

Recycling Goethean Science

Term Paper for Spring Quarter of
*As Poetry Recycles Neurons:
Flocks of Words, Tracks of Letters*

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Abstract

*Goethean science is an approach to observation that allows the observer to see the connections between him or herself and the chosen phenomenon; to acknowledge and explore the environment's effect on the observer, and the observer's effect on what is observed. Through a field study in the class *As Poetry Recycles Neurons* at The Evergreen State College, I have used this phenomenological method to study cycles. I have spent the last two months bicycling down the west coast of the United States visiting places where people choose to live more closely with cycles – including farms, intentional communities, and retreat centers. While cycling around to these various communities, I have used this approach, as described in Craig Holdrege's paper *Doing Goethean Science*, to observe and interact with many cycles. I use his ideas along with the model of Buhner's blend of poetry and prose in *The Secret Teachings of Plants* as a framework for this paper, as I seek to explain and illustrate this method. The Goethean practice begins with curiosity, a riddle, moves into observation or conversation with the phenomena, recycles the mind through exact picture building, and finds its completion in seeing the whole. Throughout this paper I have sought to bring my prose (in standard font) and poetic voices (centered and in Italics) into conversation with the voices of experts. Through this paper, it is my hope that the reader is able to understand and grasp Goethean science, and then apply this method of engaging the world to more deeply understand any question or phenomenon.*

I. The Riddle

This is how it begins - with curiosity – the very edge of passion beginning to blossom. Every journey into the method of Goethean science starts with curiosity and mystery. The riddles, the questions, that initially drew me on a bicycle journey around the United States were ‘How do I want to live?’ and ‘What are the possibilities?’ As I looked more deeply and with more breadth at these queries, I realized the core of this search was about living honestly, vulnerably, and intentionally with people, plants, animals and the earth. A pattern that emerged in the places I began visiting – farms, eco-villages, communes and retreat centers– was that people in these places live closely with cycles. From there, my journey became about finding the patterns and cycles inherent in cycling on my bicycle, in communication, in farming, in my own emotional state, in breath, rest, movements, and in all the other minute and vast ways I participate in cycles each moment.

This is the seed.

This is the origin, the place of birth.

Hiding potential energy,

Holding it for the perfect moment

To begin its unfolding.

The mystery of the closed, dark subterranean center of the seed is brought to life in a double spiral unfurling. This is the great complexity of darkness sinking deep and reaching up simultaneously. In myself over the past months I have lived this metaphor. As I have begun to put myself out in the world; I have simultaneously needed to become more rooted within myself.

This process began with a symbolic action. Just before I set off on my journey I asked my friend and classmate to shave my head for me. There are many layers of ideas and desires that motivated this action. I see this as a symbol of vulnerability; a direct parallel with my journey. By choosing to travel, and by going by myself, I am making myself vulnerable and trusting the universe to support me when I need help, and to challenge me when there are lessons I need to learn. I also think of having a shaved head as a representation of innocence. For me, this is a powerful reminder to continually look at the world through new eyes - to bring wonder and curiosity to every situation.

I find that remembering these values and desires comes in cycles, just as my fears, motivation, inspiration, and breath are all patterns that draw spirals in time. Continually in this study of cycles I find there are more cycles. By looking closer at their roots, deeper patterns and more questions emerge. These questions, this curiosity and passion, are the first indications of a deer path that leads deep into the wilderness of reality. In Holdrege's words, "The riddle that draws a particular person is the beginning of a pathway into the world." (Holdrege, 2005, p. 48)

II. Into the Phenomena

The root of Goethean science lies in fully experiencing a phenomenon: observing it from every possible angle. In this way of interacting with the world, the observer is anchored inside the observation. The observer and the observed are inseparable; they are in a space of mutually creating one another. "Life is creation." (Bernard, in Rose & Abi-Rachard, 2013, p. 109)

And observation is creation.

Observing in this manner becomes a process of asking questions, listening to and

exploring the chosen phenomenon at every level. One does this by sitting with the phenomenon and noticing the sensations that arise in the body, by thoroughly observing the patterns and cycles within the phenomenon over time, and by finding experts and learning from their observations – doing research. Simultaneously, the observer needs to be both asking questions and listening - taking an active role in the conversation and becoming intimate with the phenomenon.

A pattern in my journey has been synchronicities - miraculous coincidences, which I see as poetic invitations to look into the deeper nature of reality. I have found when I really need support, or a place to stay, people appear who joyfully give me what I need. One example of this was when I pulled into Grants Pass Oregon. I had been hoping to get down to Williams that evening, but it was too many miles to cover that day. I stopped at the health food store in town, finished packing up my groceries, and was wondering what I would do next. At that moment, as I was starting to push my bike down the sidewalk, there was a man walking in the other direction. I smiled, said hello, looked him in the eye and, after asking how he was doing, asked if he had a lawn I could sleep on that night. He paused, and asked “You really need a place to stay tonight?” I said “Yes.” After introducing himself as Bill, he immediately offered me a place to sleep in his guest bedroom. He fed me dinner, and had a computer for me to work on, and when I started talking about the school work I needed to do, he even offered to give me a place to sleep for another night. I gratefully accepted his offer.

