

Jerry Colonna: I'm Jerry Colonna and I'm CEO and, uh, coach here at Reboot.`

Ray Foote: I'm Ray Foote, and I am coach and facilitator at Reboot.

Marty Janowitz: And I'm, uh, Marty Janowitz and I'm Ray with a different name.

Jerry Colonna: (laughs).

Marty Janowitz: (laughs).

Jim Marsden: And I'm Jim Marsden and I'm, um, also a coach and facilitator. And also, um, I'm a wilderness guy who takes people out into nature to support them in transitions in their lives.

Jerry Colonna: We're gathered together in a sense because, uh, we wanted to explore the concept that shows up so often for our clients, which is this notion of that midlife career transition.

Jerry C: Right?

Jerry C: The choice to do something else, the choice to, to do, to, to move in a different direction. And we started to talking about the fact that it's hard to discuss transitioning to a new career without the context of midlife issues generally and immediately.

Jerry C: I think, you know, you know, you know, I'll say this out loud. I think that the feeling was we gathered us together to talk about this because each of us in one form or another, um, have had, have gone through that transition where in our 20s, in our 30s, and maybe even into our 40s we manifested one way. And then, uh, there was this break, this set of questions that can no longer not be answered. And all of a sudden we found ourselves manifesting in yet another way am I framing that, right?

Marty Janowitz: It also, it also points to the notion that what seems to be working at some point we recognize is either no longer working or hasn't been working in the ways we had decided it did.

Jerry Colonna: Yeah. I'm gonna read a passage from one of my favorite books. And this is from *Living Your Unlived Life* by Robert Johnson and Jerry Ruhl.

Jerry Colonna: "When we find ourselves in a midlife depression suddenly hate our spouse, our job, our life, we can be sure that the unlived life is seeking our attention. When we feel restless, bored, or empty, despite an hour to life filled with riches. The

unlived life is asking for us to engage. To not do this work will leave us depleted and despondent, with a nagging sense of ennui or failure. As you may have already discovered, doing or acquiring more does not your sense of unease or dissatisfaction. Stuffing down these rogue feelings or dutifully serving your life's routines will not suffice. Neither will meditating on the light or attempting to rise above the sufferings of earthly existence. Only awareness of your shadow qualities can help you define an appropriate place for your unredeemed darkness and thereby create a more satisfying experience. To not do this work is to remain trapped in the tedium, loneliness, agitations, and disappointments of a circumscribed life rather than awaken to your higher calling." Oh boy, that passage always gets me.

Jim Marsden: I feel for me, that passage brings up a lot of support, you know, just, um, helps to frame and provide some sensibility of what might be cooking. Um, and it also has me, um, thinking back in time and thinking of being with others, um, and reconnecting with the experiences of what they might have been going through without the wisdom of what was in that passage. (laughs)

Jim Marsden: And, um, what comes up from that place for me is that, uh, it's a number of things, almost like a, a felt experience. It, it connects with some things you were just sharing Marty, you know of, "Hey, there may have been a number of things that really were okay for quite some time and it's, it's been quite good, but now, and I may not be able to name the reasons now something's not quite square something's off. And I'm trying with all the old ways to try to address that, but I'm not sure even what I'm even trying to address. It could be that."

Jim Marsden: And, but it's, but I can't not feel this (laughs) and, um, here I am in it. Um, and I'm glad we're talking about this, uh, more at the level of almost like the canvas or backdrop of life, not just career, um.

Jerry Colonna: Right.

Jim Marsden: And career can be where it shows up, cuz it could be, "I'm in an amazing position. (laughs) I have a wonderful title. I'm really well compensated. So why do I feel something's not quite square?" Um, and then the bigger questions maybe coming in and I feel like part of what is in this experience as well, kind of moving more towards the support is, uh, a potential awakening for I've been living up to and within structures and yard sticks that have, that have, that have serviced to me, but they may not have been mine. They may not have been my yardstick of what constitute success, a good life. Um, now there's an opening to go further into discovering, well, what are my yard sticks?

