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"Living With Purpose and Passion"

The Dan Keusal e-Newsletter

Winter (Feb) 2008

In This Issue

Essay: At the movies
Resources for a richer life
Quotes for inspiration and
action

Workshops by Dan Keusal
Counseling & Astrology
Services

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



Dear Dan,



As I write this "Winter" edition of my e-newsletter, the sun is shining and the temperature is approaching 60 degrees, but the calendar says it's still February. Like Bill Murray's character in "Groundhog Day," I suspect the sunshine will give way to a few more weeks of winter before returning for an extended stay. In the mean time, I hope you'll find something of light and warmth in this edition of "Living With Purpose And Passion." If you find something you'd like to share with a friend, you can click on the "Forward" link at the end of this email to pass it along. Enjoy!

-Dan

Essay: At the movies

It happens about once a week--one of my counseling clients walks into a session with the latest self-help book, wanting to know what I think of it.

Often, I tell them--go to the movies.

To a client struggling with obsessive-compulsive tendencies, I suggested she watch Jack Nicholson's character in "As Good As It Gets" (whose compulsions diminish when he finds something more compelling on which to focus his attention). To another client who found that the absence of sex while his wife traveled brought energy to other parts of his life, I suggested the baseball classic "Bull Durham" (where Nuke LaLoosh channels his sexual energy into his pitching). To a young woman frustrated by the "good ol' boys" atmosphere in her work environment, I suggested "Whale Rider" (where a courageous young girl shifts the male biases of her community).

Movies are fun. They are an escape. And they are magic, often leaving in their wake far more than an evening's entertainment, as these three writers articulate so beautifully:

"Seeing a film of any significance is not a passive activity; it

requires from the beginning a kind of descent. As the theater darkens, so does our daylight consciousness. We enter a realm closer to the dream than to waking life, a place where the raw, subversive, and sublime can come to light, where the 'sympathy of all things' is more manifest. The screen may capture images but those image release the imagination, involving us in a series of timeless, universal stories running in the background of life." (Glenn Slater, "Archetypal Perspective and American Film," in Spring #73 Cinema & Psyche, 2005, p. 2)

"Film is the most readily available vehicle for either genuine escape or genuine therapeutic healing in our culture--the cinema is the most widely attended cathedral in our era. Film gives the Soul hope in much the same way that cathedral, synagogue, mosque, and mystery shrines did for the ancient world. Within the warmth of community and collective image, film soothes the Soul." (Terrill L. Gibson, "Cin-Imago Dei: Jungian Psychology and Images of the Soul in Contemporary Cinema," in Spring #73 Cinema & Psyche, 2005, p. 72).

"...the arts offer us a way through our predicaments with the tempered light of imagination instead of the blazing lamp of enlightenment...The arts provide a viewpoint fundamentally different from the one that shapes modern psychology. Through the artistic imagination, we are liberated more by entering into our experiences than by being led out of them." (Thomas Moore, The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life, p. 197).

* * *

Jung once wrote that "concepts are coined and negotiable values, images are life." May you find new life in the images of your favorite movies.

~Dan

Resources for a richer life.

(Book): Remember how good it feels when you've finished cleaning out the garage, or a closet, or that messy desk in your drawer? Cleaning like this can actually be good for your mental, spiritual, and physical health, according to Karen Kingston's book *Clear Your Clutter With Feng Shui*. Kingston suggests that clutter represents "stuck energy," and that clearing away such clutter can bring new life to your work, relationships, creativity--even your financial well-being. She identifies 4 categories of clutter: 1) things you do not use or love 2) things that are untidy or disorganized 3) too many things in too small a space, 4) anything unfinished. Don't be put off by the "woo-woo" title--this book is filled with practical advice that will make a difference in your everyday life.

(Music): "Wealthy the spirit that knows its own flight/Stealthy the hunter who slays his own freight/Blessed the traveler who journeys the length of the light." On December 16th, I received an email from a friend telling me that singer, songwriter, and guitarist Dan Fogelberg had died of prostate cancer at the age of 56. I'd spend countless hours in college learning Fogelberg tunes. I performed many of his songs in my own concerts at coffee houses in the 80s and throughout grad school. One of Fogelberg's crowning

achievements was his double-length album "The Innocent Age," a cycle of songs moving from birth to death, released when Fogelberg was barely 30 years old. The lyrics at the beginning of this review, from the song "Nexus," hint at the lyrical wisdom that pervades the entire album. The album also includes the hits "Leader of the Band," "Run For the Roses," and "Same Old Lang Syne." For more on Fogelberg's life and music, visit either of his web sites: danfogelberg.com or thelivinglegacy.net.

(Movie): "Avenue Montaigne" is the perfect movie for a Friday night at the end of a tough week--light enough to help you laugh and relax, warm enough to rekindle your tired spirit and send you to bed happy and hopeful. Through the eyes of Jessica, a fetching young waitress at a Paris cafe, you'll get to watch the lives of more than a dozen people who struggle with the same things you do: letting go vs. holding on, following your dreams vs. playing it safe, living from the heart rather than the head. To read William Arnold's review from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, click [here](#).

Quotes for inspiration and action

"It is not good to be too nervous, but I think it is essential to be a little nervous: one ought to care that much." (Madeline L'Engle)

"We are capable of fear and courage, generosity and selfishness, vulnerability and strength. These things do not cancel each other out, but offer us a full range of power and response to life." (Rachel Naomi Remen)

"When you're down and they're counting
When your secrets are found out
When your troubles take to mounting
When the map you have leads you to doubt
When there's no information
And the compass turns to nowhere that you know well
Let your soul be your pilot
Let your soul guide you."
(Sting)

"If human kind is to grow up, we must envision and act upon a less childlike and more peer relationship with divinity" (Carol Pearson).

Workshops by Dan Keusal

I've been invited to serve on the faculty of the 2008 Northwest Astrological Conference (NORWAC). NORWAC is one of the country's oldest and most respected astrological conferences, drawing faculty members and participants from around the world. On Saturday, April 5th, I'll be delivering a talk titled "From Study to Practice: Using What We Already Know"--a reflection on how students of astrology can take what they already know and use it to help others; along the way, we'll reflect on how we ALL sometimes hesitate to put our gifts out there! For more info, visit my web site by clicking [here](#).

Counseling & Astrology Services

Find your purpose, heal your pain, and live with passion. I offer professional counseling and/or astrology sessions for both individuals and couples. Whether you come to me with a "problem" (such as depression, stress, anxiety, relationship issues) or simply the sense that it's time for a change, I help you see how that starting point is calling you to grow, and how you can respond with creativity, vitality, and hope.

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.

That's it for this issue. I hope you've found something here to warm yourself by--like a 60-degree day in February!

As always, I welcome your comments, stories, feedback, suggestions (send me an email by clicking [here](#)).

Look for the "Spring" edition of "Living With Purpose And Passion" soon.

Thanks!

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