

Welcome to Living the Questions!

This is the text accompaniment to the year-long class offered in 2019 by Molly Remer of [Brigid's Grove](#). Archived class materials may be found [here](#).

"I want to beg you, as much as I can...to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

—Rainer Maria Rilke

Thank you for joining me on this exploratory journey through the questions of our lives! This class was inspired by multiple quotes, one being the quote from Rilke above, but also by Jennifer Louden's writings on Living the Questions in her book, [Comfort Secrets for Busy Women](#), and by this quote:

"There are years that ask questions and years that answer."

--Zora Neale Hurston

I feel like this is a year for questions and for *living and leaning into our questions*. I also think this is a year for **listening**--to ourselves, to our hearts, to our souls, to the answers that arise from within.

Our first audio is [here](#). Feel free to reflect upon it in your own journals and/or in the [private Facebook group](#) created for this class.

I really want to create a class experience that is easy, gentle, and applies no pressure, only an opportunity to reflect and to learn from yourself. The content to follow with "bite-sized" content will help you to continue to engage, to consider new aspects of the questions, and will be nice for those who prefer written content to audio content (or, who enjoy both!)

***Be brave
and audacious
in your listening.***

What is your question of the year?

"How you listen is how you live."

--Danielle LaPorte

This quote was briefly explored in the [first audio recording](#) for our shared exploration and I encouraged you to reflect on your own "questions of the year."

- What would it be like to hold the unknowing inside?
- What is the shape/form of your life right now? (mudflat, ocean, river, mountain, desert, rainbow, etc.)
- What are your questions of the year?

I find that listening for your own questions then provides the action: **if you were living this question, what would you do next? How would you act, feel, know, or understand?**

Your questions may be different, but my own questions of the year are these:

What do I want?

How am I listening?

What would happen if I trusted myself?

I would be honored to know yours.

"The earth itself responds to our listening and sends us the whispers that only the practiced ear can record."

--Anne Wilson Schaef

May you question and may you listen.

The Listening Hours

*Where might you find
a spot to nestle?
To watch and wonder.
To listen and feel.
To incubate your own being
and soothe your own heart.
This is cave time
soul song
heart call
life beat.
The listening hours.*

Living the Questions, to me, begins with **listening**. Listening to yourself, to your heart, to your soul, to the whispers of the wild, to the goddess in your veins.

This [ritual recording from last year](#) is about **listening**...listening to your intuition, to natural oracles, to your heart, to the Goddess, to the unconscious, to the dreamtime. Are you listening? What is whispering to you from the dreamtime? From your intuition? From the crow and river?

In the audio, I also share a “witch’s walk” exercise, thoughts about everyday acts of life-changing magic, and poems of course! Oh, and a little snippet about “balance” and what listening to the earth teaches us about it. :)

Affirmation: I listen to the messages around me.

We are embedded within a rich tapestry of guidance and wisdom all of the time, we only need to make the space to listen to it.

***May you be mindful and attuned.
May you listen to your dreams,
to your intuition,
and to the messages all around you.***

Everyday Magic

“There are moments when I think we assign ‘magic’ to a little box on our altar and think that ‘magic’ is when we light a candle and stick a pin in it, but magic is so much more than that. It’s the very essence of our rites. Magic happens every time we step into ritual space, take a deep breath in the woods, or direct a little ‘something-something’ to make our daily lives a better place. For me, it’s woven into the DNA of my practice...”

—Jason Mankey, in *Witches and Pagans* magazine (2015)

This year I continued the daily practice I established last year of being alert to and making a notation in my daily planner of the magic I've encountered that day. It is like a gratitude journal only it is a daily magic journal. I had 365 entries for last year. That's a lot of magic!

This year, since my word of the year is "listen," I'm also doing a daily notation of what I've listened to during the day. I encourage you to think of a very simple "Living the Questions" daily practice for yourself for 2019 as well, a touchstone with the goddess, with your path, with your soul...maybe it will be a journal note like mine, maybe it will be a daily prayer, maybe it will be in photo form, maybe it will be a card draw, something that will connect you to and enhance your own magic, or awareness of the magic surrounding you each day.

This [audio](#) explores what it is I mean when I use the phrase Everyday Magic as well as some thoughts about magic in general.

“The terrain of the mysteries is the ordinary. To seek out mystery, we don’t have to go anywhere. We must simply change our perception, our description, our consciousness of where we are.”

—Starhawk, *Truth or Dare*

The Deeper River

"I trust the mystery. I trust what comes in silence and what comes in nature where there's no diversion. I think the lack of stimulation allows us to hear and experience a deeper river that's constant, still, vibrant, and real. And the process of deep listening with attention and intention catalyzes and mobilizes exactly what's needed at that time."

--Angeles Arrien

Listen in this pause in this stillness.

Wait.

There is nothing you need to do.

What do you trust?

Can you hear the "deeper river"?

The second foundation audio is available for you [here](#).

