



NAVIGATING TRANSITIONS

A LOVE LETTER FROM THE
WILD DREAMS COMMUNITY

Ana Polanco
COACHING

W H O I S T H E W I L D D R E A M S C O M M U N I T Y ?

The Wild Dreams Community is a group of women of color who once asked, "Does my life need to be organized like this?" Across what is now four cohorts, this community of women come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, racial and ethnic identities – all holding a passion to see a creative, loving and thriving future for themselves and the next seven generations. These women have participated in the Wild Dreams coaching program since its inception, and they are the heartbeat of a call for bringing well-being, creativity, listening, and rigor to the Wild Dreams community.

HOW DO MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY GATHER?

Members of the community gather online in an open space chat group, sharing stories, questions, recommendations and acknowledging each other in all the ways. The community also comes together once a month to dive into a topic they care about. The conversations touch the mind, body, and the energy of our shared and unique experiences.

HOW DID NAVIGATING TRANSITIONS BECOME A THEME?

Navigating transitions became a theme because our society is in a mega transition in terms of values, relationships, and how we build community and we feel that transition at every level. The global health pandemic and the ongoing collective racial and social trauma have affected each of us and our vision. We also have a shared wild dream -- a deep desire for freedom. So we hold each other, across time and space. Wild Dreams is also about giving women of color the space to navigate transitions on their own terms without having to hold everyone in the room.

We have learned some things about navigating transitions in our online chats, live group sessions, and in all the in-between spaces.

Wild Dreamers have collected all those insights and with the help of Ana and Aquarius turned these ideas into a small offering to our communities about navigating change.



WE HOPE THIS LOVE
LETTER AND
COLLECTIVE WISDOM
SPEAKS TO YOU.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ADAPTED TRANSCRIPT OF THE ONLINE CONVERSATION AND LIVE COMMUNITY SESSION. SOME OF THE INFORMATION HAS BEEN REDACTED TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY OF EACH PARTICIPANT.

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COLLECTIVE INQUIRY

QUESTIONS ABOUT TRANSITIONS
THAT RESONATED IN THE GROUP

- Am I doing the right thing?
- Am I being useful?
- How do I let go of a desired outcome and surrender to what is?
- Am I surrendering to divine timing or am I scared to act?
- When will this end?
- How do I move forward when it feels like slogging through a neverending swamp?
- Will this all work out? What if it doesn't work out?
- Am I ready? Will I ever feel ready? Is this wise?

COLLECTIVE INQUIRY

QUESTIONS ABOUT TRANSITIONS THAT RESONATED IN THE GROUP

- How do I transition with dignity?
- How do I embrace the beauty/lessons learned that accompany this transition?
- How do I transition if it means leaving some people behind?
- What am I grateful for during this time?
- What's so good about worrying what other people think of me?
- When I feel angry, ask is the anger mine? Is it for my ancestors?
- Will I ever get a break?
- What's important about pushing this agenda?

FEEL FREE TO USE THESE QUESTIONS IN YOUR OWN
TRANSITION AND JOURNALING PRACTICE

PERMISSION TO LET GO OF OUTCOMES

I am in the thick of/towards the end of the transition period. I am moving to a new city and only some of my stuff has arrived in a new apartment -- clothes, shoes, books and I need to buy furniture - a process. So I read a book on Buddhism this morning and realized the suffering is coming from attachment to the outcome. I need to let go of the idea of arriving at a fully furnished apartment that is perfect. Phew, don't we love an outcome! I already have a fully furnished rental space, and there's income coming in to pay for the furniture in my new place.

REIMAGINING THE SELF

We think of transition as tied to external validation. We rarely think about the spiritual transition of the people we have become and are becoming through the process. We don't have to stay who we were! We can let go of what doesn't serve us now. What worked 5 or 10 years ago is not necessarily what we need at this moment and it's totally badass to change your vision of ourselves and turn into something new!