Ray Foote: Yeah, what's coming to me is, um, the, oftentimes as we've talked about the William Bridge's work and, and you know, that, that almost seems like the noticing of the change that's coming like, "Oh, how do I engage in the notice that there's something up?" Well, then I move into a place of this, the

wilderness or the in between state of, um, even, even I may still be my experience of it anyway, is that I was still very much completely in this other construct. And yet I knew that I needed to be moving into another place. It just, wasn't quite sure where that next place could be or could go or even the nature of it. That's where, um, I often think of, um, of, uh, of Hollis's book,

Jerry Colonna: *Finding Meaning in This Second Half of Life.*

Jerry Colonna: Take a minute. Yeah. Why don't you take a minute and describe what that transition was. You were, as I remember a CEO of a company you co-founded.

Ray Foote: Right.

Jerry Colonna: And then what?

Ray Foote: So I was, um, the CEO of that company and that I'd co-founded and what had happened to me is that for, um, it, it just gave me incredible joy for so many years, and then it just, at some point, things just started to shift where I felt like there was something more and yet I didn't have a real sense about what that more could be and that it, um, it really was like, um, the only aspect that I, I knew about it is that I felt like I wanted to be on a bigger or a different stage.

Ray Foote: I wanted to have different kinds of conversations and I didn't know how that could even fit in. Um, and that process went on for, I mean, I think it started probably a couple of years before I met you. And that was in 2010 and I didn't really make the change until about 2000 and probably 2016. So it was a long period of time where I was in this, what I would describe as the wilderness in the place where I'm trying to point, push out and find a place for myself, but then come back to the safety of what I know.

Marty Janowitz: As I'm, as I'm listening to you, Ray, I realize that my, my journey came from a different place, uh, not a better or worse place, just a different place. Um, when I got to the point that we're now talking about is midlife. I had settled into refusing to know or refusing to even acknowledge that I should know that I was unhappy-

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Marty Janowitz: ...because I had gone from a, a young adult arc where, where everything was volatile. I was quick to change quick to do different things in and out, up and down enterprise succeed, enterprise fail, one thing or another. And I, and I labeled it all growing up, you know, being, being young, you know, doing, doing stuff. And, uh, and then at some point, you know, due to circumstances, they're probably not worth going into my reason for doing some of that. Went away. The, you know, the death of my most important mentor.

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Marty Janowitz: And then I reverted and I said, "Okay, I've got a family. I have responsibilities, what do I know how to do?" And I recreated an enterprise I had created and then abandon/lost 15 years before because I knew I could do it. And I, and I realized this as I'm speaking to you, to you all in a few minutes before we started that I had decided to be my father, uh, to do what duty called for. And I was resolved in that. And so I, I only encountered the, the, the moment you're describing as self-born through the truth teller in my life was my wife Susanna, who said to me, one day, "You're not gonna keep doing what you're doing now for the next 25 years and the journey." And that was like bang, slap in my, uh, in my head space. It led me into a period of reflection that then more in sync with what you were describing Ray.

Jim Marsden: There are some themes I've been named that I can relate to. And, um, going back to pretty big time in my life where things started to shift pretty dramatically and you know, one is, um, Marty the, that refusal stage. You know, it, for me where it started to, um, show up, I feel now with the benefit of hindsight, looking back, I can see where I was paying a good attention to some things and really missing really big cues in, in other ways.

Jim Marsden: And I was, um, where things really started to happen. I, it's been about five years in Italy, living overseas, helping to start up a division of Hewlett Packard. And then when the transition came to come back, um, I was being offered a series of different positions in upper management that I just really didn't wanna pursue.

Jim Marsden: And this is where I felt like I was doing a reasonably, a job in tracking what was a value for me. It just had no interest. It just felt like it'd be boring and just cumbersome. Um, but, uh, where I had really missed things, I think, and things just continued to build up is my wife and I at the time recognized it'd be important to take a bit of time before really engaging coming back stateside to reorient and take a breath and, and see what is it that we'd really like.

Jim Marsden: And, um, while we both agreed to do that, neither one of us did tha- did that at all. And instead, I got very busy in a merger and acquisition still within Hewlett Packard. And I just got to this place of seeing how busy I was and how much time I was spending away from home. And I had a lot of reward and recognition and it, it, there was something that was even almost addictive where I was lear-, I was learning a ton and it really enjoyed the people. And there just a number of things that were feeding me in some ways, but keeping me from something that was more important.

Jim Marsden: And I reached this place where I felt like I'm just, now it's clear, I'm just too busy. And I felt the disconnection with family. And I had two younger daughters at that time. And, um, I needed, I, I got to the place where I just realized I needed to

just get off the merry-go-round just to take a break. And, um, at that point for me, I felt like it's not just take a break and be at home.