These are the core questions I pose in this audio:

- **How is your listening expressed in your living?**
- **Have you stopped listening to yourself? (and, whether or not you have OR haven't, what supports your own listening space?)**
- **What do you trust?**
- **Can you hear the deeper river (of your life)?**

I want to remind you that there are no "right answers" this class and really, perhaps, even **no goals** for it, it is very much a personal process of exploration and reflection. At the same time I feel strongly that we learn much from other's experiences with the questions of living. Your questions may be similar to mine, they may be very different. I want to be clear that I don't hold a "master key" to unlocking the questions or *how* to engage with them or even whether they relate to anyone other than me, instead I'm sharing what I feel inspired to share, which is woven from a tapestry of personal experiences, self-inquiry, study, reading, consideration, reflection, and inspiration. Thank you for trusting me to take this journey with you and to learn with you as we move through the year!

*I am endlessly
inspired by the
reality
of what it is
to live in this world.*

Practice: Setting Your Root

*I want to spy
on the red-shouldered hawk
that lives in our field
and learn about its life.
I want to discover more secrets
from the crows who visit our
compost pile each morning.
I want to sit in the woods
on a rock every day
and listen to the birds.
I want to keep a date
with sunset
every night this year.*

These are some of my goals for the year exactly as I described them to Mark on one of our walks last month. First, they made me laugh as I heard them spoken aloud, but I also realized that I am 100% serious about them and they belong on my list as much, or more so, than any other traditional goal.

This week I have a practice-based audio for you. It is called [Setting Your Root](#) and it is from the book [The Mist-Filled Path](#) by Frank MacEowen.

What is your root?

*May you listen
and learn from
the story of your life
as it is being written
right now.*

Practice: Blessing and Releasing

"The world's full of people who have stopped listening to themselves," wrote mythologist Joseph Campbell. It's imperative that you NOT be one of those folks. 2019 should be the Year of Listening Deeply to Yourself. That means being on high alert for your inner inklings, your unconscious longings, and the still, small voice at the heart of your destiny. If you do that, you'll discover I'm right when I say that you're smarter than you realize.

--Rob Brezsny

Are you listening to yourself?

This week I have a [quick practice-based audio](#) for you. This is my first effort at making a "bite-sized" audio instead of a long musing. It is about blessing and releasing things in your life and is based on [this blog post by Julie Wolk about "Marie Kondo'ing Your Business."](#)

What are you ready to thank, or bless, and lay to rest?

*May you coax
your own truth out
of hiding.*

Practice: A Place Meditation

“No longer am I only hearing my own voice but instead I co-exist in a world where everything speaks with its own unique, quirky, gorgeous personality. Every berry has a little voice, every grass stalk makes itself known. I become surrounded by a community of living Earth, and this entire community is willing to play with me in this changing game of life.”

—Day Schildkret ([Morning Altars](#), @morningaltars)

What is waiting for you to notice it? Do you have time to play in this changing game of life?

This week our practice-based audio comes from Day Schildkret. It is a [Place Meditation](#).

I would love to hear what you discover in your own place!

*May you delight
in the many voices
of this ensouled world
as they rise up
to speak to
and through
you.*

Wandering and Wondering:

*I want to tell
small stories
about everyday
enchantment
and real magic.*

*I want to journey
in my own back yard.*

Questions from the audio:

- What is happening in your own back yard?
- What real-life magic is waiting for you to notice it?
- Where might you journey in your physical body that is nearby?
- What might you be overlooking that is near you that would be willing to share things with you if you looked at it/for it?

*It is possible
to travel within
hidden realms
alternate dimensions
fantastical reality
and enchanted landscapes
just a few feet from
your own front door.*

May you wonder and wander into your own heart's longing and your most powerful truths.

Practice: A Wondering Exercise

A Recipe of Wholeness

*I am part wondering
and part knowing
part wandering
and part here.*

*I am part wishing
and part certainty
part wildness
and part still.*

*I am part watching
and part unseen
part wavering
and part firm.*

*I am woven of words
and wishes
these fragments
forming a recipe
of wholeness.*

This week I have a practice-based audio for you. It is called [A Wondering Exercise](#) and it is from the book [Morning Altars](#) by Day Schildkret.

- **Where does your wonder lead you?**
- **Can you take your wondering home? (practice radical amazement!)**

*Hungering for your own wisdom
and naming it as worthy
is a radical and revolutionary act.*

Supplemental Audio: Limitation

“Limits are a necessary partner in the creative act as well as in the crafting of a successful life. What matters is the ability to look around and accurately recognize what is working for you and what is working against you, adjusting to the realities of the situation and mining the potential of the limits with invention and energy.”

—Anne Bogart

This week, I have a [quick audio](#) for you with some thoughts on Limitation.

- **What is your own dance with limitation like?**
- **How is limitation at play in your own life and your relationship to creative work and living?**

After I made this recording, I did our [Egg card layout](#). You may enjoy trying it this week as well! As I laid out the cards, I became aware of an insistent hawk call outside, very loud and persistent and close by, coupled with the sounds of many crows. I left my layout and went out to discover two red-shouldered hawks circling in the air in what I think was a magnificent and interesting courtship display, as well as several crows, who were registering their displeasure with hawks in "their" piece of the sky over our woods and compost pile.

