

## **INTENTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS: A MANIFESTO**

by Craig Green

"There is an almost sensual longing for communion with others who have a larger vision. The immense fulfillment of the friendships between those engaged in furthering the evolution of consciousness has a quality almost impossible to describe." -Teilhard de Chardin

I've spent my last 16 years in the trenches of communal living. I've lived in communities large and small, spiritual and secular, urban and rural. This paper represents my current hunch on how to best make the endeavor fruitful.

I once helped found a small land based community with big aspirations. One evening, early on in our endeavor, we did an exercise to develop our collective vision: each of us wrote a letter from 5 years in the group's future. In mine, I rhapsodized about the enchanting clusters of dwellings and workshops that seemed to have grown from the Earth, the lush erotic gardens, the sun dappled paths that meandered through the forest.... And I wrote that the community's most striking feature was an interpersonal electricity: people were passionately involved in each other's journeys to fulfillment and empowerment. In this spirit there were evolving ensembles, apprenticeships, crews.... The place was a synthesis of a revolutionary base camp, a Zen monastery, a gypsy carnival, an artists' colony, a research lab and a coral reef! When I finished reading my letter to the group, the room filled with delicious oohs and ahhs.

A couple of years later I left the community, hungry for greener pastures. Except for tantalizing tastes, the vision had remained but a dream. I'd failed to make good use of our collective gifts and needs. How come? I hadn't envisioned in a way that enticed and provoked others to join me in the trenches; nor did I have the gumption to catalyze the vision single handedly. Now, a bit more seasoned, and still possessed by the vision, I seek to more practically articulate some key steps in building the widely imagined Tribal Synergistic Eco-village!

I am endeavoring with kindred spirits to create an ensemble that practices the art of culture sculpture. We're developing cultural forms and practices to create a greenhouse for ripening human beings into their full glory. Such ensembles are necessary to the transition to a saner world. The mainstream recipes for creating "the good life" are ever less viable. Yet people will cling to them until a better way becomes visible: a context that sparks each of us to unfold into our full creativity. Our ensemble functions as a laboratory of day to day life- dedicated to the practice psychological alchemy: discovering the transformation of fear into courage, estrangement into compassion, cynicism into faith. The ensemble's foundation is a shared commitment to this alchemy. Interest, even enthusiasm, is insufficient. Commitment, preferably written in blood, is essential.

Commitment has become a scary prospect for many of us these days. It's come to represent the opposite of "freedom". We fear being trapped or bound by commitments. But I've come to see commitment as the nails and glue that hold the house up, the roots that nourish and steady the tree, the cast that holds the broken bone in alignment as it mends. A baby learning to walk is a powerful model of commitment. She may fall on her face and cry over and over, but intrepidly picks herself back up each time. Commitment isn't a promise that we won't fail or screw up. It is a dedication to learning through all our failings, persevering in the journey.

These lines from W.H. Murray's *The Scottish Himalayan Expedition* wonderfully evoke the power of commitment: Until one is committed there is hesitancy, the choice to draw back, always ineffectiveness.. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no one

could have dreamed would have come his way. I have learned a great respect for one of Goethe's couplets: "Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."

It's good to bear in mind, though, that we're always living out commitments of some sort. Commitments aren't only our conscious goals and ideals: our "patterns", neuroses and habits are also commitments. Energy follows intention. Notice your moment-to-moment, day-to-day choices and priorities to discover your true commitments. For myself I've noticed persistent commitments to avoid social discomfort or strife, to conceal vulnerability, to keep life predictable, to distract myself from frightening challenges at my doorstep. These entrenched commitments must be wrestled and danced with in order to embody the conscious commitments that run against their grain.

All this may sound great but still, how do you do it? I'm no expert on the subject. (In my better moments I feel a kinship with this tale about Thomas Edison: one of his researchers once told him that the months of intensive effort spent trying to find a workable filament for a light bulb had proven fruitless. "Nonsense", he cried, "Now we know a thousand ways it doesn't work!") I offer these reflections as field notes from my own inquiry with hopes of sparking conversations with fellow experimenters and culture sculptors.

What follows are the core commitments I and some comrades are working with (each followed by a brief elaboration). They're gleaned from the world's great spiritual traditions, pop psychology books, and our own muddled experience. These are some of the precepts of a passionately sane culture.