While staying with Bill, we had several conversations about his understanding of reality; particularly about facing challenges. As I see it now, beyond each problem or hill - which is a very physically accurate metaphor for my journey - there is always a bigger hill, a greater challenge, which wasn't visible or comprehensible before the previous problem was overcome.

Even having experienced these series of circumstances myself, I am still in awe of how this unfolded. The transformation of a stranger into a father-figure who taught me such applicable lessons about life is miraculous. (For a basic outline of my travels, see Appendix A, and for my full travel log, see Appendix B.)

The point of my body pulls
The thread of energy behind me as my legs pump
Synchronized with the beat
Of my lungs - air becoming sound.
As my heart slips back into the drumbeat of my breath
The stone walls, earth halls that follow
And contain my ascent
Breathe with my whole body.
Tumbling the indigo of dreams
Of death and rebirth back into the world
Of this dimension, though shadow and light
See and smell and taste me the same, as I wander
And sway through both simultaneously
In the heart of the mountain of my heart
And on the peak, I am unbalanced, precarious
As a monarch just unfurling its wet,
Orange, new wings, moments before flying.

One week after I met Bill, I was reminded that ‘Observe and Interact’ is one of the key

principles of permaculture, which is “a sustainable design system stressing the harmonious interrelationship of humans, plants, animals and the Earth” (Mollison, 1999, p. 59). While I stayed at a farm called ‘7 Seeds’ in Southern Oregon I attended an introduction to this way of interacting with the world. Following an accurate observation, a person can apply the naturally occurring patterns, whether biological or social, to creating an abundant, diverse and resilient way of living. Some permaculture teachers recommend observing the natural patterns of the life on the land for a couple years before interacting. In taking this permaculture course, I found many parallels I had previously been unaware of between permaculture and my class, *As Poetry Recycles Neurons*. The common thread is Goethean science; remembering myself as the observer affecting the observation has become another cycle. As I have woven myself a spiraling cocoon, I have begun to notice the interconnectedness of all beings, all patterns, all movement and stillness.

*Inside, outside, alone, with others, listening to birds and trees and rivers,
washed in the cool light of the moon,
She cupped her hand about her ear, to hear the branching
and spiraling, the cathedrals of oceanic fractals
In minds, in bodies, on the skin of the earth and floating in the sheets of the sky,
She has felt the buds of hands, and the souls of feet
Unfold into ripening perceptions in the inevitable darkness of each body's re-making.*

I have sought out people who live closely with cycles – those who choose to live closely with the earth and closely with people, those who have chosen a path of seeming risk and

therefore growth. I have asked questions and listened to many people, plants, caves and clouds, and in all of these I have found more transformational cycles. As Goethe describes: “When something has acquired a form it metamorphoses immediately into a new one. If we wish to arrive at some living perception of Nature we ourselves must remain as quick and flexible as Nature and follow the example She gives” (Goethe, in Buhner, 2004, p. 153).

Observing and researching the cycles that happen all around brings me back into myself and my patterns. In turn, seeing my patterns allows me to develop and grow beyond them. This study of cycles has allowed me to release some of my attachment to my emotional state - to ride the wave - whether it is incredibly intense or gentle. Just after entering Northern California on the Redwoods Highway, I was cycling, and feeling calm in the constant circling of my legs and the recycling of my thoughts (moving from back, to shoulders, legs, and arms). The highway was narrow, and cars started to get backed up behind me. As cars began to pass, someone rolled down his window and yelled, ‘You idiot. You deserve to be hit!’ I felt his words sink into my solar plexus, and blast through my chest. I wasn’t in a place I could stop, so I decided to process this experience later. As I reached the top of the hill, I started to coast down, and began letting all the emotions bubbling up wash over me: the fear and pain, a burning of helplessness. After sobbing and fully feeling my emotions and seeing their roots within my own unmet needs for safety and kindness, I began to consider what might have been going on for him that day. I’m guessing he was scared, or there was something in his life that was really challenging for him in that moment - that he was in pain of some kind.

In that moment, I was recognizing him in me and myself in him. This doesn’t make what he said acceptable, but this view allows me to hold myself and this man simultaneously with deep compassion and empathy. This experience taught me again about the reflections we each

are for one another in every moment. I was also reminded of a children's book called *The Little Soul and the Sun* by Neill Donald Walsh. The gem I took away from this book was that every being is an angel allowing each of us to experience ourselves in different ways. In this case, this man, this angel, allowed me to experience forgiveness, compassion, acceptance and love. It is my hope that others find the flow of this cycle - from contraction, fear, or anger, to an opening into empathy, deeper understanding and compassion for themselves as well as others. In the poem, *Discovering Your Subject* by Pattiann Rogers, I discovered the same slip between self and other as I found within myself on this day.