Jim Marsden: I need to head towards something that I cared about. Something that mattered, but be something that's totally outta context. So I, I did what anybody else would've done. And I took two months and went trucking and Pakistan hopping (laughs) in some of the highest mountains in the world, uh, and just really, uh, got off the grid and was gone in a very different context.

Jim Marsden: And, and now in hindsight, I feel like that was so important. Um, because being out with something that really mattered to me, which is mountains, which I said, that's been a long time though, love supported me and just reorienting coming back to what really mattered. Uh, without having an answer, but, but being grounded in a new way. And then coming back from that, I felt like it was supporting me to head towards and being closer connection with what mattered, which at the time was family and, and kids and, um, relationships and, and work, but work in a different way.

Jim Marsden: And, and that was more of the start of what became more of the career transition. But, uh, it, it wasn't out of some strategy to switch careers. It was out of crisis and doing what I could with what was around me, um, and turning towards what I could, you know, at, at the time,

Jerry Colonna: Jim? Before Pakistan, what was your relationship to the work you were doing? Did it feel like it mattered?

Jim Marsden: Yeah, there were some essential things that, um, are threads that have mattered all long. Um, the things that mattered were relationships, the things that also mattered were things that had to do with creating or bringing something alive in the act of business, um, that, that mattered to us all in, in a way there's a community, uh, component to that. What didn't matter were job titles or, um, growth rates, um, you know, some other things that might be external, it was just, it was something that was, um, found in the relationship between what we're bringing alive and how it also brings alive something inside people, including me. That, that, that's, that was a thread I realized really matters (laughs).

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jim Marsden: And not being connected to that would become quite deadening for me.

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jim Marsden: Which is why I was not taking upper management positions for they're up into a multinational company. It's like, "Ugh," just felt like it was getting further and further away from that.

Jerry Colonna: I really resonate with, um, these transitions in some way, being a movement towards that, which matters.

Jim Marsden: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: And the, and the refinement and the discovery of that, which matters. You know, when I look back over the long arc of my many career manifestations, whether I was a reporter or when I was an investor, it was like you Jim, it was always the relationships that matter. But even more specifically, it was always the conversations that felt connective.

Jerry Colonna: The theme in my life, which I looking backwards I can see is a theme that mattered is to have conversations that resulted in connection.

Jim Marsden: Yeah.

Jerry Colonna: And, you know, that's why I, I often will say, like, I feel incredibly lucky right now because I get paid to have conversations that result in connection.

Jerry Colonna: Not as a byproduct of the work that I do, but as the central theme of the work that I do.

Marty Janowitz: It really resonates with me. Uh, as you said, that it occurred to me that I had spent the first 20 years of my so-called, uh, professional era life in picking something that mattered and then sacrificing other things that mattered because of choice. Uh, until then that ran out. Uh, and what, what I did that was different, man. I wish I even knew what a coach was in those days or that there were coaches. That was the first time I asked myself, "Think about all the things that, that matter. And if there's a confluence," when you talked about at the center.

Jerry Colonna: Yeah.

Marty Janowitz: And, and I, and I had, you know, actually, I, I didn't have Pakistans available and I wasn't the mountain climber.

Jerry Colonna: (laughs).

Marty Janowitz: So I had wandering around my neighborhood (laughs) and in Halifax, Nova Scotia at the time.

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative) (laughs).

Marty Janowitz: And, uh, I actually identified for the first time for intertwined things that mattered, and I still know what they are and I, I could repeat them. I don't know if it's irrelevant.

Jerry Colonna: It's relevant.

Marty Janowitz: All right. Well, there, there were, there were four things and I won't place them in, in order. Uh, one was being a father and being a member of a, a family and a partner, and having that sense of responsibility and participation. Second, uh, was inner practice, which, you know, you all know that was part of my, an early age becoming a Buddhist practitioner and a meditator and this and that.

Marty Janowitz: And it really been a defining peace about what was important to figure out something about being. Third, uh, peace, uh, was, uh, the commitment I had made out of that to be an activist, uh, version of that, rather than a, a Mendkin or a Hermit kind of person, but something that would be let's, call it applied practice, which the terminology that was applied, that point, if it's a gonna be enlightenment, let it be enlightened society that you were focused on.