I commit and choose:

--to live adventurously;

This is the first essential. Without an adventurous approach to day-to-day life, the commitments expressed here become burdensome head trips I lay upon myself. The adventurous life is only possible to the extent that curiosity is stronger than fear, pride or the need to be "right". (It's been asked: "Would you rather be right or be free?") There's a basic choice we can make in each of the predicaments that life so constantly presents us with. We can relate to life as an adventure or as a problem, a hassle. (Certainly, on an adventure one encounters "problems", but that's part of the adventure. What would an Indiana Jones movie be without problems?) Helen Keller put it well:

"Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. To keep our faces toward change and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate is strength undefeatable."

Quotes like this can be momentarily galvanizing, but more is often needed to translate the inspirational buzz they give into action. I'm a cowardly lion. My curiosity is often eclipsed by fear and addiction to security. I have discovered three great aids in sustaining adventurousness:

1. Sharing the company of fellow adventurers. At times I've wondered if my "need" for intentional community was a symptom of a basic inadequacy, a shirking of the real work of pulling myself up by my bootstraps. So I was excited to discover a paper ("Lessons from Geese") describing how migrating geese can journey 70% further when they fly in a V formation than when they fly singly. Flying in formation, they create an air current, reducing the resistance they need to overcome in their forward motion. That's why I crave community! (I've appended the full "Lessons from Geese" to the end of this paper. This metaphor runs deep and wide.)

2. Taking big leaps in small, deliberate "bites"; finding the incremental steps that make for a sustainable ascent in an endeavor. In this spirit, it's useful to see commitments as focal points for inquiry instead of as "rules". I often ask myself, "Given who I am in this moment, in this predicament, what does it mean to live adventurously? How can I embody this commitment a bit more fully?"

3. Developing a resilient, inquiring attitude through the practice of meditation. Meditation, as I understand it, isn't a matter of "rising above" our worldly troubles. It's a way to cultivate equanimity in the midst of difficulty. In meditation I'm training myself to stay alert to the here and now, applying a naturalist's curiosity to the waves of sensation that pass through the body with each breath, thought and emotion. This is quite a shift from my habitual obsession with the mind's reactive storyline. Karlfried Gras van Durkheim writes: "The aim of [meditation] practice is not to develop an attitude which allows us to acquire a state of harmony and peace wherein nothing can ever trouble us. On the contrary, practice should teach us to let ourselves be assaulted, perturbed, moved, insulted, broken and battered - that is to say, it should enable us to dare to let go of our futile hankering after harmony, surcease from pain, and a comfortable life.... The first necessity is that we should have the courage to face life, and to encounter all that is most perilous in the world. When this is possible, meditation itself becomes the means by which we accept and welcome the demons which arise from the unconscious." More simply, a Zen master said: "Life is like getting aboard a boat that's about to sail out to sea and sink." Through meditation I'm beginning to identify with the sea more and the boat less. I'm growing in the realization that the mind's chatter is froth on life's ocean. I'm gradually letting go of stodgy obsessions with anchors and moorings, reveling instead in the sea's wildness.

Perhaps I'm overemphasizing the heroic. Adventuring is also a subtle art, requiring a tender heart and an ocean of patience and self forgiveness. For example, I play the classical guitar. In my practice I've learned that a challenging piece can best be mastered by learning to relax and remain delicately attentive in the midst of the greatest effort. The same is true in life.

--to grow in creative conspiracy with fellow adventurers, welcoming blockages and conflicts as doorways to deeper intimacy;

The hunger for a deeper sense of friendship draws many towards community. My driving quest has been to build relationships in which I can plainly and ardently say of another: "We are allies!" Yet often in my journey I've sensed that "friends" are mainly people one complains about one's life to, or with whom one shares a mutual diversion from life's pain and difficulty. I believed true rapport with most people was impossible. They were too busy, or boring, or arrogant, or I was too shy, or deep, or etc. After years of alienation I've realized my work was to discover how to cultivate vital relationships across such chasms. I forswore the excuse- "the chemistry isn't right"- and began instead to study chemistry.