“Finally one day when the boat's lines are drawn in completely,

It will begin to move away, gradually changing its size,

Enlarging the ocean, requiring less sky, and suddenly it might seem

That you are the one moving. You are the one altering space,

Gliding easily over rough surfaces toward the mark

Between the ocean and the sky. You might see clearly,

For the first time, the boat inside the painter inside the boat

Inside the eye watching the painter moving beyond himself.”

(In 'Discovering Your Subject,' Rogers, 1986, p. 88)

The more awareness I bring to cycles, the more noticeable the energy fluctuations - between anger and compassion, patience and impatience, among satiation, desperation and joy, and listening, holding and creating. The valleys have all become deeper and more fertile and filled with shadows, and all the peaks have become more intensely golden, airy and buoyant.

Through all these cycles I feel my heart opening further into love and acceptance of both ends of the spectrum – with no need to grasp either. As I see these cycles in every area of my life and the world, I have begun to recognize the parallels, the reflections of the interpersonal in the intrapersonal and of the macrocosm in the microcosm. *“If we look carefully into the dragonfly's eye, we can see the mountain behind our shoulder”* (Issei poet, paraphrased in ‘Lessons in the old language,’ 2012).

III. Exact Picture Building

This step, which Holdrege also calls sensorial imagination, involves initially retreating from the chosen phenomenon into a separate space to re-create the experience in the mind. For a plant, this would mean bringing up in your mind the size, texture, smell, and color of the plant, as well as noting the sensations that come while remembering. This building in the mind creates space for the phenomenon to escape any reductionist ideas through creativity. “Knowledge ... always entails a break away from the immediate and the concrete to the visualization and manipulation of artificial objects moved by hypothetical forces in abstract space.” (Rose & Abi-Rachard, 2013, p. 80) The imagining of a phenomenon allows a fuller and more accurate experience during the next observation.

For me, this exact picture building was as separate from observation as possible. I decided to check out from the people I considered ‘experts’ and wrote poetry – checking in with the creative cycle within myself. Through this creative process I was able to see the cycles I had been experiencing – the cycle of listening, holding and creating for example – from a new angle,

a broader view, from the perspective of the stars.

*I am a branch of flowers on a lilac bush – one of many.
Just beginning to open are the flowers at the base of the bunch;
As they are starting to share their beauty with the world around,
Beginning to breathe in the foreign fragrances of light and wind,
Their gust of perfume and vibrant color
Becomes part of the vast cycles and spirals that flow and change
The wind of harmonies which are beginning to bend
And shift as feet learn to walk in freedom;
Learning to choose direction and perception.*

I found when using the poetic voice, I learned about cycles in an even deeper way. By writing poetry and experiencing the cycle of creativity (receiving, holding, and then creating) and then returning to read what I had created gave me insight into the broader cycles I had been observing. I felt I had unknowingly created a blueprint for what I had seen, and what I have yet to see. In Rich's words in 'Diving into the Wreck,' "I came to explore the wreck./ The words are purposes./ The words are maps" (*Diving into the wreck*, Rich, 1973).

My own words have become an invitation to travel deeper into the matrix of spirals I have begun to see holding up every living being. As I dive into this infinite pattern through my own poetic voice, I find that voice coming through as I speak. I experience the other edges of the fractals that cycle around me like the golden grains of pollen dusting down from the flowers of

the elder tree. In Holdrege's paper, I found a parallel when he said, "The more I've done this, the more I find that my observing and perceiving becomes dynamic and full of life. I become active while perceiving, following inwardly the shapes, colors, smells or tones as I observe. I sculpt the shapes while looking. This is where... you begin to see more intensely" (Holdrege, 2005, p. 49).

Through writing poetry, and talking with people about cycles, these patterns have become my lens, my perspective, my blueprint of the world. After immersing myself in looking at rhythms, and especially after writing about cycles, I have begun to notice them with greater depth and power in every moment.

IV. Seeing the Whole

In the previous stages of observation and exact picture building of the phenomenon from the mind, often, distinct steps are found. For example, the cycles a plant goes through as it grows, or the development of a fertilized egg into a fully-grown, self-actualized human being. Yet these steps are a creation of the mind. In reality growth is a smooth, seamless process. Beyond the comprehensive details of appearances and other indispensable qualities, Goethe reminds us that "everything is gradually arranged under higher rules and laws, which, however, are not to be made intelligible by words and hypotheses to the understanding merely, but, at the same time, by real phenomena to the senses. We call these archetypal phenomena, because nothing appreciable by the senses lies beyond them, on the contrary, they are perfectly fit to be considered as a fixed point to which we first ascend, step by step, and from which we may, in

like manner, descend to the commonest case of everyday experience” (Goethe, 1810, in Seamon & Zajonc 1998, p. 25).

