



Moxie: the Bridge between Stuckness and Liberation

by Wendi Bernau

In my companioning practice, when I first meet with someone, I (Wendi) ask, "What brings you to spiritual companioning? What are you hoping will happen in this space?" Very often, people present me with one of three personal frustrations: either they feel out of touch with themselves - "My life needs to change but I don't know what I really want," or they are stuck - "I know what I want but I can't seem to make myself do it and I don't know why," or they might sigh in frustration over a large-scale or systemic issue - "I'm feeling defeated and I don't know what to do."

All of these responses are related to a lack or interruption of Moxie, which is the nerve to take bold action for the greater good. In the case of my companions, our conversations will often focus around internal drivers and motivations, values and passion, but along the way we will almost always uncover hidden resistance and fears that get in the way.

Sometimes a lack of Moxie stems from an underlying lack of confidence in one's ability to act efficaciously in the world. That fear fuels feelings of powerlessness ("it's too big;" "I'm just one person;" "This will never change") or a perceived need for perfection ("failure is not an option;" "I'm not good enough;" "I don't know how to do it right"), paralyzing a person from trying anything at all. Or perhaps someone is wondering if what they have to offer has any worth or value ("I'm no good at this;" "no one wants my..." "someone else should do it") and they are afraid to take the next step. They're stuck.

It can be tempting for some of us just to focus on what's going on inside of myself - I do my contemplative practice, I seek out the Divine Mystery, I connect with Vitality...and I become what might be called a "navel-gazer," but I am living in a space of fruitlessness: I'm focused on myself and interacting with no one. Is it even possible or healthy to turn an apathetic back on the rest of the world if I have sought Vitality, honored Mystery and nurtured Presence? I think not. If I work through my fears and become unstuck, I cannot be content to remain small. My liberation from fear urges me into the expansion and action of Moxie. I may be stepping out into Mystery - and I'm ok with that!

Moxie

Symptom of Stuckness: I feel called to action but I am overwhelmed or unable to find a place for this calling.

Sign of Liberation: I work up the nerve to be authentic and take bold action for the greater good.

From the time I was very young, I intuitively knew that my life had purpose - I just didn't know what it was, nor did I know what to do with this unexplored, undirected Moxie. I needed Presence found through contemplative practice to figure that out. I needed to feel the connection of Mystery and the life-energy of Vitality to connect the dots to my calling, my role in the grand drama of the Universe. This has been a many years long process, which I doubt is ever going to feel complete, but with every cycle of my spiritual progression, every facade and fear that is uncovered, every movement toward freedom, another piece of my true Self can become revealed and I can move closer toward the fullness of fruition in my Moxie.



As a Wayfaring Companion, it is my work and calling to use my Moxie to walk with and listen to others who are stepping out in their Moxie in all kinds of ways. Without Moxie, we can become all spirit with no earthiness; we have no material substance or we are small and stuck. But when we engage Moxie, we can overcome the inertia, give ourselves permission to fail, and create social networks for mutual encouragement and support.

Howard Thurman said, "Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and go do that, because what the world needs is people who have come alive." This is Moxie: becoming fully alive and offering your unique self, with all its strengths and challenges, to the benefit of the greater good.

Moxie is the natural outpouring of the other three elements. To neglect Moxie cripples the flow, rendering us stale, static, and apathetic. But it doesn't have to be this way - Mystery, Contemplation and Vitality all feed our ability to enter into Moxie: we can counter selfishness with love, powerlessness with community, and fear with grace and compassion.

If you'd like to enter into these kinds of conversations with a spiritual companion, [contact us](#). If you'd like to learn how to engage in this kind of companioning with others, [contact us](#).

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