

Soul and Role (2-25-17)

Introductions:

- Name, role, and how is your winter break going?

Touchstones:

- Reminder of our norms for creating a container for our time together

Today's Theme:

- Current condition of your work world; soul and role
- Poetry as the truth told at a slant, storytelling of one's selfhood
- “Burlap Sacks”; ridding ourselves of accumulated grief and loss
- The ways we accumulate stress and become of losses, who loaded us up? Who can cut the bags away?

Reflective Dialogue:

- What word image or phrase captured your attention around the theme of letting the bags of responsibility, obligation, stress, or anxiety go?
- Journal prompts that grabbed the attention of your heart?
- Other noticings

General offerings for the group:

Closing:

- What would you like to carry from this gathering back to your work world at DU?

*Soul and Role Touchstones

- Bring 100% of self
- There is always invitation, always opportunity; never invasion
 - No fixing, no saving, and no advising
 - Openness to learning from others
 - Speak for yourself; tell your story
 - Listen to the silence
 - Confidentiality

Burlap Sack

A person is full of sorrow
the way a burlap sack is full of stones or sand.
We say, "Hand me the sack,"
but we get the weight.
Heavier if left out in the rain.
To think that the stones or sand are the self is an error.
To think that grief is the self is an error.
Self carries grief as a pack mule carries the side bags,
being careful between the trees to leave extra room.
The mule is not the load of ropes and nails and axes.
The self is not the miner nor builder nor driver.
What would it be to take the bride
and leave behind the heavy dowry?
To let the thin-ribbed mule browse in tall grasses,
its long ears wagging like the tails of two happy dogs?

Jane Hirshfield

Reflection Questions:

-How does the weight of your sorrow and loss hang on your body? Where do you feel it the most?

-Is that weight you are carrying equally distributed or off-centered and pulling you sideways? How has your gait, movement through the world, changed because of your loss?

-If you imagine shedding grief and leaving the “side bags” on the trail of your life, what happens? What aspect of your true-self, your core being, remains intact and stable?