I had a moment of seeing this archetypal reality while I was swimming in a pond. I was doing the breaststroke, and decided to make the shape of a torus by essentially swimming in the shape of a figure eight. As I began to make my way around the pond, I realized that I was creating fractals – not only in the ripples I was sending across the pond, but the movement of my arms and my legs was a smaller version of the large shape I was making in the pond, and that is the same shape in which the electromagnetic field flowers around and encircles our bodies, which is the same bead-shape that the magnetic field of the earth makes. I find the same circular pattern in this poem, *Little Fugue*.

“Cecil can see the red-tailed hawk growing smaller
And smaller, circling his feet, disappearing finally
Into the black mouth of a single killifish gliding
At the bottom of the pond.

The killifish, simultaneously swallowed up like a lip of sun
By the shadow of the hawk, can be seen as itself once again
Inside Felicia’s laughter.

Felicia, catching up and stepping on the shadow
Of the hawk, has finally seen the black wings of her feet.”

(Rogers, 1986, p. 76)

I have had many moments over the past two months of returning to the beginning of cycles, the place where the fire of curiosity begins to smoke. As I have given myself over to this spark and tinder, I have uncovered many more sedimentary layers of unexpected experiences with cycles, and spirals and fractals - right where I began. "So finding the fertile idea is at once a completion of a process and the beginning of a new one. As an end, it brings us full circle to a more conscious glimpse of the being – the riddle – that formed the starting point of the investigation" (Holdrege, 2005, p. 51).

Finding Fire with the Mountain

The mountain, nearly swallowed as an insect in the haze of sun and distance

Imagines itself in the textures and angles of swallows' flight

As the hawk circles in the song of sleeping willows,

The call of the jays mimics the rocks underfoot in sharp and mountainous jabs.

Air winds through nostrils and throat to the fractal sacs of lungs,

And the wind subtly exiting past loose lips detects the air becoming lighter

As limbs become heavier over the slowly flowing slopes of stones.

Each shadow sharply cast, and every breath of the sun-sweet pine air bring a body

Closer to poetic perception.

And, peering into the gemstone eye of the dragonfly

Reveals the mountain and human heart in every facet and angle,

Each sharp and unyielding edge smoothed into a continuous whole.

When practicing Goethean science, we can see the reflection and refraction of the observed within the observer. Through exploration, examination and interaction with the phenomenon, in conversation and sensorial imagination, all things become archetypal in nature. Peering closely at anything in the world, whether infinitesimal or infinite, discloses deep truths about moving towards right-relationships with ourselves, our communities, animals, plants and the earth as a living and evolving organism. Each being, object, and phenomena, metamorphoses into another as we observe it deeply. Fukuoka saw the same pattern, in *One Straw Revolution* he wrote “Nature has neither a beginning nor an end, before nor after... but only what resembles a circle or sphere” (Fukuoka, 1992, in Buhner, 2004, p. 61). Goethean science is yet another circle continually completing itself. It is a beginning, and an ending, infinitely unfolding like the layers of usnea lichens, ferns, salal berries, and cedars; all unfurling their fractals in a cathedral of cycles.

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Appendix A: Major Stops

4/13 - Leaving Olympia
4/16 - Arrive Portland
4/20 - Tryon Life Community Farm
4/25 - Lighthouse Center Oregon
4/29 - Grants Pass
5/2 - 7 Seeds Farm
5/13 - Black Bear Commune
5/19 - Davis

Appendix B: Full Cycling Log

4/12 Friday – Leaving Olympia... arriving back in Olympia!
6 hours – biking and eating, expending and consuming energy, solitude
3 hours – disordering, ordering
It was my intention of making it to Chehalis when I left, but I learned some important things about my pride when I learned there was a package arriving for me back in Olympia after I had left. Turning around was an arduous process, and nearly physically painful for me. But I did it, and discovered that I can turn around, that it is a possibility, and no one will think less of me for it.

4/13 Saturday – Leaving Olympia, arriving in Chehalis
2 hours – organizing and un-organizing
10 hours – biking and eating – expending and consuming
I knocked on doors to find a place to sleep for the night. For me, choosing which door to knock on, and then asking the person if I could sleep in their yard or on their floor was so hard, and brought to my attention another somewhat similar pattern – remaining silent rather than speaking what is on my mind or in my heart.

4/14 Sunday – Chehalis to Deer Island
2 hours – organizing and un-organizing
10 hours – biking and eating – expending and consuming
I met a wonderful cyclist today who showed me the way through Longview, and right into Oregon! My passage through this city was the sketchiest and scariest part of my journey north from Portland. It seems that the people and things I need are popping up to support me when I need them most!