*In the space
between morning
and doing
there is a slice
of silent witness.*

Practice: What If?

*What if we didn't take dictation
from false dichotomies,
and our destination
is already here?*

*What if the liminal spaces
are dwelling places,
the grassy strip between the demarcation lines,
that no-woman's land, a field of possibility?*

*What if we could rest
in the beauty of dusk
between day and night,
in the grey between black and white?*

*What if we could see
the infinitude of fractions
spanning the chasm between one and zero
like a rainbow for us to walk on?*

*What if the answers were not
here/there, either/or, but:
both,
between,
and?*

--Agnes Vojta

The question for this week is simply, and complexly, What If?

*The first task
in rebuilding
your soul
is to allow
a wide margin
for magic.*

Creative Living and Sacred Listening

*Keep putting yourself
in the path of magic.
Keep walking right up to
and into it.
Be willing to be
in the heart.*

Our foundation audio for May is about Creative Living and Sacred Listening. You have two options to explore it. The first is to listen to the [full audio \(30 minutes\)](#) as sort of a mini-retreat for self-reflection and exploration. The second option is to listen to it in two parts. I've received feedback that shorter is often better for people, so I broke the audio into two parts at a natural break point and you can listen to it in two shorter audios, according to your preference.

- [Full audio](#)
- **Part one:** [Creative Living \(17 minutes\)](#)
- **Part two:** [Sacred Listening \(13 minutes\)](#)

These are the core questions from these pieces:

- What story is your life telling the world?
- How is your inner life shaping your outer life?
- Are you living from the center of your inner life, growing outward from the center, or is your inner life pared away by, shaped by your outer life instead?
- What are your signs that you're getting out of harmony in your life?
- What is one tiny step you might take to bring a bit of harmony and relief to one area of your life?

Breathe in some self-kindness, breathe out judgment, and let what you discover percolate in you for the next few days.

In curve of root
and arc of stone
there is a place
for dreams
to roam.

Attuning to your longing

*May you follow your longing
into the heart of your living.*

This supplemental [audio practice](#) (7 minutes) is about attuning to longing in your life.

Questions:

- What is the longing of your soul?
- What would your longing say if you gave voice to it?
- How does it feel to consider the spirit of longing in your life? Can you befriend it?

I just want to
watch rainbows
dance across the water
and to feel
my bones
against the grass.

May your spirit of inquiry yield deep treasures.

What are your vows?

Keep returning to your body.

Keep returning to your breath.

Keep returning to your heart.

What do you actually want?

What do you actually hear?

Listen. Feel. Do. Be.

This [supplemental audio](#) is only two minutes long and consists of a poem reading and two questions:

- What is your truth?
- What are your vows?

Sometimes life is so small

and lovely

that it feels huge.

Nourishing Your Caring

*Take time
to nourish
your caring.
It is needed.*

Audio poem: [Careworn Soul](#)

Last month, it was raining heavily one Saturday morning and I ended up coloring letters to fairies with the younger children and baking a cake rather than going to the woods as I like to do in the morning. I told Mark, again, that I am feeling burned out in my life in general and like I've lost my caring. I sometimes worry that I don't *care* anymore, that I've used up my care, my inspiration, my passion, that I've fueled magic for others for so long, that my own has evaporated and I'm finished, extinguished. I listed off the things I need to refuel my soul and restore my care so that I can be there for others, for our work. My list was simple and short and Mark pointed out that I get the things on it almost every day.

1. Go to the woods.
2. Write and journal.
3. Walk and discover things.
4. Create/draw/take pictures.
5. Read.

*I need to nourish my care, I tell him, because I **can't** stop caring.*

Caring is what holds life together.

What do you need to nourish your caring?

Some resource links:

- [The Art of Reclaiming Lost Time](#)
- [The Miracle of the Mundane](#)
- [Storytelling as a Spiritual Practice](#)
- [Enough is Enough: How to Prioritize Self-Care When We've Forgotten Our Worth](#)
- Podcast: [Mary Oliver on Listening to the World](#)
- [Attention as the Beginning of Devotion](#)

May you hold your caring with tender fingers.

Divine Discontent

*When it is safe
to say enough
I am satisfied
instead of fried,
heart-centered
instead of heart-sore,
content instead of coerced,
at ease instead of accelerated.*

I am undoing my knots.

This month, I offer a [brief audio exploration about Divine Discontent](#), as explored by Sarah Ban Breathnach in her book [Something More: Excavating the Authentic Self](#).

Questions:

- Do you feel a sense of, or connection to, your "authentic self"?
- How might you honor and work with your Divine Discontent?
- What would it feel like/look like to be minted into coins instead of staying in the furnace?

"You sit here for days saying, *This is strange business*. You're the strange business. You have the energy of the sun in you, but you keep knotting it up at the base of your spine. You're some weird kind of gold that wants to stay melted in the furnace, so you won't have to become coins."

--Rumi

May you honor your Divine Discontent as a sign of hope.

