

Soul and Role
(December 16th, 2009)

Introductions:

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

Touchstones:

- Reminder of our norms

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
- “Sweet Darkness”; the gifts of winter's darkness, loss, and dormancy?

Reflective Dialogue:

- What word image or phrase captured your attention around the theme of winter loss and dormancy in work or professional world?
- 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

Sweet Darkness

When your eyes are tired
the world is tired also.

When your vision has gone
no part of the world can find you.

Time to go into the dark
where the night has eyes
to recognize its own.

There you can be sure
you are not beyond love.

The dark will be your womb
tonight.

The night will give you a horizon
further than you can see.

You must learn one thing:
the world was made to be free in.

Give up all the other worlds
except the one to which you belong.

Sometimes it takes darkness and the sweet
confinement of your aloneness
to learn

anything or anyone
that does not bring you alive

is too small for you.

~ David Whyte ~

(House of Belonging)

Prompts for Reflection:

Sweet Darkness

1. What, if anything, makes darkness “sweet” and rich with possibility for you as a teacher or leader?
2. What comes to mind when you think about darkness as an ally supporting your work instead of an enemy to conquer, a force to keep at bay, or an intruder to chase away? How is/might the horizon of your leadership, teaching, or personal understanding expanded by periods of winter dormancy and darkness?
3. What worlds, professional/personal, or images of selfhood have you tried and given up in order to uncover the one you really belong too? How has winter’s cold, darkness, and dormancy helped with the discernment of the true world you belong to?
4. What if anything might be waiting to be born within the womb of your personal or professional darkness? How near or distant is the birthday of your new beginning?