4/15 Monday – Deer Island to Portland!
2 hours – creating order from disorder
5 hours – biking and eating, inhaling and exhaling, gathering and dispersing, **movement**
1.5 hours – working on bike, a cycle of creating chaos and restoring greater order”

6.5 hours – Stillness

Movement and stillness are a major cycle in my life right now.

4/16 Tuesday – Portland

2.5 hours – creating and destroying... food

4 hours – working on blog

1 hour – consuming, grounding

1 hour – stillness, settling

4/17 Wednesday – Portland

4 hours – Reading Neuro, and Pattiann Rogers, Writing, Reading others' seminar passes

3 hours – attending a talk at Clackamas Community College with a person who calls himself the Planet Walker. He walked around the country for 22 years, and spent 17 of those years without speaking, just listening. He was such a being of love and light. It seemed to me that he had totally let go and was entirely trusting the universe to lead him, and let light shine through him to all the beings around.

4/18 Thursday – Portland

3 hours – Reading Neuro and Pattiann Rogers

3 hours – attending a playful play about the cycles of the constellations – astrology, and the affects of the movements of the planets and the moon on our realities.

1 hour – run, finding movement, and stillness within movement

4/19 Friday – Portland

2 hours – creating order from disorder, or maybe just containing the chaos

4 hours – getting to know my first interveiwee – Jas – and learning about community organizing and social permaculture

1.5 hours – doing the interview

2 hours – working on my blog, logging hours

I've been seeing how cycles permeate every moment, every object and life around me, and every movement of thought or emotion within me. I see permaculture and cycles merging together in so many different, distinct yet overlapping areas – socially, economically and ecologically.

4/20 Saturday – a visit to Tryon Life Community Farm

1.5 hr – biking there; a lot of deep inhalation and rapid exhalation

7 hrs – at Tryon Life in a cycle between community and solitude

I accidentally chose a treacherous route up a very steep road with lots of cars and no shoulder. Once I got there, I was welcomed warmly by a beautiful group of people laughing and singing. After being there for a half an hour, I was asked to leave the area – I could be in the garden, but the person whose party was being held there had asked, through a community member that I leave this private party. To be honest, this was probably the hardest thing on my journey so far.

I chose, as this community member was asking me to go somewhere else, the path of vulnerability. I was able to express with words, through my tears, that I was confused and that what was really important to me in that moment was connection and acceptance. After hearing this, the community member softened, and offered to join me in the garden for a while. What, to me, seemed like rejection, hurt really deeply, and throughout the rest of the day I found myself worked into tears by little things. And, simultaneously, felt so held by this community. Each person that I expressed my pain to made space for me, as I was, which I am so deeply grateful for.

After returning to Portland that evening, I felt so cleansed and light from my experience. I also learned something I need to keep in mind as I continue visiting places – a) communities are navigating the boundary between public and private and b) I need to make a point to become aware of communities' structures, rules and boundaries as I enter. So far, these include dress code, meditation practice, housing situation, pronouns, or the membrane between private and public events and property.

4/21 Sunday – Portland to Salem

8 hrs – cycling, using energy and refueling

3.5 hrs – expressing and listening

1 hr – reading and writing, consuming and creating

I stayed in Salem with a friend of a dear friend from high school. She happened to be hosting a couch surfing couple from New Zealand (where I spent two months a year and a half ago) on the same night! It was so wonderful to hear their accents and to talk about New Zealand, and food and vocabulary. They fed the whole house a wonderful dinner, it was heaps of fun!

4/22 Monday – Salem to Corvallis

3 hrs – cycling, getting warm, going fast!

3 hrs – cooling down, slowing down

5 hrs – reconnecting and connecting

A super short day of biking, with the wind at my back! It went so fast, and then I went to one of my favorite spots on Mary's River – a sweet tree hangs over the river, with some lovely ropes attached to it! Needless to say, and despite the cold water, I went for a nice swim. Not a long one. I also visited the Organic Growers Club Farm near Oregon State University, a lucky coincidence that they were having their annual Hoo Haa event! Dinner and free face painting for all!

4/23 Tuesday – Corvallis to Cottage Grove- 65 miles!

6 hrs – in the seat

1.5 hrs – giving my poor butt a break

3 hrs – reconnecting :) and refueling

I decided to make it a long day, since the wind was still at my back, and I was feeling so good, and had a place I knew I could stay in Cottage Grove with a friend's wonderful parents :)

4/24 Wednesday – Cottage Grove to Oakland Oregon

5 hours – cycling between movement and stillness

1 hour – a bath! In a claw foot tub! SO. GOOD.

5 hours – talking about cycling, routes, gardening, places I could visit... and eating some pizza
35 miles of up and down and up and down and some gravel; an exciting, beautiful, short day! I stayed with this sweet couple that I found on Warm Showers (couch surfing for cyclists). The cyclist of the household recommended some routes which have been really excellent so far, which have kept me off of I-5 for all but 4 miles :) Karolyn and Wayne recommended a little organic shop and meditation center called Lighthouse Center Oregon to me.

