



From: [Dan Keusal](#)
To: dankeusal@dankeusal.com
Subject: "A Way of Working Things Out" (Spring 2009)
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 <h1>"Living With Purpose and Passion"</h1>	
The Dan Keusal e-newsletter Spring 2009	
In This Issue Quotes For Inspiration and Action "A Way of Working Things Out" Resources for a Richer Life New web site! Counseling & Astrology Privacy Policy, How to Unsubscribe	Dear Dan,
To learn more about my work as a Counselor and Astrologer, visit my web site, DanKeusal.com , by clicking here .	 When the economy started to go south, my own anxiety showed up as a joke I nervously repeated to colleagues and friends: "At least I can take comfort in knowing that when money gets tight and people are deciding what's essential and what's not, the two things they never, EVER cut out...are counseling and astrology!"
	Turns out, I was right--no joke. Over the last six months, I've been getting more calls than ever. And I've wondered: Why ARE people choosing to spend their discretionary income on counseling and astrology sessions?
	As is so often the case, my clients have also been my teachers. The people coming to see me these days are not desperate, or reactive, or afraid. They are calm, thoughtful, discerning people who are determined to stay true to themselves and their journeys in the midst of tough times. "Now, more than ever," one client told me, "I think it's important to invest in myself." Another client put it this way: "If I've got an old car, and only so much gas in the tank, and I'm going to be driving through a storm, I want to make sure that I'm choosing my destinations wisely, and that I know how to steer!"
	I hope this newsletter puts a little gas in your tank, and helps you find your way.
	~Dan
	<hr/> <h3><u>Quotes for Inspiration and Action</u></h3>
	"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." (Philo of Alexandria)
	"Take care of yourself--you never know when the world will need you." (Rabbi Hillel)
	"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." (Maya Angelou)
	"Expect nothing. Live frugally on surprise." (Alice Walker)

"Yet it is in our idleness, in our dreams, that the submerged truth sometimes comes to light."
(Virginia Wolf)

"What is a soul? It's like electricity: we don't really know what it is, but it's a force that can light a room."
(Ray Charles)

Essay: "A Way of Working Things Out"

Sometimes our problems are more than just problems, they're a way of working things out.

The title character in the movie "Lars and the Real Girl" seems troubled to begin with. He's a socially isolated, 27 year-old man who lives in the garage of his deceased parents' small-town home, and declines repeated invitations from his brother Gus and sister-in-law Karen to join them in the main house. When Lars shows up at their door one day saying he's met someone and would like to bring her over for dinner, they are delighted. The delight turns to shock when the someone turns out to be "Bianca," an life-sized, anatomically correct female doll that Lars has purchased online...and believes to be a real, live woman.

Gus and Karen seek advice from Dr. Dagmar, the family doctor and town psychologist, on how to solve this problem. She tells them that Lars does, indeed, appear to have a delusion. "What the hell is he doing with a delusion?" Gus asks impatiently. "That's what we have to find out," replies Dr. Dagmar. "This isn't necessarily a bad thing," she continues. "What we call mental illness isn't always just an illness. It can be a communication. It can be a way of working things out."

Dr. Dagmar suggests that everyone go along with Lars' belief that Bianca is real. "Fantastic," Gus says sarcastically, "when will it be over?" Dr. Dagmar responds with quiet compassion "When he doesn't need it anymore."

Everyone does go along, including the pastor of the local church. With the help of Bianca, Lars (and everyone else in town) starts working some things out. How they do so is one of the more moving stories I've seen in recent years, and a reminder that no one is "crazy," that all our choices and behaviors make perfect sense if we understand the pain and grief behind them. By going along, by going INTO and THROUGH our problems rather than trying to get rid of them, we can arrive at a place where those problems can be over...because we've outgrown them, because we simply don't need them anymore.