In one small group I lived with I was struck with the insight that a community is only as intentional as the relationships between each of its members. I made the rounds, asking each person: "What intentions are governing our interactions these days? What intentions would you like to realize? Here's what I want...." It was an exciting, awkward process. It felt brazen to inquire so baldly. General discussions about the purpose or ideals of our community were easier. But without descending into the nuts and bolts of relationship, idealistic intentions are the stuff that the road to hell is paved with.

So, I'm working to cultivate an artful, muscular intimacy: capable of brainstorming and barnraising, eager to explore conflict, founded on a thorough, humble honesty that can share anger or judgment with open hands. Such intimacy thrives best when it's also in service to the larger community. Joko Beck writes: "A good relationship gives life more power. If two people are strong together, then life has a more powerful channel than it has with two single people. That is what life is looking for. It doesn't care about whether you are 'happy' in your relationship. What it

is looking for is a channel, and it wants that channel to be powerful. If it's not powerful, life would just as soon discard it."

Of course, people can be put off by such an "intense" approach to relationships. It's rare to seek such mutual intentionality beyond one's primary relationship. A builder of Intentional Relationships must learn how to offer invitations that aren't taken as demands. I'm developing the attitude of the gardener who celebrates the germination of 1 seed in 100.

--to cultivate my ripening into full glorious Craigness;

These shared commitments aren't a one size fits all affair. We each have our own journey. I ripen most effectively when I regularly stoke my own fire of inspiration, practicing the rigorous discipline of following my bliss. These are vital elements of my own ripening: fiercely claiming time in my schedule for writing, meditation and music practice; risking asking for help when discouraged; honing, voicing and exercising the vision emerging through me. In practicing these I become a fuller member of the community and dissolve the duality of selfishness and altruism. I cultivate myself to better serve others and in serving the community I nourish myself. Bernard Shaw put it well: "This is the true joy of life, the being used up by a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can."

My thinking about the balance between the individual and the community has been aided by the concepts taken from evolutionary theory of "Differentiation" and "Integration". Differentiation is the process of molecules and organisms and people becoming increasingly more different from each other over the course of evolution. Each of us becoming ever more uniquely ourselves, honoring and developing our unique gifts, overcoming the strong barriers that society erects to each of us manifesting our inborn genius. Throwing off the shackles of the herd mentality! Integration is the weaving together of everyone's and everything's different-ness into an ever more vibrant harmonious tapestry of life. The harmonization of these two qualities leads to "Complexity": the glorious resilient diversity found in coral reefs and rain forests. Among human beings, complexity is the wonder that is felt when a band of musicians groove together, or a theatre troupe weaves a spell of magic or a community of people creates a vibrant home together.

Finding the ever shifting balance between integration and differentiation is one of the keys to community building. You can think of them as the right and left feet of evolution. Unless we move forward with both, we won't get far. Each of them offers its own challenges and pitfalls. Too much integration without differentiation leads to cultural rigidity, the oppressive pressure to conform that most of us had to contend with growing up. Differentiation without integration leads to egomania, loneliness, war. It can also lead to the sense of things being "complicated", with awkward and halting coherence. (The income tax code, and U.S. foreign policy might be examples of this.) In looking at community dynamics, it's useful to ask how the group might enhance differentiation and integration, and to notice if one is overshadowing the other.

So, committing to my own ripening is a matter of balancing my own needs for differentiation and integration: the unique unfolding that I must be the ultimate architect of. Reader, what commitments will serve your unique ripening into full glory?

--to encourage the empowerment of the people around me;

"For when you think about it, the only way to love someone is not to coddle them and bring them soup when they are sick, but by listening to them and seeing and believing in the god, in the poet in them. For by doing this, you keep the god and poet alive and make it flourish." -- Brenda Ueland

In this light, I enjoy launching conversations using these questions as springboards: "What are your deepest passions and curiosities? What brings you your greatest happiness? In what environment do you (or would you) most vigorously flourish? How could you use more help in your life? Tell me about five people (living, dead, or fictional) who are invigorating examples to you of a life well lived." To fulfill this commitment, I need instruction in these matters.