4/25 Thursday – Riding Oakland to Lighthouse Center

2 hours – excited cycling!

2 hours – in stillness, at the shop, waiting to see if they could accommodate me

4 hour – settling in, sharing lunch with the community, connecting -

2 hours – My first stop where I got to pull weeds! And we talked a little about the form of meditation the community practices.

It was so sweet to be welcomed into this community on such short notice. They all were so genuine, and excited to meet me and hear all about what I'm doing, and I was so inspired to hear what they are doing. They have a bakery, café, and shop (mostly bulk items) where they sell bread they bake in a crazy awesome cobb oven they created, sell produce that they grow, create beautiful, nourishing, vegetarian food, and delight all that enter with warmth.

4/26 Friday – A day at Lighthouse Center Oregon!

6 hours – in the garden and greenhouse

2 hours – fueling up

4 hours – in the cycle of communication – listening and expressing
After such a wonderful experience Thursday, I wanted to spend another day, and so I did! I got to work more in the garden – they have two very large hoop houses that are side by side, creating probably half an acre of indoor space. We planted peas and beans, I harvested nasturtium leaves, and we planted a bunch of different varieties of flowers outside.

I found these people to be so loving and gentle and open. I shared many touching moments of vulnerability, trust, and generosity.

4/27 Saturday – Leaving Lighthouse

8 hours – cycling –

2 hours – finding a place to camp, making camp, filtering water, making food, bundling up for the night

I was biking a little against the wind towards the end of the day, and didn't get as far as I was aiming for, but found a sweet little camping spot right on Cow Creek – I got to sleep on sand, which I think is my most comfortable night camping so far :) Sand camping is a different game – you know those little square games where you make a picture or put numbers in order by moving pieces around to the one open space? It felt like I had to do that with all my stuff to keep from getting sand in everything.

4/28 Sunday – Arrival in Wolf Creek

3 hours – gathering, organizing, re-organizing, disorganizing

2 hours – reading, writing – receiving, expressing

6 hours – cycling

Another day when I was planning on making it further... This time it wasn't energy or wind that stopped me though. I got to Wolf Creek, and went into the Inn there to see if I could charge my phone which had died earlier, and they welcomed me in, and let me play their piano :) yay! And when I asked if they had any recommendations for places for me to camp that night, the innkeeper just handed me a key to a room, and said that I could have breakfast in the morning. Of course I said yes – not only was there a bed, and food for me, there was also the amazing invention that I no longer take for granted – a shower.

4/29 Monday – Wolf Creek to Grants Pass

5 hours – cycling of inhalation and exhalation

4 hours – listening, holding, and digging deeper

Got my second flat of the trip today. It only took me about 20 minutes to stop, unload, figure out what had gone wrong, and put everything back together again, which was awesomely fast compared to last time. Tire pries that didn't break definitely helped.

I got to GP, went into a little health food store there, and connected with one person after another. I ended up gearing up to go see a shop, when a man walked past me on the side walk, and I asked if he had a lawn I could spend the night on. I picked the right man. He let me use his guest room, and computer, fed me a wonderful dinner, and we talked about what I was doing, and also a lot about his life philosophies. One of the biggest lessons I gleaned from this conversation was the importance of seeing the patterns, rhythms, and cycles that aren't helpful in my life, and confronting them within myself. To take responsibility for all that I do, for the ways I react, and for the things I attract into my life

4/30 Tuesday – In Grants Pass

2 hours – fueling

2 hours – physical movement, mental stillness

6 hours – reading, writing – on the computer. Mental movement, physical stillness

I feel so good being caught up on all this work that I was starting to feel a little behind on. This is the day that balances out all of the physical movement I've been doing, as well as all the interactions I've had with so many amazing people – the majority of today was for reflection, writing, organizing, preparation and solitude.

5/1 Wednesday – 30 miles from Grants Pass to 7 Seeds Farm near Williams Oregon

3.5 hours – cycling in excitement!

1 hour – fueling

1.5 hours – weeding and talking; immersion in the cycle of physical and mental movement

1.5 hours – pulling and organizing drip tape

3 hours – connecting with conversation and food

5/2 Thursday – at 7 Seeds – community day

1.5 hour – cycling into disorganization and organization

4 hours – weeding the garden we are all welcome to eat from

1.5 hours – making and eating food; talking about enough, abundance, and the triple bottom line (economic, ecological and social sustainability)

Moved into my space while I'm here – a bus which has been outfitted with a stove, a wood burning stove, a sink, a bed and some benches! It's an awesome space and it feels so good to be able to spread out my stuff. Sometimes I feel like I have to live in a perpetual state of ultimate organization.