Marty Janowitz: And then the fourth, which was the surprise, what did I actually care about as an arena? And I came to the conclusion that the arena was the environment as a father, as someone connected to society, it could have been anything, but I decided it was the environment. And once I was clear on those four things, I opened myself up and possibility started popping. My antenna was kind of tuned. As you say to what, what is the confluence of what mattered?

Ray Foote: It brings up something for me too, particularly the connection piece, connection is really important to me. And, um, and I think as I was starting to get some of this cognitive dissonance around the role that I was playing, one of the things that I was so, uh, concerned about was losing the connection because I had been for many years built this company and, um, and was realized one of the things I was so passionate about was this team that I had built and this group of people that we could really make, just punch way above our weight.

Ray Foote: And, um, and that was really, really fun. And as I, um, started to realize that I didn't want to lose that. In fact, I wanted to grow it. So the sense of team and high-performance teams was really, um, a power thing that I was afraid I was going to lose. And so that ended up actually being a pillar of what I was looking for. You know, what kind of a team can I be in?

Ray Foote: And then I also just really loved the idea of improvisation and being able to work within a group of people and just come up with new ideas and bringing out sort of the creativity and, um, and play really at work so that it all feels kind of like, "Hey, we're out just kind of playing in the sandbox."

Ray Foote: And once that started to fall away, I still was like, "How can I move into something that can still hold onto these pillars of team and connection and improvisation and creativity, um, as I moved through." And so it was like, once I kind of had a sense about what those as pillars were, then it was really well,

what can fit into this. And that, you know, was really quite a long conversation for me as I began looking.

Ray Foote: And particularly as I looked at other jobs like other CEO jobs, I just couldn't even imagine doing, and then, yeah, stepping into more of a coaching role, it leads me right into the heart of that connection and building high performance teams and helping to facilitate the creativity that happens when that is really starting to click, feels just, um, incredibly alive.

Jim Marsden: Yeah. One of the things I'm noticing is just even at this part of the conversation, just seeing how much energy and vitality is just coming into naming, what, what matters and what you care about, you know, just coming alive and being an artist and a musician and being in a band and like all that's energizing.

Jim Marsden: And, um, kind of heading back to that idea of what matters and, um, connecting it with midlife career transitions. Part of what, um, also seems like is here is it's in my experience, I've seen it in others as well is it's not an efforting out to find out what matters to go grab something or, you know, it, it's actually a letting it come, um, of falling into what matters that, um, it's a letting go.

Jim Marsden: And, um, even with the idea of what matters, it feels like this, um, is almost like a transition between what should matter, what has mattered, what should matter. And I think in terms of like, well, this is what I, who I need to be in terms of being a good father or here's what it is to be a good manager or CEO, um, to actually letting go of the should and coming more directly into what does, for me individually, matter, what do I care about?

Jerry Colonna: (laughs).

Jim Marsden: And it, it's like, I think of that Mary Oliver line of letting the soft animal of your body love what it loves. You know, it's, it's that.

Marty Janowitz: Both you Jim, and Ray just provoked in me recognition, which is that in, in my list of what matters, I excluded unconsciously things that would give me joy cause that I could not bring to the sphere of what matters. All the things I named was still in the category of duties.

Ray Foote: Yeah.

Marty Janowitz: You know, things I felt I should do as you just were pointing to. And I, and if I were looking at it now, as I am, I would say, what I realized I loved in this whole moment of possibility was I've always loved building things, starting things, creating things, growing things. It's kind of like my inner entrepreneur of some sort, but that wasn't the allowed. It was only when it happened again that I said, "Yeah, I'm getting a kick out of this too."



Ray Foote: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jim Marsden: That's awesome. Boy, that brings up a big thing just in supporting others. And I wonder, um, if this might relate to some of us here too, but in helping people go through this kind of transition, almost always one of the first things to come up, or what are the financials? you know, it's like, what can I do financially? If I'm, I it's almost like approaching it as a shift in career, a shift in, in work, which then just has responsibility and obligation right there at barking at its heels, you know? So the first thing that I need to pay attention to are the financials, you know, and it's like, "Oh, it makes so much sense." And it's just such a false friend, you know, to depend on the financial part.

