

The Give-Away Girl's Give-Away Book

An Autoethnographic Pathway Towards Transformation: Engaging with Your *Transformagram*

Cultivating Living Wisdom Through Knowledge of Self

Self-knowledge comes from living wisdom that has been associated with *gnosis* or insights gained through experiential ways of knowing. Wisdom or Sophia, the Greek word, is a traceable, stepwise path or Way itself. The Holy Grail or 'rail-way' is yet another representation, using the chalice, the sacred vessel, as a symbolic container for the transformational process. Self-discovery entails shining light into our conflict and illness narratives, so they can reveal the Way forward. Lifelong questing or self-discovery activates aliveness and awareness. Be the Self-discovery that you give to others, connecting to living wisdom for guidance and inspiration. Autoethnographic process is Self-shaping and future forming. Here are steps to elicit recollection and writing flow. Invite yourself to meet Sophia in a creative space where spiritual journey dovetails with writing life on a regular basis. Allow wisdom to flow into your meeting place, taking you on a pilgrimage of expression.

Phase One: Create a meditation space where it is possible to imagine the unfolding of your story. Using a mindfulness posture that is associated with Buddhism or a contemplative posture in relation to the Christian mystical tradition, or yet another approach that inspires you like Abraham Heschel's Radical Amazement or Buber's Encounter within « The I and Thou Relationship » from the Jewish Wisdom traditions. Rumi's path of love is yet another poetic way. Maybe you want to synchronize with the Goddess traditions.

Find your spiritual resonance so to be present in the 'Divine Milieu' using the words of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin or in another sacred space of your choice. Pretend that you have entered a sacred building that has a big red button that you can push at the entrance. Once you push the button, the building is designed to configure a sacred space that mirrors your deepest spiritual desires manifested before you - your personal representation of Divine Presence. What do you see? How is love manifesting just for you? Take in the beauty. How are you part of this living temple? Draw a picture or write a short poem that represents the vision you had.

Phase Two: Imagine a moment in your life, that was a kind of threshold moment or event that inspired awe, wonder, or epiphany. Feel that experience and perception of the ineffable penetrate your whole being. Now, from that place allow your own experience of awe to take narrative form. See the unfolding of that experience in your mind's eye. What happened? How did that experience touch your life? What did you

understand? What is important about that 'wonderful' moment in your life? How can you communicate that moment of epiphany in a narrative?

Phase Three: Make an appointment with yourself at your computer in a sacred writing space that you look forward to entering daily or weekly. Take your time to make a space that you will be able to return to easily. Take care to make it a space of encounter, where your transformational process can unfold with the intention of writing to transform your relations. Let your words give form to the penman's dance: a kind of social poetics that co-ordinates new relational worlds. Illustrate the interlacing relational figures emerging. Is there a patternweaver? Follow your synchronistic storyline.

Phase Four: Allow yourself to enter a state of flow where you can write freely, remembering the events of your life. Re-collect those thoughts and experiences, translating them into words that have narrative and poetic expressions. Take the necessary time to transcribe the visions in your mind's eye. Write those perceptions with vivid descriptions, including the sensations that accompany those re-rememberings. What childhood memories come up? How are they related to your phase of life now? Experience the Logos or the Word, as creative and live-giving, the "word of life" ([Php 2:16](#)).

Phase Five: As your manuscript takes form, go back to it, look at the shape that is coming forth. Delve into the meaning of the words that you have chosen, look up the words and the terms using a dictionary. Let those words and expressions take you on a journey of discovery. Through those words, expressions, and thought forms, find the origin of your root-words. Play in the field of 'natality' as you give birth to your written Self. Enjoy the encounter with your authored self. Notice the events that you are describing and the characters that are emerging. Observe the unfolding relationships that are forming with the imprint of love's symmetry. What patterns do you recognize? What symbols are present? What synchronicities can you identify? How does serendipity come to play in your story? Is there an archetypal framework? Add these insights to the layers of meaning within your unfolding story. Maybe drawing or Mind Mapping could help you give form to the connections in your relational lexicon.

Phase 6: As your aesthetic narrative comes into the world through your sacred writing space, appreciate and recognize your becomingness. How are you engaging in this transformational process? What would make your story a better story? What are you hoping for? Where are the evolving storylines taking you? Where are they going? What patterns can be erased, as they no longer serve the plot? Take a ride on the back of an eagle where the horizon offers a wide-open space of discovery. What new lines of flight or flyways appear? Where might they take you? Make a cartography of the lines of flight or flight patterns.

Phase 7: What cosmologies are influencing the backdrop of your own storied lifeworld? What teachers, mentors, theories, philosophies, worldviews are intertwined with your understandings? Can you explain your meaning-making process by entwining your own story with bigger stories that are unfolding? How do discourses change the way you are in the world? What is the place of hope in your lifelong learning process?

Where is 'journeymanhood' or lifelong learning taking you? Feel gratitude for your life and express your gratefulness. Use this appreciative energy to activate your *life-o-gram*.

Phase 8: What do you want to pass on to the next generation? What is your legacy and how can you transmit that legacy? What aspects of your story mandala can be understood as a teaching story? Are those passages expressed in your 'authorship'? What tools and processes are aiding you to become a story-catcher? Keep writing!