5/3 Friday – at 7 Seeds

4 hours – weeding parsnips (yes, just one row)

1 hour – cycling into town to grab some food

5/4 Saturday - at 7 Seeds, a day off

2 hours – reading and writing Seminar Pass

3.5 hours – Intro to Permaculture taught by Don Tipping

1 hour – hike to Medicine Mountain

5 hours – diving into the depths of conversation around a fire – constantly in cycling between burning hot, and needing more fuel

5/5 Sunday - at 7 Seeds – we got some rain!

1 hour – hiking down from Medicine Mountain

2 hours – weeding onions

1 hour – reading The One-Straw Revolution

2 hours – re-creating paper outline

1.5 hours – getting together some lilac brew

This day was a trip. I got a few hours of sleep up on the Mountain, and then entered the intense world of re-creating my paper outline – cycling in fractals of dreams

5/6 Monday - at 7 Seeds – Thunder Storm

1 hour – helping friends clean up old home and move out stuff

1.5 hours – reading Neuro, working on Sem pass

4 hours – Hula Hoeing onions

1 hour – transplanting lettuce

I. Love. Thunder Storms. The elemental power is so beautiful.

5/7 Tuesday - at 7 Seeds

1.5 hour – feeding animals, watering plants; a vital part of the cycle of this farm

3 hours – lost in cycles of the mind

4 hours – moving, cycling, running, swimming toroids in toroids; fractals of the body

2 hours – weeding – another important part of the cycle of growing food on this land at this time

1 hour – playing piano!

This was a really hard day for me – I was alone on the farm and just felt lost and uncomfortable. I kept finding myself mindlessly eating instead of doing something. I ended up spinning my wheels (metaphorically) for more than 3 hours, jumping from one task to another before I finally got myself to leave the land. I just needed a break. I ended up doing a mini triathlon – bike, run, swim.

While I was swimming I had this awesome experience. I've been thinking a lot about the mirrored cycles of the shape of the torus, and I decided to swim in the pond in that shape (it was more of a figure 8, but that's close). I had this realization: I was embodying a fractal. I was making a torus in the pond, while I was making the same shape with both my arms and my legs!

5/8 Wednesday – at 7 Seeds

1 hour – connecting with the plants and animals of this farm

2 hours – cycling backwards to catch neglected computer work

2 hours – taking pictures

2 hours – biking into town go buy some food!

5/9 Thursday – at 7 Seeds

2 hours – harvesting willow branches

3 hours – patching a cobb bench that was falling apart

4 hours – harvesting pea greens, wild oyster mushrooms, other wild and cultivated edible plants, rolling out whole wheat noodles, and finally, digging in!

A community project day – we harvested willow branches to cure, and later soak and weave into baskets, we reshaped a cobb bench and we cooked a delightful meal – home made pasta, with fresh veggies from the garden!

5/10 Friday – 7 Seeds towards the Redwoods

7 hours – cycling and re-cycling the pedals; stopped because of the headwind, which was no longer manageable at 7pm

I camped on this evening at a day use site, on top of a picnic table, since it was the flattest, least rocky area I could find. It was a beautiful night full of stars, with many cycles between sleep and dreams and looking at the stars which somehow are a part of my perception of this reality.

5/11 Saturday – to Crescent City

7 hours – inhaling and exhaling, finding a rhythm between fear and calm as I wound my way through the mountains to Jedediah Smith State Park and the Redwoods and the ocean.

5/12 Sunday – Crescent city to a rest stop

8 hours – cycling and recycling neurons

I met so many cyclists today!

5/13 Monday - BB

3 hours - hiking to white bear mine, finding peace in a place ravaged by greed and lack of forethought

2 hours - hiking up to the gulch - a high point on a ridge overlooking the valley where black bear is seated

3 hours - again lost is both appreciating and feeling frustrated with no one giving me direction, and not knowing how to find that direction within myself

5/14 Tuesday - ride from BB

.5 hour - starting a fire in the ditch oven, the only fire lit during the day

1 hour - milking goats

2 hours - saying goodbye to people, getting contact information, gathering scattered pieces

3 hours - driving back towards civilization, dropped off in Orleans, talking about cycles in relationships and the power, advantages and disadvantages of polyamory

1 hour - meeting people at a little store in the mountains, trying to find a ride

2 hours - back in the saddle

.5 hour - appreciating a rainbow with a fellow traveler

2 hours - being welcomed into a generous person's home, experiencing a fire ceremony, talking about astrology and all the cycles that exist within that paradigm

5/15 Wednesday - School work day

3 hours - weeding, shoveling bark, beautifying the garden

1.5 hours - reconnecting with internet

2 hours - reconnecting with my parents, helping to ground them and calm them down

2 hours - reconnecting with school work, working on time logs, poetry, sem passes