Jim Marsden: It's what brings you alive? Where's the vitality, not what can I pull off? You know, what, how do I, what's the certainty of what's next with a financial number that's that I can find acceptable and with responsibility that I can be a good person. `Cause it's the number that's gonna influence my identity. Like, "No, no, no, no, no." It, it's just, it just marked all of that for me when we're paying attention to the shits and trying to do our best, with the best of intentions and somehow the financials just got in there. (laughs).

Jerry Colonna: You know, I think what we're working our way into is a bit of a guide for folks who are either in or approaching these kinds of transitions. And I'm gonna lift up this notion of finding the themes that matter it's super important. ... and finding the threads. Um, the, they're, there are almost like golden threads that connect on that unconscious basis. And then the, the, the counterweight may be, you know, if we go back to that passage that I read at the top, to not do this work is to remain trapped in the tedium, loneliness, agitations, and disappointments. And we might add duty, and obligation, and fears of financial wellbeing.

Jim Marsden: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: Financial is really just a substitute, right? For safety.

Jim Marsden: Yeah.

Jerry Colonna: All of these things of a circumscribed life. Circumscribed life, rather than awakening to, he wrote, your higher calling, but one could say awakening to what really matters.

Jim Marsden: Yeah.

Jerry Colonna: Right? And the fearsome aspect of midlife transition is in my experience is holy crap, the house of cards that I work so hard to build is gonna fall apart. What's on the other side? Now, what? And, you know, as I slip slide my way into elderhood, um, and I think I may be the youngest of the four of us.

Jerry Colonna: So, and I still feel like an elder. (laughs) I still feel like an elder as I slip slide into that. What I want to say to those who are behind us, "Come on in the water is okay. You're not alone, Folks have traveled this path before you, and there is a place on the other side where you can feel safe and dedicate your life to that, which matters to you."

Marty Janowitz: Perhaps even more frightening that I'm thinking just personally here is that the House of Cards might not fall apart.

Jerry Colonna: Ooh, God bless you.

Marty Janowitz: Then, you know, year after year, decade after decade, it'll keep sort of working until the end of the, that particular journey is, wow. The emptiness despite all the success, my, my least happy client is also my most successful.

Jerry Colonna: Yeah.

Marty Janowitz: I'll leave it at that.

Ray Foote: I've spoken with a number of people and have felt this feeling myself as well, is that on paper? What do you have to complain about? You're doing great. And yet there's this inside. It's like, this is just not working. This is not aligning.

Jim Marsden: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ray Foote: And it almost feels shameful to bring it up, right? And so even having that, being able to have that conversation with yourself about, oh, you know, I, I, and, and realizing that you're not alone in this feeling is a really, um, powerful realization.

Jerry Colonna: I'll lift up two things. Um, one and, and Johnson and Ruhl use this word. And that word always means a lot to me. One is the ennui.

Ray Foote: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: That living in that House of Cards, living in that, uh, uh, experience and, and to tease it out, my understanding of that word is always that feeling that comes up with is that all there is?

Ray Foote: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: This is what I strove for? That's what I'm living? That's what I sacrificed for? That's what I, you know, went through for? And I'm, I'm often reminded of a quote I read during that period of transition myself, which was, I, I believe it's attributed to Buzz Aldrin who, after he, uh, began orbiting the earth suffered a massive depression. And he said, "When you've seen the earth from the vantage

point of the moon, what else is there?" And I, that quote for me sums up that whole sensibility about, oh my.

Jim Marsden: That quote leads me to, um, an expression of being in a new perspective, a, a new place, a new orientation. And, um, I, I feel like that's on tap. That's what part of the office for answer here is to actually have this opening be a transformative shift, um, that who is coming through on the other side is not the same person that, uh, existed in the beginning of it all.

Jim Marsden: I also can't help, but connect with some of the folks who may be listening, who are connecting with some of what we're naming, but also wondering, well, how do I do this? And, you know, one of the things that just feels is a natural first step is to try to strategize, try to plan your way through. Um, but there cannot be the transformative shift without the letting go.

Jim Marsden: And it takes me to those words from data, but Whyte of, you know, what you can plan is too small for you to live and what you can live wholeheartedly, uh, will bring the vitality. That's there found in your sleep as the rest of the poem is relating to, but the, the temptation to plan and strategize is to try to jump over the move and the opening that's really here. And so part of the transformative shift that coming into the new vantage point is to let go of a number of things that have held us in the old, in the old perspective.