Live from the Honeycomb: Belief Release

*You have a story
worth telling.
To decide you are
interesting enough
to write about,
learn from,
study,
and explore
is a radical act.*

The [audio](#) I am sharing with you for this month is a tender one that I have hesitated to share and almost deleted. It is odd, basically, and details a vulnerable (and odd!) personal experience with a sort of energetic cleansing/healing around the question of being "good enough."

- [Live from the Honeycomb + Belief Release process \(personal\)](#)

Questions for this month:

- What belief would you like to unwind and release?
- What if you let go of wondering if you are good enough?
- How can you be more you, in this very moment?

Some resource links:

- [It is not always right to make yourself feel better](#)
- [Shiloh Sophia's free Colorful Scars e-course](#)
- My own free [Summer Magic class](#)
- [Tea with the Midnight Muse book](#)
- [Undreaming Poem](#)

*This day is so lucky
to have you in it.*

May you know that you are good enough.

Practice: Practical Regrounding

"Peace of mind is not a rare and exotic flower that only blooms on deserted islands or on top of mountains. You don't have to travel far and wide to find it. Relaxation is actually a native plant that grows in your own backyard--a hardy one at that. It never entirely gives up, although we repeatedly try to uproot it."

--Veronique Vienne (The Art of Doing Nothing)

The supplemental practice for this week is [some thoughts on everyday enchantment and practical regrounding](#).

Questions:

- What is enchanting you lately?
- Where are you making magic?
- What might you be trying to uproot from your life that is really a gift in disguise?
- Where is your heart meandering lately?
- Sometimes we are carrying something that is not ours to carry. What do you need to set down?
- Where and how might you need a physical regrounding, rather than a mental/thought-based approach to your life and feelings? What does your body need?

Sink down.

Root in.

Breathe deep.

Be here.

May you feel centered in your place of power this week.

May you know you have this wholeness to draw upon when needed.

Determined Awe

"Have you noticed how awe is a natural reaction to the daily magic of life? When we are too busy to stop in awe, we may be too busy to do life. Remember we are a part of a vast universe that is beyond our understanding."

--Anne Wilson Schaef (2018 page a day calendar)

Our supplemental recording for this week is available at [this link](#). It is on the subjects of transformation, determination, and everyday awe.

Questions from the audio:

- What is transforming for you? What is being reborn from within you? What is changing for you?
- What do you need in order to take a flying leap?
- What obstacle are you working with? Where can your determination take you?
- **What if you live a miracle every single day?**

*Sometimes sunlight
and blackberry leaves
are the only miracles,
and only filters,
you need.*

May you believe in the miracle that you are. May you be present with awe.

Releasing Limitation

*Who are you without your symbols
and your striving
when you are ragged in your skin?
Who are you when you are stripped bare
laid raw
unknowing and alone?
How do you know how to rise
when you have fallen
fly when you are hobbled
and soar when you ache?
Where might you soak
in a deep pool of truth
until your bones knit back together
and you rise shivering into
a moonlit night
full of fire?
Can you scoop hope back into your arms
re-collect yourself from where you've fallen
gather your tattered edges
and lay down new seams
with bright threads of possibility?
Can you shed your skin
cast off your longing
spread your wings
steep your meaning
into a strong,
sweet
concoction
of renewed truth,
purpose,
and vision?
Can you lay it all down
and then pick up what you still want
and re-weave your heart,
truth,
spirit
with lumps, bumps, passion, and power
all entwined?*

This month, I offer a [brief audio exploration about Releasing Limitation](#), as inspired by Shiloh

Sophia in her book [Tea with the Midnight Muse.](#)

Questions from this audio:

- What self-imposed limitation in your life might you not even be aware of? (Obviously, if you're not aware of it, you might *not* be able to identify it!)
- What cage have you created for yourself?
- If you could step out of the cage, what could grow?
- What do you see if the cage dissolves, how does it feel?
- What new metaphor might you create for your life? **Even if it doesn't feel possible, allow yourself to imagine it anyway.**

Shh...

Place one hand on your wild heart

What does she have to say?

Listen.

May you saturate yourself in streams of living truth and birth new metaphors for being.

Freedom

*May you make your own magic
out of weeds and wonder.
May you create your own enchantments
from the stuff of mud and memory.
May you spin your own spells
from threads of raindrops and roses.
May you breathe in the knowing
that you hold the power
to make the world anew,
your fingers the instruments
of a fresh song.*

The [audio](#) for this week is a reading of the poem Freedom + associated questions and reflections from the book [Tea with the Midnight Muse](#).

Questions for this week:

- What comes first, the dream or the wing?
- What is that you're flying toward?
- What does it feel like to consider that your whole life might be in front of you, instead of behind you?
- What would bring more freedom to your mind, your life, your body, your heart?

*Inviting you to take a deep breath today...
letting it soak into your bones
feeling a peace settle in your heart
letting everything drift away for a moment
and bringing yourself here
into your body
right now.*

May you spread your wings.

Choices

“Could it possibly be that participating in the unfolding of our lives is really all we have to do?”

—Anne Wilson Schaef

The [audio](#) for this week explores Choices and the idea that our lives change through chance, crisis, or choice.