W I L D D R E A M E R S T O R I E S

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RELEASING THE SAVIOR MENTALITY

On saving others and the savior mentality: the “helping” doesn’t really help me. I have learned that some behaviors, good or bad, are learned and I just don’t need these roots in my life anymore. Deciding to make a transition is a transition in and of itself.

PERMISSION TO HAVE A CREATIVE SEASON/ LET GO OF EXTERNAL EXPECTATIONS

I added 2 months of part time on to transition from my work role, and negotiated benefits into the deal. I felt the pressure around outcomes and metrics, counting money. If this was the only reason, it wouldn't be worth it to launch a business. I realized I am not just leaving for financial freedom, it's for joy and creative room! I still worry about the external pressure - what will I tell people that I've accomplished and where I have succeeded?

WILD DREAMER STORIES

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GRATITUDE FOR ANIMAL VISITORS!

What am I grateful for during this time? While I was away at the beach all these creatures came to greet me. The two most frequent visitors were the snake - all about transition and Iguana - active rest, basking in the sun. Being in the sunshine with these animal visitors showed me that taking time in between transitions is critical. A snake needs to shed skin otherwise it's a painful life. This got me really clear about boundaries.

CAREGIVERS ASKING FOR HELP

Black, Indigenous, Women of Color are always taking on caretaking roles. We don't question the depth and breadth of our caregiving and whether we can change over time. No one might say "hey throw me the ball. But if we say, can I throw you the ball, they'll catch it."

W I L D D R E A M E R S T O R I E S

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PERMISSION TO REST


I moved temporarily to another country with sunshine, beaches and palm trees. I had a hard time giving myself permission to come, because right before I left I moved into action supporting a family mental health crisis. I felt like maybe I shouldn't come, maybe it's not the right time? Living in the sunshine during the winters is part of my wild dream and ancestral memory. I grew up spending winters in the Caribbean with family and I've been trying to get back to that reality my whole adult life. Work always took precedence, so I didn't do it in my early adult years. Now with remote work, it seemed like caretaking was the only reason holding me at home - and making this decision to leave was a transition in and of itself. In this transition of saying "yes" to my wild dream - and questioning my obligations, I realized that I had to come. I have two weeks left of my trip. I feel ready to go back, but only because I gave myself this time away and this gift of rest and light.

CELEBRATE!

Celebrate who you ARE - not just what you do.

W I L D D R E A M E R S T O R I E S

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CULTURE AS MEMORY OF IDENTITY

Some years ago I was vacationing with my partner on a wealthy, mostly white artist island off the coast of Florida, when I came across a small artisan shop owned by a Haitian artisan. She had the most beautiful jewelry that captivated my attention. When we began speaking I felt encapsulated in a kind of collective energy and shared sense of spirit that you can often find in your conversations among people from the caribbean. Among the jewelry I bought was a wooden bead bracelet that really encompassed the spirit of our conversation. Flash forward to 2021, my partner and I got a dog which really forced some structure around walking and wellbeing into my life. COVID was driving us all nuts and so the morning dogs with the walk were a routine I had to get used to. In the flash of helping everyone else including the dog I realized I needed something of my own to remind myself to be grounded and to take care of myself. At that moment I remembered the beads and the energy of that day in Florida and now I put them on as I head out the door every morning.



WILD DREAMER STORIES

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VISION OF A BEAUTIFUL FUTURE

Becoming a different person or the next version of yourself is the transition. It goes against the outcomes narrative or visible transitions. It's a very internal transition. Even as we pursue a beautiful future, we worry about the collective one.

Surrendering to doing less is a practice. It's no small thing.

EXPLORING MINDFULNESS AT THIS TIME
HELPS TO BE IN A PRACTICE OF:

- Navigating transition, surrendering to divine timing
- Becoming aware of my parts and which parts of me are asking for what (my inner child, my adult self)
- Working on stopping negative self-talk early on - give myself grace to go on
- Creating awareness and compassion about how difficult it can be to peel from the system
- Allowing myself to feel supported by nature and animals

DEEP ROOTS OF OUR EXPERIENCE

WE OFTEN HOLD ANGER IN OUR BODIES.
WHAT CARE DO WE NEED IN OUR OWN TRANSITIONS?