Phase 9: How are you shape-shifting? What storylines are emerging and evolving? What meaning-making processes are shifting, taking on new meanings, or expressions as you progress? What pilgrimages to new places are influencing this transformational process? How are 'heartways' taking you to new lifeways? Describe your personal *transformagram*. How is the writing process creating a space of increased flexibility where you can enter into a process of transformation?

Phase 10: Who do you want to share your manuscript with? What 'Healing Conversations' would add to your writing process? Do you feel safe enough to share your story? Can you take the risk of rejection of your authored *Self*? Are you comfortable with your authored *Self*'s narrative truth? How do you think Others will respond to your narrative truth? What is an expression of your *linkedness*, or relational space where it all comes together through mediatorship? How is your writing process a form of narrative mediation, connecting and opening new flyways?

Phase 11: How did the 'Healing Conversations' add to your storyline? How did they transform your relations? Can these transformational experiences be in-corporated within the body of your manuscript? How can you write them into the manuscript? Has the dialogical process and sharing engendered polyphony or multiple voices? How do those voices contribute to your work in progress? How is relational mind taking form through the conversations? Illustrate your embodied change; the *life-o-gram* in relation to the *transformagram*.

Phase 12: Can you describe the emancipatory agency of your writing process? Can you relate that emancipatory dimension to your original vision of awe, wonder, and epiphany? What connects that first phase with this phase? Has your perception of the ineffable transformed your lifeworld perceptions? How are you feeling about your place in the matrix of your relations? Are you connecting to a better more aesthetic storyline? If so, can you explain what that feels like? What sensations accompany you now? What insights? How are they changing the present, acting on the unfolding story?

Phase 13: Do you want to share your manuscript with the world? What needs to be re-looked at during the editing process. Who can help you edit? Who can accompany you as a midwife for your authored *Self* to be born into the world? How do you feel when you are reading your life? How is this affecting how you are growing older? How is your writing experience *lifescaping* your becomingness? Is the writing process transforming your relations in any tangible ways?

Phase 14: Now that you have found your voice, can you imagine performing your narrative in a creative way to share your *life-o-gram* with an audience? How would a

performance change the language style? Try to write a dialogue for a performance inspired from your manuscript. How could musicality add to your performance? How might 'Others' hear you differently when music is added to the sensory field?

Phase 15: Can you identify writing communities that you could share your *œuvre* with? How is being part of a writing community supporting your authorship? Would joining a group facilitate your process, together writing a new story? How could your transformative process become part of a community project in your region? How are global influences affecting your local community? Can you describe your 'glocal' lifeworld? Does that description have a place in your writing? Where do you feel you belong? Are you involved with online communities? Describe your 'glovircal' landscapes.

Phase 16: Look at the protective covering or chrysalis that you and your story are enrobed in. Stand back and look at the symbolic representation you are depicting. What finishing touches can be added so that you can fully bloom? Can you see the process of your own metamorphosis in the aesthetic narrative that you have written? As a story gardener, what other grasses, plants, flowers, and trees would make your *lifescaping* more complete? Go back to the pages in your manuscript and complete the text with what you perceived was missing. Now that you have added those lifeforms to your lifeworld, can you see the butterflies? What lifts you? Give what lifts you more time and space in your writing journey.

Phase 17: You are manumitting or using your hands to write yourself free. Find freedom from your Old Story. Co-ordinate new relational worlds. Use serendipitous encounters and happenstance to gently guide you, so that you may find your place. Are you adding new words to add on to your vocabulary? Think of three important new words that you have written into your memoir. Is your story-tale a wonder tale? How would you qualify your autobiography or life history?

Phase 18: Experience narrative rebirth. Read your story with love. Honor your sacred 'natality'. Embody your transformation like a butterfly. Use your newfound wings. Share what you know from your experiential learning process. Pass on your own Golden Pocket Watch or heirloom in conscious transmission. Make questing part of your daily practice. Remember it's all about love. Use your inner compass to find Graceland. Be the Captain of your authorship following heartways to new destin-y-ations.

Phase 19: Where is relation-ship carrying you? Can you see how Earthship, Scholarship, Fellowship, Worship, Kinship, Leadership, Mediatorship and Authorship are word containers on the sea of lifeways? How do these vessels transport you? What is the unique quality of your Penmanship? How are you writing your life? What differentiates your personal writing style? Are you writing a poem, song, play, or story? Describe your personal medicine shield. How does it feel to 'see beyond seeing itself'? Has writing become a vehicle for your transformational process? Are there new symbols on your medicine shield that show how you have been transported?

Phase 20: « Know thyself! ». Just like other seekers before you, this ancient Greek aphorism « gnothi seauton », has been at the heart of the quest for knowledge through

time. How has the writing process allowed you to gain a deeper understanding of *Self* and *Other*? How have you personally connected to the wisdom traditions and Sophia? How does daily meditation/prayer offer you personalized experience of *mediatorship*? Let the hallowing process give form to your chalice, making space for grace and living wisdom!

This is love: to fly toward a secret sky,

To cause a hundred veils to fall each moment.

First, to let go of life.

In the end, to take a step without feet;

To regard this world as invisible,

And to disregard what appears to be the self.

Heart, I said, what a gift it has been

To enter this circle of lovers,

To see beyond seeing itself,

To reach and feel within the breast¹.

-Rumi

Poem Eleven from The Divine Shamsi Tabriz XXXV

¹ Mascetti, Manuela Dunn, and Rumi/Mathnawi. *Rumi the Path of Love*. I, I-8, 33, Element