

July's Message

For so long, we have strived for perfection. But the question is: Perfection according to whose standards? We learn in the SOM philosophy that the Divine finds us to be already perfect and works through us in that perfection, which means that our perfection includes our imperfections, doesn't it? I like the phrase: I am perfectly imperfect. It means that my uniqueness, individuality, personal zones of excellence and genius are just "what the doctor ordered" in any given circumstance. Mmmm, that is delicious!



In my experience, keeping the path open to all possibilities instead of being hypervigilant for an imagined outcome, in other words remaining unattached to outcome as Don Miguel Ruiz suggests, leaves room for expansion, growth, flexibility, collateral beauty, and just plain changing my mind as I'm presented with new information and possibilities.

I have lived my life trying to be the best me that was possible at the moment. Although I may not have expressed it as seeking perfection, I guess that is what it really was. I'm not sure that I ever really felt good enough. Pretty enough. Strong enough. Healthy enough. Smart enough.

Then in my late forties I moved into the birthing world. Was it too late to be a midwife? Yes, of course it was! I was too old to go to school. How ever would we pay for such a thing? Oh, perhaps in another lifetime, I would say. Yet I was beginning to realize that we live many lives in this one human existence. So, maybe it really was possible in another life... another life within THIS life! Perfect.

Perfect?? Well, there were huge challenges involved in going to midwifery school at age 50. Managing finances so that I could quit work to attend classes and births. Studying and researching with a much older brain and body than my young cohort. And then there's the all-nighters to attend a woman in labor. Egad! So... maybe, perfectly imperfect?

Shortly after I started school, my (now late) husband, Lee, asked what I saw myself doing when I graduated. Move to Sierra Leone? Work on a Native Reservation? I know you'll want to do something big with this thing you're doing! Egad, again. Thank you for the compliment, but all I know is that I am supposed to be a midwife. I don't know what comes next. To his chagrin, I felt completely unattached to the outcome beyond the learning and experiencing.

I was afraid that the science behind pregnancy and birth would nullify the mystery. The mystery got bigger instead. Perfect. I was worried I would have trouble learning so much at my "advanced" age. It actually felt more like I was remembering than learning; more like I was embracing something that I already was. Perfect.

Was midwifery the perfect career for me? Perhaps not. I shifted my focus just before graduation to holistic pelvic health care for women and moved away from catching babies full time. My desire had always been to serve women themselves, not so much the baby. I needed my midwifery licensure to do that work, though. So, perhaps it's perfect after all. Is a perfect career one that you have for numerous years? Well then, maybe not so perfect. I left my Oregon licensure behind after Lee left the planet and I moved to Utah to be near my kids.

That unexpected path change did not mean, it turns out, that I left behind what I had learned, remembered, and experienced. The becoming-a-midwife process and path brought me to discover my deep essential self, who is full to the brim with authenticity, compassion, empathy, openness, resilience, flexibility, and wholeness. Those same skills that allowed me to beautifully serve women, babies, and families, also paired well with my work regarding abuse and sexual assault recovery at the DOVE Center here in St George. And the ability to hold sacred space and believe the stories of others is a hugely important part of engaging in the work of creating social justice. These skills and these endeavors led me to truly understand how interdependent we all are in our inclusive wholeness and oneness.

In the wake of that perfectly imperfect career, I cherish and honor the many skills and awarenesses that still serve me in the ongoing diverse chapters of my life. I trust the process. I know how to hold sacred space. I can listen to and imagine the entire story, not just the singular situation in front of me, in the perfect reflection of an imperfect life and being.

Perfectly imperfect? Perfect.

In Gratitude and Joy,
Marina Anderson
Core Council Prez

