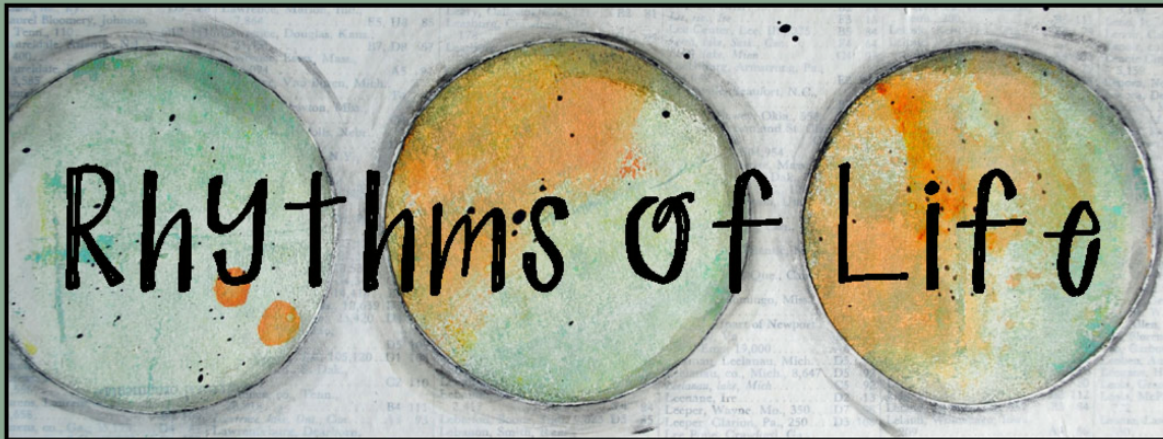


Aldea Explores Series**Finding and Following the Rhythms that Shape our Lives**

Living in harmony (as opposed to resistance) with the present moment through sensing what arises in the now, and continually responding to that - nothing more, nothing less is needed of you. From here, we approach our tasks from a place of ease and flow, acceptance and peace - knowing when to retire when our work is done.

Gemma Louise Pugh

Ponder and Practice:

Can you remember a moment where your life-flow and life-energy seems to effortlessly move you from one element of your day to another? Can you feel that feeling of flow? The calm and yet focused feeling that enables you to approach the task at hand with peace and purpose. You were creative, productive, effective, and full of energy. What if you could close your eyes and find that place any time you desired? Try it now.

We work to become,
not to acquire.

Elbert Hubbard

“This is the real
secret of life -- to
be completely
engaged with what
you are doing in
the here and now.
And instead of
calling it work,
realize it is play.”
— Alan Watts

Work, Rest, Recovery

These three elements of life form an important rhythm that enable us to find meaning and purpose in life.

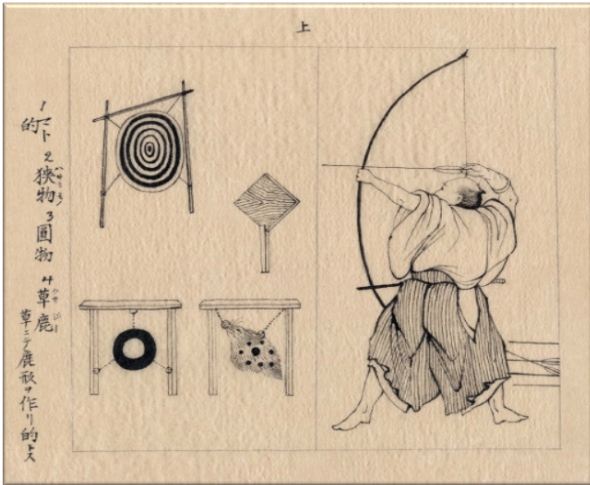
- Work is whole-person output for the purpose of creativity or sustainability of important endeavors (**To Do**)
- Rest is a secession of work or focused activity (**To Cease**)
- Recovery restores, integrates, and readies you to return to a calm and effective state (**To Return**)

The key to this rhythm is how the three elements interact with each other. When the three are working together we have powerful life energy (chi) and the ability to flow with our life-work - making important contributions without forcing them.

Ponder on the three elements of the rhythm: To Do, To Cease, To Return. How are they connected to bring you to your best lifework?

