

In Love with the Heartbreaking Beauty of the Discomfort

With my body in pain, I looked up at the sunlight and kept my heart open.

And I took in the heartbreaking beauty of life.

I witnessed it, and found it to be miraculous, pain and struggle and discomfort and all. It wasn't beautiful in spite of the pain — the pain was a part of its total beauty. The struggle and discomfort itself was heart-renderingly gorgeous, as was everything else in the moment.

This weekend I took part in a workshop on relationships and intimacy called **the Art of Fearless Intimacy**, by John Wineland and Kendra Cunov. There's a lot I could write about the weekend, which was life-changing, but I want to speak to just one moment.

The moment:

I was in a standing pose, doing about a quarter squat, with my arms raised in the air. For what seemed like an eternity.

I was looking deeply into another man's eyes, a complete stranger, and also a brother and fellow warrior. We held each other's eyes, and matched each other's breath, for more than half an hour.

We came to be in deep discomfort, holding ourselves in stillness in that pose. My shoulders ached, screamed for mercy, wanted nothing more or less than rest from the work. My mind wanted to get away from the discomfort.

And in this moment, I could see my mental habit: reject discomfort and pain, shut it down, get away from it, find peace from it. This is a pattern that has held me in sway since boyhood.

In this moment, I found a place where I was devoted to this brother, and wouldn't let him down. I wanted to show him, through my gaze, my deepest soul, my devotion to those I loved, my fierce heart ready to go to battle for him, for my family, for all of you.

In this moment, I soaked in the beauty of the light around us, the sound of other men roaring, the beauty of this fellow soul right in front of me, showing me his courage.

In this moment, I fell in love with all of it.

With life, in its total grandeur.

With pain and discomfort, as part of the divinity and magic of that moment.

With my own heart, which I often shut down in fear. No longer would I allow myself to shut down. I kept it open, and saw the absolute pristineness of my glorious heart.

I fell in love with life, and had my heart broken. And I loved the pain of that heartbreak, completely.

Thank you to my brother who held me in that space. Thank you to John and Kendra, who led me there.

And thank you to my wife, my kids, my other loved ones, and all of you, who give me a powerful reason to keep my heart open to the heartbreaking awe-inspiring discomfort of being alive.