I hold a constant torch of anger around racism and misogyny. It's heavy. I have made a direct connection to being angry about racism and misogyny and heavy drinking in my teens and 20s and 30s. So yes to all of that - becoming aware of where the anger is coming from.

My anger is about colonization. Do I need to be angry at this time, or is it about something deeper in my childhood or spiritual practice? It is a constant struggle in broad group settings to discern this.

If you keep anger in your body, you will get sick. Many of the endemic health issues in our communities are partly due to anger we carry across generations.

I am realizing lately I'm not used to being in white spaces anymore and it is making it hard when I get into those spaces.

I had a real reckoning early last year about the harm I was causing my body with alcohol. It had been an escape for me. Transitioning other (healthier) coping mechanisms has been a struggle.

WHEN ANGER IS PRESENT, WHAT NEEDS TO BE WORKED THROUGH, RELEASED, AND TRANSFORMED?

UNDERNEATH MY ANGER IS:

- “For me, its related to exclusion and lack of belonging“
- “Anger comes from my lack of control and underneath that is a sense of not being heard/ understood/ listened to, etc”
- “Yesssss, the need for planning and control, I can so relate to the source of that”
- If we process our anger and organize, we might change things.”

WHAT COULD BE OUR EMERGING PRACTICES:

I practice meditation/mindfulness to notice what is emerging

I wear meditation beads to remind me of who I am now.

I practice intervening with negative self-talk early.

I acknowledge that transitions are a change
in who you are - your personal self.

I practice “Turn Anger into Spiritual Support”
by Lama Rod Owens

HOW CAN WE ACCEPT SUPPORT FROM NATURE?

We acknowledge and embrace animal visitors and what they represent. This is a list of animals that were spoken of in our session. The meaning-making comes from “Medicine Cards” by Jamie Sams and David Carson and from Tanya Casteel on the Macaw.

ANT - PATIENCE



**SQUIRREL - GATHERING AND
STORING ENERGY FOR FUTURE**



IGUANA - ACTIVE REST



SNAKE - TRANSITION



**MACAW - BE YOUR
FULL BRIGHT
COMMUNICATIVE SELF**



MOUSE - SCRUTINY



M O V I N G F O R W A R D

WHAT'S ONE PRACTICE SMALL OR
LARGE WE'RE TAKING FORWARD TODAY?

Notice my animal visitors. They are co-regulating with me.

Talk to my anger, actually say hello to it during the transition.

There are many ways to get settled/centered/present in
the midst of transition.

Yes to animal visitors and noticing internal transitions.

Surrender and remain grateful for what emerges

Notice what's happening even when it seems like nothing
is happening

Sit and feel what you're feeling.

A DEEP THANK YOU
TO THE WILD
DREAMERS WHO
OFFERED THEIR
EXPERIENCE,
PRESENCE AND
SELF-DEVOTION TO
MAKE THIS LOVE
LETTER POSSIBLE.

ABOUT ANA POLANCO



I am an ancestral coach, cultural facilitator, and storyteller supporting culturally diverse women to fully unleash their wild dreams. Since I began my coaching & consulting practice in 2013, I have working to shift the culture inside of each one of us toward a collective future that includes more of us. I started the Wild Dreams Coaching Program to give women of culture what they deserve - a space where they can look at their experiences through the many ancestral and cultural lenses that have occupied such an important role in their lives. I believe that by witnessing and accepting the cultural belief systems and ancestral loyalties that inform how we act, we can change the shape of our personal and collective futures so that they are more authentic, inclusive, and sustainable.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WILD DREAMS
COACHING PROGRAM AND JOIN THE WAITLIST
FOR FUTURE COHORTS, PLEASE VISIT
WWW.ANAPOLANCO.ORG