



With Suzanne Sterling

Week Three: Finding YOUR truth and Speaking that truth to Power

- What is truth?
- How do you recognize YOUR intuitive truth?
- Where have you spoken up for self and others?

In today's class we realized that our words have power and that our words matter. Many ancient cultures have strong teachings about the power of words and instruct us to be very careful with our words. Our repeated thoughts, words and stories can become self-fulfilling. Words move into our subconscious mind and out into the world--both conceptually and physically as sound, and begin to create for us. It is important to understand what our words are creating for us and if we are using them consciously or not.

It is also important to discover our own unique truths. This means we need to go beneath the conditioning of our childhood or our cultural norms and allow ourselves to see what lies hidden there. Many of us grew up in environments where we would be threatened or hurt if we were to speak our truth and so we learned to speak the truths that others want to hear. If that is the case, then it can often be vulnerable or even terrifying to begin to know and speak our truth.

But part of our healing process is discovering who we are beneath the conditioning of our families, schools, religions, and cultures. As we seek and find these truths, we often feel a tremendous relief because the burden of hiding has been lifted. When there is fear or shame or guilt in our bodies then we cannot freely express, we shut down and create a closed system that cannot accept intimacy. Living truth is a creative act and allows us to both

give and receive. Truth telling is a revolutionary act of courage and our words have the power to inspire great change and deep healing. Some of the greatest figures in history have used their words to invite and invoke great change. The Truth and Reconciliation Hearings in South Africa were based on listening to truths without fear

Still today as we step into this work, there are many thousands if not millions of people who would be tortured or killed for speaking their truths. This is why it is so important and so profound for us to step into this work courageously...for ourselves and on behalf of those living in forced silence.

WORDS: SO INNOCENT
AND POWERLESS
AS THEY ARE, AS STANDING IN
A DICTIONARY, HOW POTENT
FOR **GOOD** AND **EVIL**
THEY BECOME IN THE HANDS OF
ONE WHO KNOWS HOW TO
COMBINE THEM. NATHANIEL
HAWTHORNE

Homework for Week Three:

- change one story or internal mantra that you tell about yourself often. "I'm too busy." becomes "I am learning to find balance." or "I'm not a real artist." to "My art is important to me."
- add five new words that you love to your vocabulary
- take a risk and speak a truth to yourself and others

My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you. But for every real word spoken, for every attempt I had ever made to speak those truths for which I am still seeking, I had made contact with other women while we examined the words to fit a world in which we all believed, bridging our differences.

Audre Lorde ~ The Cancer Diaries

Resources for Week Three: articles and other items of interest.

http://www.oprah.com/spirit/Speak-Your-Truth_2

<http://www.speakforsuccess.net/a-topten.htm>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PXdacSqvcA>

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=speak%20truth%20to%20power>

http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/make_the_rich_panic_20150503

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