

From: [Dan Keusal](#)
To: dankeusal@dankeusal.com
Subject: Autumn 2008: Instead of fear, a conversation.
Date: Tuesday, September 09, 2008 10:31:11 AM

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"Living With Purpose and Passion"

The Dan Keusal e-Newsletter

Autumn 2008

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For more information about my work as a counselor, astrologer, and workshop leader, please visit my web site by clicking [here](#).

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Dear Dan,



Part of the fun in creating these newsletters is watching the way that seemingly disparate elements come together to support "Living With Purpose and Passion." In this issue you'll find a wild mustang, a German philosopher, a 60s beat poet, a vineyard in France, a doctor who lectures at medical schools AND kitchen tables, a web site based on the work of a monk, and news of how two "cousins" who haven't worked and played well with each other for a few centuries are beginning to talk again! Read on to see how they all can help you live a rich, soulful life.

~Dan

Quotes for inspiration and action

"The moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred."
(Goethe)

"Life is an ongoing process of choosing between safety (out of fear and need for defense) and risk (for the sake of progress and growth). Make the growth choice a dozen times a day."
(Abraham Maslow)

"We are the hurdles we leap to be ourselves."
(Michael McClure)

"The truth is that life is delicious, horrible, charming, frightful, sweet, bitter, and that is everything"
(Anatole France)

Essay: Instead of fear, a conversation.

I recently learned something about



patience, process, and the value of allowing, rather than forcing, from my friend and colleague Ginger Kennell, who partners with horses in her work as a counselor. When Ginger called to tell me she was adopting a wild mustang from the Bureau of Land Management's program at the Northwest Washington Fair, I accepted her invitation to ride along to pick him up, curious to see how she would get this untamed gelding into a trailer for the trip back to her farm outside of Bellingham.

The representative from the adoption program, who was well-meaning but perhaps tired after a week of long days at the fair, said that "If we just make some noise *behind* him, he'll get scared and run into the trailer because he'll see it as a relatively safe place. The whole thing will just take a minute."

Ginger, however, knew this was the beginning of a life-long conversation with the horse, and didn't want to start that conversation with fear. There were some tense moments--moments when I feared for my friend's safety, moments when I understood why both Native American spirituality and the manufacturers of internal combustion engines associate horses with "power." But I watched in wonder as little by little the trust between Ginger and the mustang grew, her gentle cues and his tentative responses gradually coming into sync with one another...until at last he *chose* to walk calmly into the trailer. It took more than an hour--and brought tears to my eyes.

In a world that often urges us to make choices based on fear, there is much we can learn from this story--about taking our time, about calming our anxiety so we can tune in to the soul's own rhythms, about the value and beauty of embracing the ebb and flow of process rather than pushing straight ahead to outcome.

Ginger has since named the mustang "Cheveyo," a Hopi word meaning "Spirit Warrior." I took the above picture of him just hours after he arrived at her farm, where he is now living happily with her two mares, Sunshine and Azure. For more on Ginger Kennell and her work as an Equine Guided Counselor and instructor of natural horsemanship, visit her [web site](#).

Resources for a richer life

(WEB SITE): [Gratefulness.org](#) (click [here](#)) offers an abundance of creative resources for "responding to life in all its fullness," including: 1) a creative, online version of the ancient practice of walking a labyrinth, 2) the chance to "light a candle" for yourself or someone else, 3) an archive of Q & A with Brother David Steindl-Rast responding to readers (read how he copes with his own [depression](#)), and 4) an email newsletter ("Word for the Day") that delivers an inspiring quote to your Inbox each morning, including the one from Goethe above.

(BOOK): *Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories That Heal* by Rachel Naomi Remen. "Everybody is a story," Remen writes in the introduction to this warm and inspiring book. "When I was a child, people sat around kitchen tables and told their stories. We don't do that much anymore. Sitting around the table telling stories is not just a way of passing time. It is the way the wisdom gets passed along." Remen passes along her wisdom in dozens of brief (2-4 page) reflections--perfect for starting or ending your day, or

for a thoughtful, inspiring pick-me-up any time. She followed up *Kitchen Table Wisdom* with a second collection titled *My Grandfather's Blessings*.

(MOVIE): "A Good Year." This lovely film is an understated meditation on the healing power of place, the importance of vulnerability in rebuilding trust, and the hidden value of those threads that connect past with present and future. When Max Skinner (Russell Crowe), a wealthy and unscrupulous London day trader, gets word that he has inherited the vineyard in France where he was raised by his beloved Uncle Henry (Albert Finney), he returns there...and finds that the people and places from his youth call into question the man he has become. Max decides to quickly sell the vineyard and put the past behind him. "This place just doesn't suit my life," he says to his childhood sweetheart Fanny (Marion Cotillard); "No Max," she replies, "it is your life that doesn't suit this place." Watch for the simply written and beautifully acted scene between them near the end of the film, at the outdoor cafe where Fanny works...(Written by Marc Klein, directed by Ridley Scott).

Astrology & Christianity class Nov 17 & 24, Dec 1

Upcoming class led by Dan Keusal:

"They Followed A Star: Astrology & Christianity As Allies on the Journey." Just as the Magi followed a star to find Jesus, we can look to the stars for help in discerning Spirit's plan for us. Drawing on biblical theology, music, poetry, psychology, and more, we'll explore the connections between Astrology & Christianity, and look at how astrology can support and deepen our journeys.

Dates: November 17 & 24 and Dec 1, 2008

Time: 7:00 - 9:00 PM each night

Place: University Unitarian Church, 6556 35th Ave NE Seattle WA 98115

Fee: \$10/night or \$25 for the entire series.

To register: email University Unitarian at churchoffice@uuchurch.org, or phone the church office at: 525-8400 ext. 10

Note: Pre-registration is encouraged, but not required (we'd just like to know about how many chairs to set up, and how many copies of the handouts to print!). Also, while attending the entire series will make for a richer, more integrated experience, you are welcome to attend any or all of the sessions.

I was interviewed on NPR about this class (see the next section, below, for details on how to listen to the interview).

For more info on the class or the interview, visit the "Workshops" page of my web site (click [here](#)), or call me at 206-523-1340.

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If you'd like me to come speak to your business, school, community group, church, or other organization, call me at (206) 523-1340, or email me by clicking [here](#).

Listen to Dan on NPR!

On 11/21/07, I was interviewed on KUOW, Seattle's NPR affiliate, about the connections between astrology, spirituality, psychology, and the arts--disciplines I refer to as "cousins in soul-making." The interview was conducted by Dave Beck, host of KUOW's daily program "Sound Focus," and lasts for about 18 minutes. To listen to the interview online, click [here](#), and then choose one of the options under "Listen to Sound Focus" (if you're not sure which one, choose "MP3 Lo"). My interview begins at the 13:58 mark of that day's hour-long program. (If you have trouble with the above link, just go to KUOW.org and type "astrology" into the Search box).

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To learn more about how I might be of help, please visit my [web site](#).

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

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That's it for this issue. As always, I welcome your comments, stories, feedback, suggestions (send me an email by clicking [here](#), or give me a call at (206) 523-1340). Share this newsletter with friends is by clicking on the "Forward Email" link below.

Wishing you all the best as you find your purpose, heal your pain, and live with passion!

Peace,

-Dan

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