5/16 Thursday - hitching

8 hours - hitch hiking; a cycle of standing and trusting, and feeling people's energy as they pulled over to see if I needed a ride. I got a ride from 2 construction guys, and then caught a ride to Mad River - middle of nowhere with this cool farmer dude named Quin, and chilled with him and his friends

5/17 Friday - Catching a ride to Chico

5 hours - hitching

4 hours - taking it really easy, appreciating part of the cycle of birth and death - seeing and holding a baby

I stood in the middle of nowhere for 2 hours, turned down 4 short rides, and then, miraculously, got a ride all the way from Mad River to Chico. One Ride. It was crazy awesome - this cool guy, Bill, from Kentucky picked me up in his rental car, and we talked about farming and food and how to live life, and we saw a coyote, half a dozen deer, and a baby brown bear. Stayed with Katie and Aren and their sweet 3 week old baby :)

5/18 Saturday - chico to Yuba city

5 hours - back on the bike, straight into the wind

2 hours - sleeping and dozing, exploring the line between conscious and unconscious

2 hours - refueling my body which I am so deeply grateful for, with food lovingly prepared by two lovely people - Rick and Sharon who hosted me in Yuba City

5/19 Sunday - Davis; a warm welcome at Sunwise common house

5 hours - ride to Davis

2.5 hours - non-violent communication workshop at the collective house called Sunwise where I'm staying this week

3 hours - connecting with the beautiful people and plants of this place

1 hours - completing the order portion of the cycle of creativity - dishes and stacking pots and beautifying the garden

2 hours - catching a bee swarm! which is an incredible part of the life cycle of a hive

5/20 - Monday

2 hours - Massage and Reiki Trade (a little cycle of skill exchanging)

4 hours - preparing and sharing food with a beautiful community of people. Monday nights, "Late but Great!"

2 hours - going through all my stuff, I no longer need all my cold-weather gear; transitioning with the cycles of the seasons

5/21 - Tuesday

5 hours - writing 'Recycling Goethean Science'

2 hours - time logging

1 hour - picking cherries

1 hour - community dinner

5/22 - Wednesday

1 hour - run; movement

1 hour - playing piano

5 hours - writing 'Recycling Goethean Science'

1 hour - community dinner

5/23 - Thursday

6 hours - writing 'Recycling Goethean Science'

1 hour - yoga on roof!

1 hour - attended a community dinner in a neighborhood called 'N Street' where they took down all their fences and created common space, gardens, and walkways where the back yards used to be

1 hour - check-ins at meeting at Sunwise

1 hour - writing poetry

5/24 - Friday

2 hours - writing 'Recycling Goethean Science'

3 hours - the inauguration of the Compassion Corner, tour of Davis

3 hours - seeing the Honey Drops (a band from the Bay area) and dancing!

5/25 - Saturday - farm visit

2 hours - driving through a landscape that does not follow the natural cycles of the earth:

Monoculture

1.5 hour - farm tour

4 hours - moving dirt, using a jackhammer, digging a pooper

1 hour - hiking down to the creek and swimming

2 hours - preparing and sharing food

1.5 hours - making music!

5/26 - Sunday - return to Davis

2 hours - bike ride to a bee sanctuary, and to Putah Creek to watch the last beads of sunlight drip down beyond the mountains. There were river otters too!

5/27 - Monday

3 hours - writing/compiling poetry

2 hours - wrote a song

2 hours - preparing and sharing food

1.5 hours - played piano, listened to a sweet jam session

5/28 - Tuesday

1.5 hour - bike ride :)

1 hour - preparing and giving my final presentation

3.5 hours - struggling to edit videos

1 hour - pulling Bermuda grass

5/29 - Wednesday

1 hour - run to creek

.5 hour - time logging

.5 hour - Ace visit to grab brackets for my bike

1 hour - tour of the food Co-op

3 hours - fixing up my bike at an amazing bike collective called 'Bike 4th'

.5 hour - learning about the Cafe Gratitude method of clearing

5/30 - Thursday - This day I messed a bunch of shit up.

1.5 hour - running and exploring

2.5 hours - organizing and expanding my blog

4 hours - writing my self-evaluation for class (I found out when I finished that I had not done the assignment the way my teacher had asked my class to)

2 hours - sharing another meal with the residents of N-Street Community

5/31 - Friday

3 hours - redoing the self evaluation

3 hours - working on movie stuff - I got my first video posted! :)

3 hours - hanging out on the town, there was a "Food Truck Rodeo" and a party at the bike collective - Bike 4th - where I did my first silk screening ever!

6/1 - Saturday

6 hours - re-writing 'Recycling Goethean Science'

It was just too hot to do anything else.

6/2 - Sunday

4.5 hours - biking to Sacramento, checking out the capitol, riding along the American River

3 hours - connecting with the only other solo, female cyclist I've met on my journey

3 hours - writing 'Recycling Goethean Science,' including compiling time logs