Jerry Colonna: Perhaps in part of the work of elders, such as us, is to hold out the promise of that transformation. Somebody that, uh, there is a, there is something on the other side that if you let go, you won't necessarily fall down. Or if you fall down, you can still be picked up.

Marty Janowitz: I still have the Buzz Aldrin thing running around my brain. And while I get it, I'm also saying man, to, to hold that view, you, of having seen the earth from the moon and embrace it, wow is a lot possible.

Jerry Colonna: Yeah.

Marty Janowitz: If you can find the path that arises, uh, by not devaluing, what you're now tired of or, or ready to let go. I mean that, is that's like the has been called the veneer of experience.

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It reminds me Jim of something that you often share, which is that, um, the letting go reminds me of the endings and the importance of honoring the endings.

Jim Marsden: Yeah. I feel like that's part of our work as elders as well, or just members of support and allies of those going through it. It's, it's to be there with the endings. It's not to be on the other side of what's there it's to actually be there every step of the way, which begins with endings and can have this sometimes

felt sense of loss where there's tremendous grief, sometimes loss where there's joy and leaving it behind (laughs). So the full range of what can be there to, to, to be there with individuals as they're stepping out and not knowing what's next, or what's under the, their feet.

Ray Foote: Yeah. And riffing off of your thought before Jim, about, well, so, you know, now what, how do I go about this process? One of the things that's been very supportive of me is doing the work around imagining not so much what you're going to do in the future, but more, how do you want to feel? And if you can get a sense about that feeling of what it feels like out five years from now, far enough, you and I have talked about this in the past, where if you can almost leap out beyond what could conceivably imagine the structure and the process-

Jim Marsden: Yeah.

Ray Foote: ... to get to this future place where you can imagine, oh, and this is how I feel. I feel creative and I feel like I'm making something and I've got a band and I'm feeling like I'm with my compadres and I'm able to be improvisational. Okay, work with the, that as more of a north star rather than, oh, I need to make this much money and have this many offices and things like that.

Jim Marsden: Yep.

Ray Foote: Has been very helpful.

Marty Janowitz: Yep. I'm pretty sure all of us I'm sure have a version of an exercise we work with of one sort or another. So the, the people were, are fortunate to work with as coaches have the opportunity to go where you just described, you know, my, my version, any client who I've worked with a potential client, uh, will, will recognize that sometimes it's two or three, or how many years ahead you wake up and before your eyes are even open, you're suffused with a feeling that says, I can't believe this is my life, but I don't particularly care about what you're doing.

Marty Janowitz: I'm interested in what are the attributes and qualities of that life. And which I think is where you're pointing Ray, if they can, if they can connect with the atmospherics of that life, the energies. Well then, okay. It puts a whole bunch of things in perspective.

Jim Marsden: Just building out that a bit more. The, um, it has me thinking about the distinction beats between pull and being pulled towards something that's really rewarding versus push, which is the effort out, you know, and try to make our way into and connecting with those qualities and attributes that are bringing us alive, creates pull, I'm inspired. I'm heading there, not my trying to find a way of pushing towards.

Jerry Colonna: I'm seeing a bit of a process here, which is looking backward and seeing what matters, and then recognizing what's ending and honoring what's ending, then creates the capacity to move towards what, what you're being pulled toward.

Ray Foote: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: It is in some ways that, you know, I will post a link to this, to that, to that essay you once wrote, Jim, *The Journey of Transformation*.

Jim Marsden: I could go through that kind of quickly just to name it or to give a little snippet of it without. Um, so if as people reach out and, um, access that resource, they'll see an image and the image is in the shape of a U. And at the beginning of that U um, we may be living, um, before the awareness that there is something about to tap on our shoulders and life for, or could be pretty good. It might be, have its challenges, but they're all contextualized everything's by and large as it should be. And then there's the tapping at the shoulder. And sometimes that's referred to as the call. Um, the journey of transformation graphic, and what I'll be saying is not unique. It, it actually is, um, what I'm naming comes from about a lot of different resources aggregated into something that you'll find hopefully meaningful and easy to relate to.

Jim Marsden: So the call may be, something's not quite square (laughs) or, um, a partner saying how long do you intend to be living this way? (laughs).

Jerry Colonna: (laughs).