Questions for this week:

- What if participating in the unfolding of our lives is truly all we have to do?
- How does it feel to witness your life as it unfolds?
- What if you could consciously design/consciously create your life? How would you design it?
- How can the designing and the unfolding hold hands?
- What are the forces of choice in your life?

*May we each find a place
of sanctuary
May we be held
heard
witnessed
and known.*

May you accept the invitation to sit with choice and design your life.

Occupy Your Life

"Within your heart, keep one still, secret spot where dreams may go."

—Louise Driscoll

The [audio](#) for this week explores the concept of "occupying your life."

Questions for this week:

- How are you occupying your life right now?
- What would it mean to fully occupy who you are?
- If you step fully into yourself right here, right now, what do you feel? **This is your life.** Are you living it? Are you occupying your own life?

*Let the soft interior
landscape
of your heart and soul
guide your next steps.*

May you fully occupy your own precious, evolving life.

Pain and Pruning

"...Make no mistake, I think pain is a wretched gardener. Her cuts stun and sting. But after pruning, preferably voluntary, we're able to discern what's real, what's important, what's essential for our happiness. Be of good cheer. Study your plants and study your lifestyle. When the right time arrives, go into the garden with sharp shears. Speak kindly. Pray softly. Prune back. Now plow ahead."

—Sarah Ban Breathnach, *Simple Abundance*

Inviting you to take a few moments to sit with your wild heart,

breathing into presence

and into what is, right now.

Offer a breath from your center,

from your heart,

and from your mind

and listen....

This week, I offer a [brief audio exploration about pain and pruning](#), as inspired by Sarah Ban Breathnach in *Simple Abundance*.

Questions from this audio:

- *How are you being pruned?*
- *Is it voluntary or is it unwilling?*
- *What is being trimmed away?*
- *What is essential for happiness?*

Where might you soak

in a deep pool of truth

until your bones knit back together

and you rise shivering into

a moonlit night

full of fire?

A Peace Retreat

"Eating the first corn, cutting the first ripe tomato, grilling fresh fish in the open air: if done consciously, these can become rituals of love and thanksgiving to the earth that sustains us."

--Patricia Monaghan, The Goddess Companion

This week, I offer a [brief audio about Peace Retreats](#). This is connected to my own Cauldron Month concept, explored in more detail in the resources in the Brigid's Grove newsletter [here](#).

Questions from this audio:

- *What is sustaining you?*
- *Do you need a peace retreat?*
- *What would a self-designed peace retreat look like for you?*
- *Can you make (let) it happen?*

Please keep loving

the unrestrained beauty

of this day.

Adversity

*There is nothing tidy here
life is too broad and billowing
to be contained,
restrained,
confined,
constrained
by lists and wishes
and well-laid plans,
or even by thin and bloodless prayers.*

*There is nothing tidy here,
expect wild winds and sharp teeth
amid the violets and sunrises.*

*There is nothing tidy here,
the world a great jumble
of twining grapevine,
sprawling brambles,
winding roots,
and beating hearts.*

*There is nothing to do
with such an untidy world,
but whirl with the wonder of it all,
keeping your hand outstretched
to touch everything,
even if your feet bleed
and your skin is streaked
with sorrow and joy.*

This week, I offer a [brief audio about Adversity and Normalcy](#).

Questions from this audio:

- *How might the dualism between normal and not normal be causing you pain?*
- *Are you telling yourself that because something feels challenging, that means it is wrong? How might things shift if you viewed difficulties or adversity as part of normal life?*
- *Are you demanding too much of yourself, causing yourself cruelty?*
- *Where might you need an "of course" response in your life?*

Witnessing

without fixing.

Following Your Heart

"Carefully observe what way your heart draws you, and then choose that way with all your strength."

--Hassidic saying

(quoted in Meditations for People Who May Worry too Much)

"It's a sad day when you find out that it's not accident or time or fortune but just yourself that kept things from you."

---Lillian Hellman

(quoted in Simple Abundance)

This week, I offer a [brief audio about listening to your heart](#).

Questions from this audio:

- *Where is your heart drawing you?*
- *Can you listen to your heart/are you practiced in heart-listening?*
- *If you are not accustomed to following your heart, what baby steps might you take to help you tune in?*

Does she whisper of longings
for sacred spaces,
meadows of dreams,
acres of promise,
mountains of meaning?
Does she sing of cool pools,
wandering trails,
tall peaks,
and firelit meeting places?
Does she howl for love
and a deep craving
to finally be heard?
Does she know exactly what you need?
Can you allow her time to speak?

May you listen to your heart.

Trusting Yourself

*If life is not a problem,
to be solved,
but an experience to
be lived,
might you become aware
of the soft breath
in your belly
the pull of need
in your back
the dawning realization
that there is nothing to do
and nothing to prove
and you are safe
in being on this earth.
It is okay to be,
to watch,
to know and not know.
To be curious.
To soften into longing
and feel it spread
across your shoulders
and into the rise and fall
of your chest.
Where are you going?
Here.
What are you doing this for?
Love.
Do there have to be answers?
No.
What is the point of being?
Everything.
What if you are already whole?
Okay.
All right.
Right now.
Please.
We move through our days
anyway
because
and now.
In an ocean of not knowing*

*there are undercurrents
of love and joy to
fuel your-my river of
being and becoming.
We're here.
Right now.*

This week, I offer a [brief audio about trusting yourself](#). This one poses complex questions with no particular answers. It is actually centered around a poem by Shiloh Sophia about **not** trusting yourself as well as my own thoughts about self-trust and the self. This was an uncomfortable audio for me to make, raising many additional questions instead!

