

Muse 2011 6-25

Somewhere in 2003 I made some big changes in my life. The journey started when I found a passage from early June, 1999 in one of my notebooks. I was surprised at what I had read and how much it rang true in the Spring of 2003.

Ironically, I found myself in the same situation in 2011. In 2003 I promised myself I would not return to bad habits of stress eating, bad sleep, and lack of exercise. I promised to walk every day! But life has a way of beating us down and robbing us of the beauty of each day and the fulfillment of self-satisfying work. The day-to-day takes a toll and we lose sight of what is important. Perhaps more importantly, we don't choose what we know is right.

I am changing again. I am stepping down as Chair of my department and making some big changes in my life. And I am correcting some of my old bad habits, particularly eating and lack of exercise. Revisiting this passage from 1999 is a fitting way to start my muse.

***A part of me has died.***

*I let so many things take too much of me. I swore I would lose myself in all of this, but somewhere in the demands of husband, father, professor, homeowner, and borrower I lost myself. And now I grieve.*

*This is not so uncommon as not to expect it. But what is "common" is the way I have accepted it. Lying down, stuffing my face with sweets and my mind with mindless solitaire. I have managed to disappoint myself in the bargain.*

*As I sit in my chair I realize that my bedroom is not my own, my car is not my own, most parts of the house are not my own, my time is not my own. The only thing I feel is mine is the wee hours of the night when, while still tired, I am alone with myself. I fight off sleep not wanting to quit, but not strong enough to produce something meaningful. And all I can think of right now is:*

*"Children, watch out for the Baobabs"*

My slogans I used on this journey still apply today.

- Singularity of thought
- Clarity of purpose
- Pay myself first

I am exercising again. I am focusing on a few projects. I am becoming less as a way to become more. I am letting go... And so I begin my muse again.