



Words of Wisdumb

from Natasha Krause

Dear Natasha,

During this quarantine, I've done some deep work to figure out who I am as a performer and, less importantly, as a human.

I feel like I'm 73% of the way there but feel stuck.

What are some things I can do to get unstuck to unlock the remaining 27% of my performer-self and my self-self?

BTW, loved last months "what your pastry order says about you" article. I shared it with my friend.

*Thanks in advance,
73% Stuck*

Dear 73% Stuck,

For most of us, there's a knee jerk reaction to fill our empty, quarantine schedules with more "things to do"— as if crossing off items on our imaginary to-do list will affirm we are still "real" and make this cocoon of isolation "worth it".

73% Stuck, what if you took your rest as seriously as your work? What if you let go of your grasp on routine and got lost in restoration? What if you released all preconceived notions of what success or happiness looks like to you and curiously toyed with aspects of yourself that are completely unrelated to "performance"?

Tomorrow, I'd recommend clearing your schedule and starting your day with an "Inner Child Meditation" from YouTube. If it resonates with you, maybe for the next few days, start everyday like this. The rest of your activities for the day can be inspired from what you observed during your meditation. Perhaps put on your favorite pjs and watch cartoons. As a child, I used to watch tv in my "Beauty & The Beast" sleeping bag on the couch— it was the comfiest way to lounge. When I had to get something in another room (like a diet caffeine-free Coke), I wouldn't want to get out of the warm cocoon I had created so I'd hop around my house whilst in my cozy bag to retrieve my item.

Eat snacks when you're hungry and take naps when you're tired. Continue to cherish and nurture the

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part of you who's only motive was to have fun and play pretend when no one else was watching.

Yours,
Natasha

Once your expense list is complete, I want you to draw all the ways you can pay for all of these items as if it were real- doodle in bags of money, coins, trading horses, etc.

Finally, crack open a bottle of Cab Sav and with each sip, whisper into your glass, "I create my personal abundance from an infinite source. "

Yours,
Natasha

Dear Natasha,

At some point, we are all going to come together and eat the rich. What wine pairs best with human?

*Sincerely,
Hungry*

Dear Hungry,

Cannibalism is actually really, really, really, really revolting and scary to me. I watched this Discovery ID episode about cannibals when I was like 10 or something and they said the human bicep tastes like filet mignon and that really f*cked me up. I couldn't eat steak for... a while.

Although I do not condone the consumption of human flesh, I do support the sentiment. Why do some people seem to have all the money, all the friends and all the helpful sh*t at their disposal and how can I get a sliver of that good-good?

If you are looking to manifest some material wealth in your life, I'd recommend making a list of your monthly expenses (without numbers) and all the areas in your life where you have debt. These debts can be monetary or they can be interpersonal. For example, a friend was there for you when you were down and you want to repay them somehow.



Dear Natasha,

In this strange time, how can I create and nourish deep bonds with people outside my quarantine bubble?

Sincerely,

Yearning in Los Angeles

Dear Yearning in Los Angeles,

For the first time in our lives, we are being ordered to stay at home. And when we must venture outside, we have to wear face masks. And if there's other people around, we have to be at least 6 feet apart. And this is how we, the human race, are banding together to (drum roll, please) save lives... what? Is this real life? Is this that dystopian future that the Syfy channel makes all those shitty movies about? We are currently in a chapter of humanity where "social distancing" equates to "not killing someone". But without the context of a pandemic, what would you have thought "social distancing" meant?

The CDC says "social distancing" means, "a set of actions taken to stop or slow the spread of a highly contagious disease." The dictionary

says, "the perceived or desired degree of remoteness between a member of one social group and the members of another, as evidenced in the level of intimacy tolerated between them."

My gushy, poetic heart reads these as two completely different things. The first definition strikes me as binary. The second has room for gray. The first we must do in order to achieve a tangible result. The second can happen when we don't know where we stand with another person—"Can I get closer? Do they like me? Do I like them?"

And so this brings me back to your question, Yearning in LA. How does one get closer to others when we are being ordered to stay away? I say reach out to the person you've been thinking of. It doesn't have to be with the intention of becoming best friends, but instead, think of it as an invitation to bring connection and compassion into your life. If the person can, they will meet you at your same level of interest and friendliness. And remember— some people are enjoying the social detox.

Like my Croton plant sitting in the window sill, the extroverted part of me is wilting without the water of face-to-face interaction, while the introverted part is beyond grateful for the reset (see picture below). In a similar way I tend to my many house plants, all the relationships in our lives require a different level of interaction for the best nourishment. Some feel good if we blow up the group chat consistently during the week, some make us feel like we can chat once in a while but pick up right where we left off, and some we can only muster the energy to chat every once in a while even though we still love them.

When we do have time to chat with others who are outside our quarantine zone, be mindful of how you feel afterwards. Do I feel listened to and supported? Do I feel invigorated or drained? Do my boundaries feel respected?

Take this time to cultivate your garden of friendships with little gestures. Sow seeds of support by sending a quick text telling someone you're thinking of them. Trust that some friendships need less than others. And remember to drink plenty of water— because what are we if not plants with more complicated emotions?

Yours,
Natasha



Exhibit A: *My croton plant— half perky/ half wilted/ fully my fault*

Dear Natasha,

How can you tell if you need a therapist or if you just miss having an audience?

*Sincerely,
Therapy?*

Hi Therapy,

This is not an either/ or question. And can I just say... I love therapy. I love therapy SO much. Yes, I am that person that slips into conversations, "I talked about this with my therapist". Therapy is fucking rad!

And therapy is hard. Finally talking about ourselves with a professional really brings to light all the parts we've been purposefully keeping our heads in the sand about. As Richard Rohr says, "The more we know about ourselves and why we do the things we do, the less impressed we are. "

But you know what? I would choose doing the hard work on myself any day over blindly working out my "stuff" on other people. I love myself AND the other people around me too much to not do it.

Now this gets muddy when performance is involved. There's a romanticization of dying for one's art because that's lauded as the only way to get "there". Not only is this philosophy unsustainable for the performer, but it sets a bad precedent for others who admire their work. To add even more confusion, the audience can be a worthless litmus test— "But they loved it!" Getting praised for our bad behavior gives a high like no other. It confirms all the negative cycles that are enmeshed in our ego aka our false self. "I knew it— even

though this makes me uncomfortable, people like it! So I'm going to keep doing it until I eventually like it!" But what happens when the uncomfortable sensation doesn't go away? What happens when we don't have an objective person to unpack the flop with? We are left with a performer who is farther away from their spark that brought them there in the first place.

Don't get me wrong, I've definitely had moments of catharsis on stage when I pushed to a place I didn't think I'd be in. But does performing in front of people fulfill the same thing that a therapist does? Absolutely not.

As Idiots, we are constantly being our most vulnerable in front of a room of people that we don't really know that well. This makes coming at our performance from the place of the healed adult paramount. It keeps the performer, the other people on stage and the audience safe. And when people feel safe, they can do their best, most innovative, dumbest work ever.

So Therapy, I'd say if you're curious and looking for an hour of emotional release in quarantine, talk to a therapist. It's not the Clubhouse main stage, but it'll definitely make you feel things. If you don't know where to start, ask a friend who's already in therapy for a list of professionals their therapist recommends. And you know what? I'm throwing in a guarantee that it will make you a stronger performer and more importantly, a better human.

Btw, did I say I love therapy?

Yours,
Natasha