Questions from this audio:

- *Do you trust yourself?*
- *Is it liberating to consider that perhaps you don't have to trust yourself?*
- *Does trusting yourself perhaps mean you risk being too safe?*
- *Do you want to build self-trust or let go of the idea that trusting yourself is in any way required?*

Reminder:

**You are not
one relentless
self-improvement project.**

**You are a marvel
of art and fire
and the world
is in your eyes.**

Witnessing without Fixing (explored)

"Life is an unfoldment, and the further we travel the more truth we comprehend. To understand the things that are at our door is the best preparation for understanding those that lie beyond."

—Hypatia

I invite you to take a deep, cleansing breath
all the way down to your toes.
Then take another one,
and another.
Let peace settle onto your shoulders.
Let your heart expand.
Let your breaths be easy, easy.
And, then, let your thoughts drift and soar...

*What is unfolding for you?
What is right outside your door?
What is your next step?*

This week, I offer a [brief audio with a deeper exploration of what I mean by "witnessing without fixing."](#) I wanted to include this before I move on to other topics for the rest of September.

Questions from this audio:

- *How might you apply Jen Louden's three step process for breaking the fear cycle?*
- *How do you discern when to witness and when to act? Is there a way to bring the two together?*
- *What happens when you let an unwanted/negative feeling fully land in your body, let it wash through you? Do you find it loses impact and drifts away or does it nestle in to roost?*

Remember, if witnessing without fixing doesn't work for you/doesn't apply in your own life, that is **totally fine**. It is not a promise or a "must do." If it doesn't resonate, consider other options of what might work for you in sitting with, processing, and/or working through or with your difficult or "unwanted" feelings.

May you exhale your weariness

and let it softly drift away.

May you cup your hands together

around the gentle whispers

of your deepest dreams.

May you allow your wildest prayers
to drift into your heart
and may you breathe in
the necessary courage
to spin them into being.

Devotion

*The time has come to set out for sacred ground that will stir our sense of wonder. It is down the path to the deeply real where time stops and we are seized by the mysteries. This is the journey that we cannot **not** take.”*

— Phil Cousineau (The Art of Pilgrimage: The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred)

This week, I am finishing an unexpected writing project: a short devotional prayerbook. This isn't something I meant to write this year, I only intended to write a five or so page handout about devotional practices for the Creative Spirit Circle. Instead, a compendium of all the prayers, blessings, and invocations I have written since 2015 has come together and become a little book of 200 pages. Rather than record a new audio for this week I am focused on finishing my book and so instead I offer you a [recording about devotion made earlier this year](#).

Questions about building devotional practices:

- *How do you do it?*
- *What does it look like?*
- *How do you cultivate devotion in your days?*

Questions from the audio:

- *What does devotion mean to you?*
- *Do you have devotional practices?*
- *Do you want to cultivate more devotion in your life?*
- *What is your doorway into thanks?*
- *Where is your devotion?*
- *What would open up for you, if you *allowed* devotion?*

**May you gift yourself with
a breath for noticing,
a breath for love,
a breath for wonder.
May you allow these tender threads
to twine a nest for your heart
and hold you softly through the day.**

Organizing Your Life

“A too-busy, distracted, and unfocused life also kills the power of imagination, an essential part of any healthy life. If we cannot imagine what we dream or passionately desire, we will never be able to realize it. Stopping is a friend of imagination. During a time of Stopping, our imaginations are given space and encouragement to soar.”

—David Kundtz ([Stopping: How to Be Still When You Have to Keep Going](#))

This week, I offer you a [very brief audio about organizing your life](#)--perhaps more organizing isn't actually what you need, but rather the opportunity to tune in and listen to/observe the organization of your life that is already present and unfolding before you.

I was feeling rushed as I made this audio and it shows in my voice, but it is actually appropriate to the topic at hand---I had to choose whether to seize a few moments as they unfolded in front of me, or table the making of a new audio until next week. I opted for the seizing!

Questions from the audio:

- *What is necessary in your life?*
- *What is your relationship to worry?*
- *What (factors) are organizing your life?*
- *Are you trying to impose a system of organization that doesn't work for your life as it actually is?*
- *If you pause to listen, what do you hear?*

Supplemental resource:

- There is a free handout available from David Kundtz (author of the opening quote) about [stopping and stillpoints as a practice](#).

***May we remember that this
tender work
we are breathing into being
requires both pause
and devotion.***

Autumnal Resolutions

*You may choose
whether or not
to dance
with your life,
sunstreaked, awestriped,
ragged, and strong
on the changing edges
of a mysterious world.
This much is up to you.*

This week, I offer you a [short audio about autumnal resolutions](#). In *Simple Abundance*, Sarah Ban Breathnach writes about September as an ideal time to consider "turning over a new leaf" and making heartfelt resolutions based on authentic wants.