I recall a Garrison Keeler monologue about a farmer who wanted to sell his cows and plant an apple orchard in his pastures. He dreamed of gazing on the snowy apple blossoms on a spring evening. But he never spoke about this longing. "We don't tell people our dreams in Lake Wobegone, because they might laugh at us and make us feel bad. So we keep them hidden in our hearts until eventually...we forget about them." Even in intentional communities, this observation is too true. By taking a vigorous interest in each others' shrouded inspiration, we practice heart to heart resuscitation. The poet Robert Hass wrote: "Capitalism makes networks. It doesn't make communities. Imagination makes communities." Creating an atmosphere in which we feel free to mingle our imaginatons, to practice imagineering is another essential step in this journey

-- to take full responsibility for my life;

"Full responsibility" means being able to respond to people and events- rather than reflexively reacting- in a way that honors my deepest values. It's like having full range of motion. The range of response most of us have is so limited (by fear, guilt, cynicism, etc.), we move thru life like whiplash victims. By working with these commitments, I can gradually regain my response-ability. Viktor Frankl wrote (in *Man's Search For Meaning*) about his experiences in W.W.II concentration camps. The Nazis stripped every freedom and dignity from the prisoners, except one. They couldn't take away a person's freedom to choose how to respond to their brutality. Prisoners who retained a sense of that freedom had a very real power and dignity. That is the extreme expression of full responsibility: relinquishing, in the worst circumstances, the luxury of being a victim.

In my own life, this commitment requires that I let go of attachments to getting assistance and encouragement from others in living out my vision. Not that I can't use the help of others. It's just too easy to use the lack of support as an excuse for not taking the steps before me. Often the step I need take is to ask for partnership and help! If I don't get an encouraging response, I take a deep breath, go back to the drawing board and envision another route of ascent. While a goose flies more effectively when it has fellow migrators, it doesn't passively wait for such comrades. To discover (and attract) its fellows it must take wing on its own, put its show on the road.

Winston Churchill once said about architecture: "First we shape our buildings, then our buildings shape us." This is true not only of buildings but of all cultural forms: families, organizations, tools. And of course, we can't really say we shape our buildings "first" any more that we can say the chicken precedes the egg. But for most of history most human beings have been shaped by our cultures far more than they have actively shaped them. We are "carriers" of cultural "viruses" both benign and destructive. The time of rapid changes we are now embroiled in asks us all to become culture sculptors, to be more than clay on the whirling pottery wheel of history. There is much evidence these days to support the observation of Yeats: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity." This is a reflection on the fact that the cultural "viruses" of separateness, greed and domination dominate the ecologies of our psyches. Those of us who aspire to the healing of this fractured Earth are called to find a way beyond this predicament. We begin to do that when we take full responsibility for shaping our lives, always willing to work with the materials and predicaments at hand.

-- to be accountable to my allies: to welcome their remindings, coaching and mirroring; and to hold them accountable in turn;

Accountability is what transforms these commitments from nice sentiments into living realities. Our egos are so sneaky and deluded, they need witnesses. Commitments are easily eroded by forgetfulness, procrastination, and excuses. Holding each other accountable is a strong counterbalance to these erosive tendencies. Accountability works best when we become detailed in our commitments. For example, if I say that my commitment is to be more loving, it's easy to fudge or gloss over in my accounting. If I commit to working thru my resentment towards a specific person my accountability can be precise. I meet weekly with a group in this spirit. We each lay out our specific goals and priorities for the upcoming week, and reflect on how we have followed thru on goals from the previous week. If a person is stalled in realizing their mission in life, the group offers assistance and provocation, but never judgment. Traditionally, serious commitments such as wedding vows or oaths of office are made in public. This is the spirit of accountability. (I'm publicly sharing this manifesto, in part, to enhance my accountability.)

The commitment to hold others accountable can also be challenging. We may feel like "Big Brother". In childhood, many of us were held accountable by people who didn't have our best interests at heart, on terms that we didn't consent to. That's oppression. In contrast, when we actively agree to hold each other accountable on our own terms, it becomes peer mentoring: one of the greatest gifts we can give each other.

Emerson wrote: "Our chief want in life is someone who will make us do what we can." The metaphor of coaching illuminates this statement. I welcome a good coach or mentor's challenges, critiques and standard setting because I trust they are offered with benign intention. Coaching helps me move past my self-sustained handicaps. Of course, coaching is a delicate art that takes time to master. Coach and coachee are engaged in an evolving reciprocal dance.

