June Newsletter

The wholesome heart of a dream

I’ve noticed that synchronicity comes into play when I start to give passionate attention to something that matters to me. Currently, in the last phase of my coaching training, I am thinking hard about how to describe what I am offering to potential clients. Last night I found this passage in my current bedside novel: *A God in Ruins* by Kate Atkinson. Hugh is 84 and on a road trip with his granddaughter Bertie, visiting the graveyard his wife and other family members and friends are buried in.

*‘A woodland burial,’ he said. ‘No name, nothing, just a tree. An oak, if you can, but anything will do. Don’t let your mother be in charge.’*

*Death was the end. Sometimes it took a whole lifetime to understand that. …… ‘Promise me you’ll make the most of your life,’ he said to Bertie.*

*‘I promise,’ Bertie said, already at twenty-four knowing it was unlikely she would be able to do so.*

I read and re-read that last sentence, with a sense of both sadness and determination. Am I really making the most of my life now? Are others? What does it take to ‘be able to do so’? In the middle of the night I woke out of a dream, where I was watching a thrilling modern dance performance in a large Buddhist temple, organised by an old Buddhist teacher of mine. Thirty-five years ago we were both fired by a vision of the integration of creative expression and spirituality. My life has now moved into slightly different directions, being also concerned with healing, in the widest sense. And yet it seems vitally important to honour that dream of spiritual beauty through the arts, that early promise .

We promise ourselves, at some point in our lives, , to make the most of it , to live our dreams. And then our lives unfold in the interplay of all kinds of different needs, including both safety andadventure. By middle age we are usually well set on our course; a course that may not be the North we had set our compass on*,* but more likely East, or North-East.

But what if it were possible to change course now and align ourselves once more to our deepest values? What if we didn’t wait for that life crisis (like a major loss or a life-threatening illness) to make us stop in our tracks and reconsider our priorities? What if it was still in our reach to find that truly satisfying way to be in relationship, to engage in work that inspires us, to write that book, to make a difference to the world?

I see my role as a coach to support people to re-orientate their lives towards their true North. In my experience, it’s not enough to think lofty thoughts about our potential every so often,. What really makes a difference is to consciously recognise and become thoroughly familiar with the values we dream and live by. Having a guide for this process is enormously helpful. As a coach I offer safety and open space for exploring those values, as well as transforming the inner obstacles to living more authentically. And, most importantly, I help people to shape their dream life (in both senses) by identifying the next step, the low lying fruit. Together we create accountability and there is on-going support in changing those old patterns.

This morning I found this bulletin by Rich Hanson in my inbox:

*Feel into the wholesome heart of a dream - how it comes from deep within, how it is healthy, how it will serve you and others. Give yourself over to your dream.*