Questions from the audio:

- *What new leaf do you want to turn over?*
- *Are you wasting the autumn?*
- *What are your authentic wants?*
- *What do you want more or less of in your life, so that you can love the life you're leading?*
- *Are you open to change?*
- *Do you love the life you're leading?*

Supplemental Resource:

- [How to fear-proof your day from Jennifer Louden](#)

Be gentle.

Be tender.

Nourish your heart

even if there are tigers

in the grass.

Creative Fire

*“We live on a steady diet of the illusion that when we get everything done, **then**—and only then—we will be able to relax and do some of those things we’ve always wanted to do, both for ourselves and with those we love...”*

—Anne Wilson Schaef, *Meditations for Living in Balance*

This week, I offer you a [short audio about creative fire and daily practice](#). In *Simple Abundance*, Sarah Ban Breathnach writes about the creative impulses within you needing an outlet like a stove that has too much coal in it--it must have one of the holes open in order to keep from becoming red hot and exploding.

Questions from the audio:

- *Where is the art in your everyday experience?*
- *What lid have you taken off or **can** take off that will prevent you from exploding?*
- *How are you expressing yourself? Do you have a place or a way to take the lid off? To express your fire?*
- *What form of personal expression is open to you?*
- *What daily opportunities might you be missing?*

Supplemental Resources:

- [Video referenced about journaling as a daily practice.](#)
- [Audio from last year on to-do lists and focused truth.](#)
 - Question from this audio: *How might focusing, or relaxing your focus, illuminate a needed truth for you or help you discover your own truth?*

Take time for healing.

Be patient.

Be still.

Reach for the sun.

Stopping

“Stopping brings you awake and aware of the present moment. But it also helps you bring together the threads of your history, of your stories. It helps you to remember who you are, where you come from, where you’re going, and where you want to go; to remember your original goals, ideals, and dreams; and to remember why you started doing what you do so that you can see if that’s still what you want to do. Even if you have no clear answers for many of the big questions of life, it is vital to continue to remember what your questions are. Losing your questions is truly losing your way.”

—David Kundtz ([Stopping: How to Be Still When You Have to Keep Going](#))

*Listen
in this pause
in this stillness.
Wait.
Let yourself just
Stop.
There is nothing you need to do.*

Can you stop?

Do you remember?

What are your questions?

I have six more short audios created for October and November, but this week we [reach our final foundation audio](#) in our Living the Questions journey together. This one is about Stopping-- and the ideas of Stillpoints, Stopovers, and Grinding Halts in our lives (based on the work of David Kundtz).

Questions from the audio:

- *Do you remember your questions? Are you living and leaning into them?*
- *What's in the bag you drag behind you?*
- *Are you still holding your questions? How are they doing?*
- *How can you Stop? Are you awake and re-membering?*

Supplemental Practice: Three Breaths to Presence

*A breath from my belly,
center of creation.
A breath from my heart,
center of compassion.
A breath from my head,*

*center of curiosity.
May all be easy in my temple
and may I dwell in devotion
in this day.*

Work Boots

"A woman actually doesn't need a room of her own but she does need an hour of her own. An hour during which she steps outside of her roles so she can remember her soul. An hour in which she's serving nobody but her own potential. An hour during which she's putting work boots on her dreams."

--Glennon Doyle Melton

As a counterpoint to our foundation audio on Stopping, the [short audio for this week](#) is about *doing the work*.

Questions from the audio:

- *Are you putting work boots on your dreams?*
- *What do you want to do?*
- *What do you need in order to do that?*
- *Where is the doing for you?*
- *Are you letting yourself stagnate in dreams?*
- *Where do you want to get going?*
- *What are you withholding from yourself while being Stopped?*
- *What's your dream and are you working on it? If not, why not?*
- *What can you build into your life in order to put work boots on your dreams?*

Supplemental Resource:

- Article: [Stop waiting for the universe to give you permission](#)

*Strip this detritus of overdoing
back to the bone,
let the sinews of striving
slacken and ease,
the knots of muscle
and thought
soften and still,
the hurry and force
float gently away
and from there,
breathe easy,
heart open,
self
hollowed through.
Choose what is next.*

Artist of the Everyday

*It always changes,
you see,
and that is the beauty
of this world.*

As a companion to our audios on Stopping and Doing, the [short audio for this week](#) is about being an artist of the everyday.

Questions from the audio:

- *How are you an artist of your every day?*
- *How can you allow, create, find, or take five minutes to center yourself before your tasks?*
- *Where do you **need** five minutes?*

*May you gift yourself
with a breath for allowing,
a gentle sweep of permission
flowing over
your hot and tender skin.
May you gift yourself
with a breath for letting go,
watching your worries drift away
into the soft exhale of the wind.
May you gift yourself
with a breath for courage,
knowing that the world needs
your heart to be in it:
this fierce work
this fierce love
this whole life.*

Comfort and Stories

"There are days I drop words of comfort on myself like falling leaves and remember that it is enough to be taken care of by my self."