--to investigate, illuminate, and reveal my shadow;

This is perhaps the most crucial and difficult of these commitments. In the shadow lurk all aspects of myself that I keep hidden (from others or myself) beneath an armor of distraction, denial and niceness. "Unacceptable" thoughts and feelings are kept locked away in the chilly basement of the heart. Who wants to go there? But in avoiding the shadow, I lack the strength to embody a radical kindness, or the gumption to practice a fierce compassion. I've locked too much life energy in that basement. (Jung, who introduced the shadow to modern Psychology, said that 90% of the shadow is pure gold.) A couple of mottoes prod me on: "You're only as sick as your secrets." "What we do not own will own us."

In observing my own antics over the years, I've gotten a sense of my shadow: it's shaped by a pattern of habitually concealing weakness, anger, greed, judgment.... I've also realized lately that my shadow isn't just my "bad" attributes. It's also my visionary and poetic energies that were derided and ridiculed in childhood. (Don't let this paper fool you. If you met me at a party, I wouldn't be animatedly talking about this stuff.) Reclaiming these qualities, especially in their vibrant rawness, is quite a stretch. It requires overriding the survival strategies of a lifetime, exposing old wounds and humiliation to the light of day. Am I willing to nestle up with shame, rage and dread? Am I willing to forego the hope of a tidy shortcut to Utopia? Honestly, I still waffle.

In my inquiry into the art and science of psychological alchemy, I've read inspiring accounts of people with serious illnesses transforming themselves through wrestling with their shadows. Some reach a point where they say: "I wouldn't trade who I am now, with cancer, for who I was before without it." Reading these stories, I've wistfully wished I had cancer or AIDS. I wanted that irresistible invitation to grapple with and integrate my shadow. (Recently I've chosen the next best thing to terminal illness: becoming a parent.) "Sometimes we need to be pushed off the cliff in order to fly." Short of that, we need a safe place to let go of being safe, where we can choose to jump off the cliff of our fears and coping strategies, in the fellowship of committed partners. The shadow develops- beginning in childhood- as a natural response to the judgment and ostracism

that society uses to "keep us in line". We reclaim the shadow and its gifts by building relationships that welcome it to the table, bad maners and all. (You'd have bad manners too if you were locked in the basement for 20 years.)

--to pragmatically investigate and honor your shadow, dear comrade;

I do emphasize the pragmatic aspect of "shadow work". It's not endless psychotherapeutic dredging. It is confronting the demons that stand in our path or nip at our heels in our journey to effective service in life.

--to engage these commitments playfully!

Again, the baby learning to walk is a great role model.

A big part of living playfully involves taking one's personality more lightly, seeing oneself as an actor playing a part in an improvisational theater. For example, here's a thumbnail sketch of the character I play most days: He's a visionary cynic, a cowardly don Quixote. He's a wild goose, ardently eager to convene the flock for the long flight to Canada. At the same time he's a lone wolf, distrustful of the pack, resistant both to leading and being led. This "heart alchemist " works under a dread of test tubes blowing up in his face. So, he'd rather read recipes than cook. He'd rather study maps than travel. If this character is to become more alive, he needs to break the voice of fear's hypnotic grip, perhaps by joining Cowards Anonymous. He needs to be more comfortable with making a fool of himself. (A poll was once taken to determine people's greatest fears in life. Surprisingly, the biggest fear was not of dying but of public speaking! Someone deduced from this that most of us would rather die than make fools of ourselves.)

In the Theater during a play, offstage actors hang out in what's known as "the green room": a place where one is close to one's character but still has perspective on his or her foibles. Community can function at times as a green room: a place to hold our personas up to the light and get a fresh perspective on our parts, play with more open ended possibilities. Again, it's a safe place to let go of being safe. And when your fellow actors know you're altering your character, they can nudge you in that direction when you're back on the stage of day to day life. (I've recently started exploring more concretely the tools of theatre improv and psychodrama in unleashing human potential from the shackles of the calcified sense of self. I'm eager to connect with others who have background or interest in this approach.)

Reader, what is your character's persona?

--to practice wonderment.

"One's destination is never a place but rather a new way of looking at things."