The Master Archer

After winning several archery contests, the young and rather boastful champion challenged a Zen master who was renowned for his skill as an archer. The young man demonstrated remarkable technical proficiency when he hit a distant bull's eye on his first try, and then split that arrow with his second shot.



"There", he said to the old man, "see if you can match that".

Undisturbed, the master did not draw his bow, but rather motioned for the young archer to follow him up the mountain. Curious about the old fellow's intentions, the champion followed him high into the mountain until they reached a deep chasm spanned by a rather flimsy and shaky log.

Calmly stepping out onto the middle of the unsteady and certainly perilous bridge, the old master picked a far away tree as a target, drew his bow, and fired a clean, direct hit.

"Now it is your turn," he said as he gracefully stepped back onto the safe ground. Staring with terror into the seemingly bottomless and beckoning abyss, the young man could not force himself to step out onto the log, no less shoot at a target.

"You have much skill with your bow," the master said, sensing his challenger's predicament, "but you have little skill with the mind that lets loose the shot."

Reflect

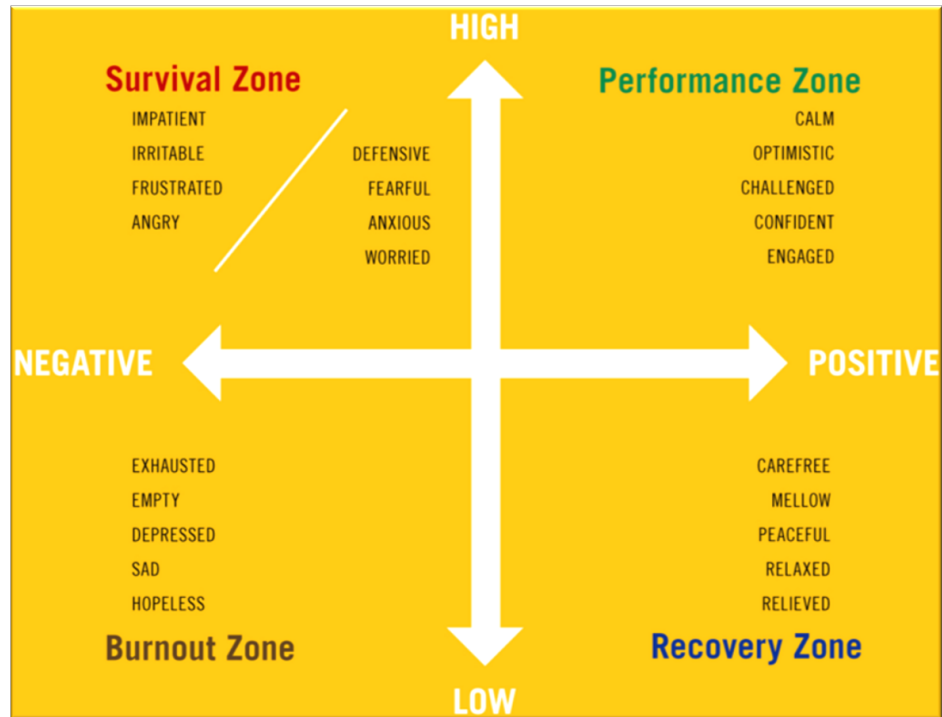
What does this story teach you about the rhythm of work, rest, and recovery?

Do you think the master lived differently than the proficient young archer?

Are there clues in the story as to how the Master lived differently?

Going Deeper: The Power and Underutilization of Recovery in the Rhythm

Take a look at the chart below developed by Tony Schwartz and Jim Leohr, in their book, *The Power of Full Engagement*.



Can you see how the master archer was at his best because he lived on two right side zones? Can you see you too are at your best when you live and work from those zones?

The question of course is this: How do we live more in those right-side zones and less on the left of the graph? Here both ancient wisdom and science can help. Explore more on the next page.

The Chinese concept of Wu Wei is a powerful way to understand the rhythm of work, rest, and recovery. But it also is a way to understand how “to be” in all of life - no matter what you’re doing. Below is a link to Alan Watts, spiritual guru and philosopher of the 20th century - discussing Wu Wei. Listen, ponder, and determine how you might add Wu Wei to your work, rest, and recovery rhythms.



[Click HERE to listen to Alan Watts.](#)

Below is an article and podcast on how to recover through “unfocused time” in your day. It highlights some of the latest research on the brain and how to enable your brain to recover and remain healthy.



[Click HERE to read and listen.](#)