

## **Courageous Creativity**

---

### *Everything is Waiting for You*

This is an unprecedented time. Our regular routine has been disrupted, human interactions are minimized and our relationship to the future has been compromised. The question is: Who do you choose to be in response?

In times of conflict and uncertainty artists have captured the moment and reflected life through their art forms:

- Kathe Kollwitz depicted German peasant revolutions in her paintings.
- Athol Fugard wrote plays denouncing apartheid in South Africa.
- Joan Baez demonstrated against the Vietnam War as a singer/songwriter.
- Kurt Jooss made dances depicting the futility of peace negotiations.

These individuals moved beyond preservation and survival and expressed a strong courageous creativity. They embraced their artistic imagination and found artistry as a way of living. I believe this is something we can do today for our students and for ourselves. We can examine what it means to deepen and broaden our idea of creativity and artistry.

For me the first step is inspiration. What keeps knocking at the door of my consciousness? Is it big and important, something existential? Is it small and mundane, something repetitious? Is it deep and thoughtful, something familial? Is it broad and expansive, something unreachable?

I listen to this knocking and invite it into my thought. I allow it to motivate me. I let it grow into something more tangible, then I can move it around in my own hands – next, I find I am making something. Something that connects to the world around me and reflects how I feel about it. Something unprecedented.

This is the creative process. Sometimes it is as quick as lightning, often it moves through us slowly like sap down the tree. Always it is unpredictable, like our currently unpredictable times.

One of my favorite poets, David Whyte, writes a poem titled, *Everything Is Waiting For You*. It prompts us to think about our place and how it is ripe with possibility. I find it comforting as I sequester in my home, listening for the starting point of

inspiration, and beginning my courageous creative journey. I hope you, too, begin your journey.

### ***Everything Is Waiting For You***

Your great mistake is to act the drama  
as if you were alone. As if life  
were a progressive and cunning crime  
with no witness to the tiny hidden  
transgressions. To feel abandoned is to deny  
the intimacy of your surroundings. Surely,  
even you, at times, have felt the grand array;  
the swelling presence, and the chorus, crowding  
out your solo voice. You must note  
the way the soap dish enables you,  
or the window latch grants you freedom.  
Alertness is the hidden discipline of familiarity.  
The stairs are your mentor of things  
to come, the doors have always been there  
to frighten you and invite you,  
and the tiny speaker in the phone  
is your dream-ladder to divinity.

Put down the weight of your aloneness and ease into the  
conversation. The kettle is singing  
even as it pours you a drink, the cooking pots  
have left their arrogant aloofness and  
seen the good in you at last. All the birds  
and creatures of the world are unutterably  
themselves. Everything is waiting for you.

David Whyte

From *Everything is Waiting for You*

2003 Many Rivers Press