--Brian Andreas

This week I have a [very brief audio](#) with *lots* of questions. It continues to center around active choice in your life as well as the role of the familiar stories we tell ourselves about what is possible.

Questions from the audio:

- *What cowpies are you wading through?*
- *What is the reality of your life right now?*
- *Are you still listening?*
- *What is your same old story?*
- *What is buttressing your fears instead of helping you listen?*
- *What is nagging at you, needing your attention?*
- *How do you feel about your choices?*
- *How are you spending your time?*
- *What are you choosing in the many small moments of your life, day to day?*

Additional Resources

- [The Third Self: Mary Oliver on Time, Concentration and more](#)
- New essay by me: [October Magic](#)

*May you be enfolded
by the wings of grace
and inspiration.*

*May you know the
wildly beating heart of wonder.*

*May you feel the power and strength
of being human.*

*And may you welcome
the tender, fragile hope of joy.*

Thin Magic

“You have the need and the right to spend part of your life caring for your soul. It is not easy. You have to resist the demands of the work-oriented, often defensive, element in your psyche that measures life only in terms of output -- how much you produce -- not in terms of the quality of your life experiences. To be a soulful person means to go against all the pervasive, prove-yourself values of our culture and instead treasure what is unique and internal and valuable in yourself and your own personal evolution.”

--Jean Shinoda Bolen

This week I have a [brief audio](#) about creative fallow times, the days in which we feel non-creative, parched and weary, and like our creative wells are depleted.

Questions:

- *Are you in a drought or in a fertile field?*
- *Is it time to cease and desist?*
- *How is your creative well? Where is the underground spring? Do you know how to find it? Can you take a drink?*
- *How can you replenish the well?*
- *What do you need? How are you listening?*

Additional Resources

- [Little Joys, Breaking the Trance of Busyness, and How to Live with Presence](#)

Perhaps today...

one full breath

one soft gaze

one moment of quiet

for your heart.

Choosing (again)

“This is love: to fly toward a secret sky, to cause a hundred veils to fall each moment. First to let go of life. Finally, to take a step without feet.”

—Rumi

This week I have an [audio](#) about choosing (again!), about those waves of ideas and projects and people and commitments that ask for our attention, that need our caring. May you exercise wise discernment as you exercise your power of choice in your life.

Questions:

- *Do you have any questions you need to reopen, reconsider?*
- *Do you have questions you need to set aside?*
- *What/how are you choosing?*
- *What waves are coming your way? How are you diving deep?*
- *Are you making painful choices? What are you giving up/sacrificing in order to choose?*
- *What needs a choice from you?*
- *Can you claim your yearnings?*
- *What life is unfolding within you?*
- *If you crack open your idea of balance, what blooms?*

By frosted blackberry

beneath a freezing sunrise

I stood laughing

with the crows

and it was good.

Mindful Listening

*"Remember what you are & let this knowing
take you home to the Beloved with every breath.
Hold tenderly who you are & let a deeper knowing
colour the shape of your humanness.
There is nowhere to go. What you are looking for is right here.
Open the fist clenched in wanting & see what you already hold in your hand."*

--Oriah Mountain Dreamer

This week I have an [audio](#) about mindful listening based on the book *Comfort Secrets for Busy Women*. It addresses the push-pull between stop and go, acknowledging that life can't be all about stopping or all about going, but rather can be about listening in the pauses and then choosing the next step or next action.

Questions:

- *If you give yourself a pause, what do you hear in the moment?*
- *Do you have airspace to listen and then choose from within?*
- *When do you push and when do you ease off? When do you sit and when do you do?*
- *What happens when you make time to listen in the pauses and then mindfully choose the next action?*
- *What sweet words of encouragement do you need to hold in your heart and head in the coming days?*
- *What do you hear in the in-between times and how can it guide you?*

Prayer for a Misty Day:

May I focus.

May I listen.

May I open.

May I trust.

May I expand.

Farewell

*If you feel you've lost your way,
listen,
and let yourself remember.
Watch,
and let yourself know.
Explore,
and let yourself trust.
Each day holds the possibility
to weave conscious experience anew.*

We have come to the end of our *Living the Questions* journey together. Thank you so much for being here over the past year, I've enjoyed exploring the many questions of our lives together. I hope you have uncovered some aspects of yourself, made peace with your choosing, and rambled through the terrain of your own being over the last ten months. I have a brief farewell [audio for you](#).

I also wanted to share this quote with you from Anne Sexton:

“Put your ear down close to your soul and listen hard.”

Keep listening, dear ones.

And, remember, sometimes you must hold the tender parts of yourself in secret places, in the planes of life and living, the shafts of sunlight, and the drifts of shadow, the trickles of wonder and the rivers of wondering.

*There is a place
where joy lives.
Find it.*

*There is a place
where hope dwells.
Seek it.*

*There is a place
where love shelters.
Share it.*

*There is a place
where you will be
cracked open*

*wholly whole and holy.
Trust it.*

Love,

Molly