to think of myself at different ages – or as different parts. When I feel like every thought in my head has legs and is running away from me, I try to see which part of self, or which age, beckons my attention. I close my eyes and breathe to center my attention and either ask what part of self needs attention, or I simply visualize an age... whatever comes first. I just let the answer or image emerge and trust what comes to me. Sometimes I see a five-year-old beckoning, needing someone to listen to her (even if that person is me), and sometimes an eight-year-old appears. I usually ask, “What do you need?” Often, I write the question down in my dominant hand and then answer the question, writing with my non-dominant hand. Lately, the response I receive revolves around the need to feel loved. To address this, I imagine the faces of everyone who loves me.

In this process, I literally show the child inside all the people who love her.

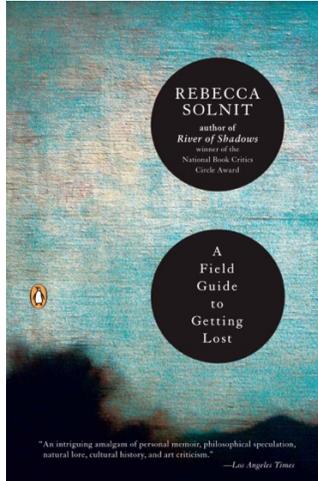




I'm Confident That:

When we attend to the children that thrive within us, we become patient and compassionate with ourselves, and grounding ensues.

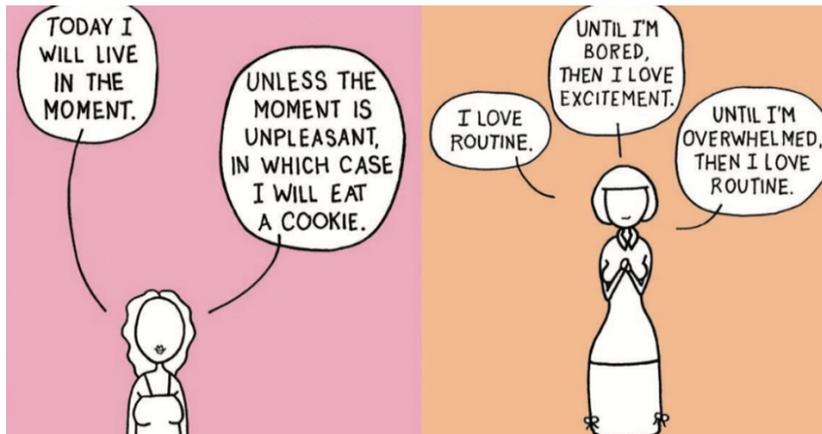
A Reading that I Love:



A Field Guide to Getting Lost offers real anecdotes about being lost and tools for how to find ourselves. One chapter, entitled “The Blue of Distance” discusses how the color blue appears as a result of light that is lost. This illustrates a possibility that beauty emerges in the face of loss.

Solnit presses readers to embrace losing the self and things in order to discover anew, in my terms, to uncover what is grounding. She quotes Thoreau: “Not til we are lost, in other words, not till we have lost the world, do we begin to find ourselves, and realize where we are and the infinite extent of our relations.”

Just for Laughs: @everydaypeoplecartoons



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