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SOS: Com Alt Mid-Quarter Evaluation

761 Words

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What an interesting, thoughtful day. I met with my SOS class today for my mid-quarter check-in / seminar, as Sarah and I agreed upon a few weeks ago. I have been reading this book called, the *Lives of Animals*, by John Coetzee (i may be spelling that wrong, is it even John?), which i found to be honestly hard to follow and really lofty, theoretical, and a bit beyond my philosophical aptitude. I did adjust and start to understand more into the depths of it, beyond the actual written word, a ways into it. Writing the pre seminar paper, helped to pinpoint pieces of the hidden messages in the book, but it wasn't really until class that I broke through the barrier of what this book is really about?, and how it actually applies to our class?

When hearing of our mid quarter evaluation assignment, and having a discussion thereover in class, learning of the creative freedoms we were encouraged to explore, as well as discussing the text and its relation to commodification processes and alternatives, it sparked the thought seed in me of my main take away from the Roots and Shoots trainings i did at GRUB last year. This idea that Where during this time of a serious need for activism and community work, how that actually unfolds for an individual, may look extremely different. Where some may drop everything to gather supplies and funds for Standing Rock, and commit a week or month or season to Standing with them, being present as an ally and witness. Or to another, it may be engaging in local politics. For me it was the recognition of my deep rooted need for personal work, for inner work. Stoking my inner fire. Striving to find inner peace, purpose, and strength.

And this was welcomed and honored at GRUB.

And it encouraged me to reinvigorate that personal practice.

Now, almost a year later, I notice within myself an incredible personal transformation. My mental and emotional states are no longer fluctuating to such extremes, I have weathered some intense family emergencies, deaths, and weddings, and managed to heal relationships and old wounds in the process. I have really stepped up my self care game, which will never stop being vitally important to my health and happiness, and made major psychological steps of reflection, acceptance, release and growth. While my body is still holding fast to trauma, stress, injury and pathogens, I am steadied and supported by my community of healers i've gathered over the last year. All this, AND I managed to get myself back into school after 4 years, and countless obstacles.

So here I am, back at GRUB, this time for credit, still significantly focused on my personal work I committed to a year ago.

All that to make the point that — when Coetzee (or Costello) says, "John, I don't know what I want to do. I just don't want to sit silent." in response to John's question, "Do you really think poetry classes will close down the slaughterhouses?" In my opinion the answer is no (as is Costello's) because frankly, the actions of one human aren't going to solve the world's problems on their own. ~~That's not to say~~ I also firmly believe that each individual's actions have a unknowingly huge impact on the fluctuations of any given situation. It is the culmination, the combined force, of these individual acts that enacts change and progress (in either direction). So, to make that change that we all (general blanket statement alert) so desperately want to see, it is not a matter of finding THE

solution to War or Racism or Food Deserts. Instead, as i see it, it's about directing your passion in a way that brings you true joy and sustenance, and trusting that the work you are doing for yourself and your community is making a lasting impact on the world.

~~And that's just it~~ That is how i view my internship at GRUB. I may not be "ending hunger" but i am undoubtedly adding my flame to the fire. By plugging in, with my educational goals and roles, by putting in hours to rewrite curriculum and rebuild the field trip program, i am making a difference— one that is felt by myself, by the GRUB community, by the youth and visitors, and depending on how they applied what they learned, in their futures, the ripple goes on and on.

My words of encouragement for myself and anyone else who may be reading this, is this:

know yourself, know your worth, keep centered and present in yourself and your work will flow out as naturally as the river courses through the mountainside to the sea.

And yes, you are making a difference, what you're doing (or not doing) matters!