



Francine Campone
individual coaching & coaching development

Reinventing Life & Work Newsletter

Without being aware of it, moment to moment, we are inventing our lives and our work, knitting together the threads of prior experiences, knowledge, genetics, emotions and perceptions to make what feels like a whole cloth. The invention, or rather "re-invention" process takes place at multiple levels of awareness and, like the weather, changes in response to new elements in our environments.

In this month's newsletter, I take my cue from the changes in the environment outside my balcony door. It's springtime and the world invites us all to throw off winter and reinvent life.

Spring Forward!

It's spring time again. Yes, there's still enough snow on the high mountains to remind us that blizzards lurk in the shifting winds. Little brown sparrows and red-breasted robins return sound to silent trees. When I stand on the balcony and look at the gardens below, my eyes are drawn to a blaze of forsythia in the neighbor's yard and to the bursts of fluffy white blooms on trees lining the avenue.

Spring offers the promise and possibility of reinventing the world. Daffodils push their way through heavy, wet spring soil. The air itself smells different, greener; the sun is warmer on the skin. Even drowsy insects signal life renewed.. It's been a challenging winter. In the west, the snowfall fell far short of what's needed for full rivers and reservoirs this summer. But it doesn't take much- a slick of moisture, the settling beads of early morning fog- to rehydrate dormant seeds.

In the human world, there has been something of an economic drought as well. Despite a shortfall of financial snow, there are some indicators that we, like the daffodils, are starting to push through heavy soil and emerge toward a warmer sun. What we share with my little green and yellow friends is the capacity for resilience.

In This Issue

[Newsletter Introduction](#)

[Spring Forward!](#)

[The Intercept Experience](#)

[The Bookshelf](#)

*Coming back-
so many pathways
through the spring
grass.*

-Buson

(From The Essential Haiku.
Robert Hass, ed..)

The Intercept Experience, Explained

The Intercept Experience™ profile is now available in the U.S. , right here in the Denver area. This instrument provides a detailed perspective on patterns of thought, and tendencies in how people think about and interpret themselves and others. An extensive report matches the client's pattern against those of successful leaders.

Call me at
303-862-7710

or

[Email Me](#)

for further information
and a exceptional
introductory offer.

Ultimately, resilience is what carries people through challenging times. It's what allows us to reinvent ourselves and our work when life seems to have withered through a winter. Resilience can be cultivated, like working the soil in a garden to keep it rich and fertile. In this issue of ReInventing Life and Work, I share three of my favorite "gardening tools".

Clear off the debris

Last week my mom took advantage of a warm spring day to clear off a thick blanket of matted, decaying leaves covering her flower bed. Underneath it all, she found the tips of perennial vines starting to green up and the fissures in the soil that portend the eruption of tulips.

Neuroscientists often point out that the brain is lazy. A more elegant term for this phenomenon is "neuroeconomics": that is, the brain is wired to conserve resources by defaulting to thought patterns whenever possible. When circumstances in life change, these brain habits can be like a blanket of dead leaves obscuring a fresh perspective.

A friend who lost her job a couple of months ago reported she was feeling in a rut. She knew that finding a new job would take an energetic effort, but it was difficult for her to get herself in gear to do what she knew needed doing. Her mental debris included a narrow definition of "job", in this case limiting the term to work for which there's a salary paid. When she peeled back that layer, she found that she could put her work energy into the job (unsalaried) of finding a job.

The first tool in the resilient gardener's kit is noticing habits of interpretation. Language gives useful clues. Look for sentences that begin with "I can't...." What would have to change so that you could? A second clue comes from "I should..." followed by doing everything but: no follow through despite the sense of obligation. What's causing you to be a "Mustafarian"? Keep peeling; there's something good growing underneath.

Don't be afraid to compost

What's to be done with the moldering material peeled off the top? How does it get recycled into something nourishing? If you've ever had a successful compost pile, you know that there are some keys to the process. Grind everything into small pieces; keep the pile moist (not soaking wet); and turn it over periodically.

A few years ago, I coached a nonprofit executive who was constantly at odds with members of the organization's Board of Directors. The struggle came up over and over again (turning the pile periodically) and every time it did, we chopped up a little more until the tangled roots of family communication patterns popped to the surface. This allowed us to isolate the pieces of the pattern and keep the most useful elements (such as confidence in arguing) moist, while allowing the less useful habits to dry out and turn to mental dust. Every experience has something of value buried in it. In thinking about the patterns that come up over and over again, it's useful to consider three questions. What is useful to learn and remember from this? Where am I wasting my energy and resources? What is necessary in order to move forward?

Remember what you planted last year

This might be laughingly familiar to gardeners. Until the

The Bookshelf

The Resilience Factor: 7 Essential Skills for Overcoming Life's Inevitable Obstacles

Karen Reivich, Ph.D. &
Andrew Shatte, Ph.D.

Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life

Martin E.P. Seligman,
Ph.D.

snow clears and the days warm enough for all of the perennials to show themselves, a garden contains large swaths of mystery. Did I plant poppies in that corner or was it begonias? What's that yellow stuff coming up in the border? When we find ourselves stuck and bewildered by the landscape that's appearing, it's useful to leaf through old photo albums and refresh the memory of what we brought to life in the past.

It's not unusual for people to suddenly feel restless or unfulfilled by work after decades of building a career in a particular field. As our work lives get longer, the need for change is more likely to occur. In an unmapped garden, unexpected tendrils of ivy poke through the soil in the middle of the tomato patch; ground cover emerges in a heretofore barren corner.

A few years ago, one of my clients found herself drawn to pursue a long-ignored passion for creating art. Exploring her memories helped her re-draw the life and career landscapes she wanted for her next decades. Reflecting on neglected desires allows people to recover what nourishes the body and the spirit. Opening up to her rediscovered interest allowed her to bloom in unexpected and satisfying ways.

In order to make sense of the unexpected, the resilient gardener must take some time and pay attention. What's growing here now, right in front of me? Is it something I planted before and forgot? Or is it a visitor with roots running underground, wandering over from a neighbor's yard and seeking to find a place here?

It's time to shed the heavy winter woolens and allow ourselves to breathe. The innate urge toward renewal presses us forward.

The cackle of crows
Cannot drown out the whisper
Of young spring grasses.

FRANCINE CAMPONE, Ed.D., PCC

*Individual Coaching &
Coaching Development*
Denver, Colorado

(303)862-7710

[Visit My Website](#) or
[Email Me](#)