Lars needed "Bianca" to work some things out. What do you need? What beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes do you employ to cope with your pain, your grief, your vulnerabilities? In counseling, I offer a safe and supportive place where you can begin exploring these questions, where you can look at how your 'problems' are calling you to grow, and how you can respond to that call with creativity, vitality, and hope.

Resources for a Richer Life

(CONCERT): **Larry Murante**. **This Saturday**, (April 25th), I'll be the Master of Ceremonies for the CD release concert of Larry Murante's new recording, "Point of Entry." For details on the concert, visit Larry's [web site](#). Larry's song "Yes We Can," recorded months before the presidential election, reminds us that November 4th was only the beginning, and that lasting change comes when we "run it from the bottom up." To see Larry perform "Yes We Can" on YouTube, click [here](#).

(COMICS): "**Frazz**." Part of my meditation each morning is reading the comics. One of my current favorites is "Frazz," which follows the adventures of an unexpected role model: an elementary school janitor who is also a Renaissance man. Like "Calvin & Hobbes" before it, "Frazz" shows that the best comics can be both funny and smart. To view "Frazz" online, click [here](#), or check the comics in your local newspaper.

(ESSAY) "**On Music**" by **Karl Paulnack**. "I have come to understand that music is not part of 'Arts & Entertainment,' as the newspaper section would have us believe. It's not a luxury, a lavish thing that we fund from leftovers in our budget, not a plaything or an amusement or a pass time. Music is a basic need of human survival. Music is one of the ways we make sense of our lives, one of the ways in which we express feelings when we have no words, a way to understand things with our hearts when we can't with our minds." These words are from the welcome address Karl Paulnack gave on September 1, 2004 to parents of incoming students at the Boston Conservatory, where he is Director of the Music Division. To download a copy of the complete text from my web site, click [here](#). To read it online, click [here](#).

(VIDEO): "**Final Edition**." On March 17th, the Seattle PI (Post-Intelligencer) published its final print edition, ending a Seattle newspaper legacy that goes back 146 years. A few weeks before that, the owners of the Denver Rocky Mountain News shut down that paper, but not before the staff put together "Final Edition." What makes this video remarkable is that there is almost no blaming or anger, which so often are defenses against grief; instead, there are simply moving stories about people's passion for their work, and their sadness over what is being lost. To view the video on the RMN web site, click [here](#).

(MOVIE): "**Lars and the Real Girl**." Written by Nancy Oliver. Directed by Craig Gillespie. Starring Ryan Gosling (Lars), Paul Schneider (Gus), Emily Mortimer (Karen), and Patricia Clarkson (Dagmar). See my essay, above, for more details.

[New web site!](#)

I have completely redesigned my web site, DanKeusal.com. The new site includes:

- * A complete archive of back issues of this e-newsletter.
- * Downloadable copies of my "Reflections" postcards
- * Poems, quotes, and photographs
- * Information on my work as a counselor, astrologer, and speaker.
- * A hidden, surprise feature that you'll have to discover for yourself.

Click [here](#) to visit the new site.

Counseling & Astrology Services

I offer professional counseling and astrology services for individuals and couples. Whether you come to me with a problem (like depression, stress, anxiety, relationship issues) or simply the sense that it's time for a change, I help you look at how that starting point is calling you to grow, and how you can respond with creativity, vitality, and hope.

To learn more, visit my web site by clicking [here](#).

To schedule an appointment,
or if you have questions,
call me at (206) 523-1340.

Privacy Policy, How to Unsubscribe

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I never give or sell my mailing list to anyone for any reason, period. I use Constant Contact to manage my email list because they support my commitment to providing you with excellent content while keeping your contact information private.

That's it for this issue of "Living With Purpose and Passion." As always, I welcome your comments & suggestions. You can send me an email by clicking [here](#), or you can call me at (206) 523-1340.

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Dan Keusal, M.S., LMFT
Counselor, Astrologer
(206) 523-1340
Email: dankeusal@dankeusal.com
Web site: www.DanKeusal.com

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