-Henry Miller This paper may seem like an overambitious personal growth junkie's "to do" list. I do get that way sometimes. "Sabbaths", days off from our goals and ambitions, are an antidote to this tendency, a chance to recall that at heart our lives are a bottomless mystery. ("I see myself as a child on the beach gathering shells." -Isaac Newton) An occasional day dedicated to rapturous savoring of the sounds of leaves rippling with the wind, a child's cries and laughter, mindfully chewing food, moving bowels.... Practicing having no ambitions is a stretch. The discipline of wonderment also benefits from the company of fellow practitioners.

Well, that's a mouthful of commitments, though in truth they're only facets of a single art. Each is implied by the others. These may seem overly formal, but I sense that they're inborn, just like we're all born with the commitment to learn to walk. With great difficulty we learn to conceal ourselves, to feel inadequate, to numb out. Commitments work like formal yoga poses; they may feel unnatural at first but by steadily practicing them we become more flexible and balanced. They

start to feel like home.

Fully implementing these commitments is a bit like climbing into a pressure cooker, sealing it and turning on the heat. Who in their right mind would choose that? But the time comes when the risk to remain tight in a bud is more painful than the risk it takes to blossom. This isn't an easy path, but as one country music singer moaned: "Easy's gettin' harder every day." And again, having comrades in the unfolding can make all the difference.

If these rantings resonate with you, let's talk or write!

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#### LESSONS FROM GEESE

Fact 1: As each goose flaps its wings it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact 2: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Fact 3: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing in leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

Fact 4: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

Fact 5: When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as these geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

From a speech given by Angeles Arrien at the 1991 Organizational Development Network and

based on the work of Milton Olson.

For further inquiry into these commitments and the art of intentional living, I recommend the following books:

The Evolving Self Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi A lucid inquiry into the promises and pitfalls of human nature, culminating with a call for a "Fellowship of the Future". "The ideal social unit is a group small enough to allow intense face to face interaction, one in which members participate voluntarily, and in which each person can contribute to a common goal by doing what he or she does best."

The Heart Aroused: Poetry and the preservation of the soul in corporate America. David Whyte A potent weaving of poetry and psychological insight. For best effect I recommend that David Whyte be taken aurally. Cassettes of his talks and readings are awesome and can be obtained from Many Rivers Press (360) 221-1324 Start with "The Poetry of Self Compassion"

Just Another Spiritual Book Bo Lozoff A gutsy and practical guide to the spiritual foundations of adventuring.

Warriors of the Heart Danaan Perry A vivid manual on the arts of conflict resolution and becoming fully human by a well seasoned veteran.

Very Far Away From Anywhere Else Ursula LeGuin A beautiful short novel that evokes the pain, delight and healing inherent in intentional friendships.

If you Want To Write Brenda Ueland A zesty infectious battle cry for anyone seeking to liberate their muse.

Wishcraft Barbara Sher

Teamworks Barbara Sher Both these books offer excellent insight and nuts and bolts instruction in the art of articulating one's dreams and aspirations and creating the community context for their realization.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Steven Covey Look beyond the corporate culture veneer of this book to find some timeless perspectives and tools in the art of living, applicable in any context.

The Starmaker Olaf Stapledon An inspiring vision of the evolution of an intentional universe. A mystical rapturous science fiction hymn written over 50 years ago.

Out of Weakness Andrew Bard Schmookler An exploration of the cultural roots of our shadows and our tragic efforts to deny them. Schmookler also offers some creative suggestions on healing the shadow. I also recommend his groundbreaking Parable of the Tribes

The Millennial Project Marshall Savage Subtitled "Colonizing the Galaxy in Eight Easy Steps", this charming book overemphasizes technical fixes. But it embodies a magnificent spirit of adventure and is a great example of sounding the call for a higher purpose. Chapter 8, "Foundation", offers provocative thinking about synergy and collective intention.

The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook Peter Senge et al. A generous practical tool chest of approaches to building "learning organizations" that bring out the best in all participants.

A Path With Heart Jack Kornfield An inspiring, funny and well rounded exploration of the importance and use of meditation in living life to the fullest.

"The Possible Relationship" by The UV Family A lucid article distilling one intentional family's pathbreaking experience over 20 years. Available on the internet at <http://www.context.org/ICLIB/IC10/UVFamily.htm>