Jim Marsden: But there's the tap on the shoulder that eventually gets to this place of it is undeniable. As much as we may recognize, we try not to really engage. The trying not to engage is a natural human response. It is not a statement of courage (laughs) or anything of that sort. It's more of, "Can I just please keep things as they are, or make minor modifications at the margin," until we realize we can't. And at that point, there's the opportunity to step over a threshold where now in the awareness that, um, what am I about to walk into is something that is beyond familiarity. Um, and yet at the same time, I am trying to walk towards even here already towards something that is that un-lived life that we were naming.

Jim Marsden: So something that is essential and a vitality for me and whatever words I might bring to it in that moment. But the crossing of threshold is to say, "I can't go back. Uh, I am no longer able to live how I did last Tuesday." Um, and now here I am. And so turning towards the graphic after crossing the threshold to really head towards and be with more directly what's here, the first move is often downward in its description. And it's downward because it relates to heading into that, which is underneath the surface, that, which is, uh, maybe been bubbling for a bit, but also comes with a sense of loss, of letting go of endings.

Jim Marsden: Even death can be death of the identity that I had had, but there's an important aspect of honoring endings. To really name them, to really let them come 'em to close that's in the work. And at the same time, there's also an exploration underway to really see what's at the edges of what I care about? What actually matters? So the search is already there on what matters. And sometimes some of us refer to that as tending to longing - what is in the longing?

Jim Marsden: It's not that for which you long it's the longing itself. And for this kind of work, being able to tap into the longing is to tap into a resource and guide. Sometimes we say, "Let the longing do the work in a way of really paying attention to that helps to open up the, the world that's waiting that's beyond here."

Jim Marsden: At the bottom of the U there's this, um, way. William Bridges might call more of that place of the wilderness. It's where it's after endings. And before new beginnings, it's the place of the cocoon. It's the place of bubbling where you're clear about what has ended been you don't know what's really next. And in the cocoon, one of things I like to think about is in the, in the cocoon, there's this, um, phrase called the imaginal buds, which hold the information of what has been, and the promise of what's coming already in the imaginal buds, but it's goo, (laughs) some of us don't like to hang out there that long. Some of us love hang out there a lot, cuz all sorts of possibilities are there, but there's in on a quest, this is the solo period.

Jim Marsden: And um, you can't not have an experience when you're out on the solo time. So coming out of that bottom of the U there's a coming into a certain level of clarity of what might be next it's in the level of qualities and attributes that Marty just shared, it's not a full blown image in a manual (laughs) it's, but it is a connection with something that really matters, and it's the awareness of that.

Jim Marsden: So coming up that U is the work of tending to that, which matters. And it's also tending to who you're becoming as you're doing it. It's not just the doing, it's not just a new job description. It's not the new career. It's actually who is the new one who's now coming forth and how is it to reorient into the identity that's here? And the practice of that is the work of coming back up from the far side of the U into what's really here is the new life to be lived. It's kind of a quick fly by, at that graphic in the view.

Jim Marsden: But it is a transformative change in that who I was coming in is very different from who I am coming out a new center of gravity. And I, another thing that's, I think important about transformative change is I can't think my way through it. (laughs) it's to be experienced rather than planned, strategized thought through. It's not a problem to solve.

Jerry Colonna: If I can add to that, Jim. Um, and that process has its own time.

Jim Marsden: Yeah.

Jerry Colonna: There's a passage in one of my favorite novels. Uh, the novel is, uh, um, Zorba of the Greek and uh, those who know the, the story know that there's this very much in his head writer who goes off to this Greek Island and he encounter Zorba, who is this animal spirit, shaman like character.

Jerry Colonna: And in one particular moving past Zorba with a lot of tears describes being a boy and encountering a cocoon, a butterfly cocoon. And he's so excited to see the butterfly that's gonna come out, that he breathes on it, to make it move forward in its process. And the cocoon breaks and the butterfly emerges, but it's not fully developed. And so that it dies. And it's such a powerful image of being told, allow it to happen in its own way.

Jim Marsden: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: Sometimes that pull for the plan is a fear that I'm gonna be stuck in this cocoon forever and I'm gonna die in the cocoon when you actually have to let the cocoon melt away is the natural process.

Jim Marsden: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: Well, maybe we can, uh, start to wrap now. And uh, I, I. I'll just sort of invite each of you to share a closing thought, um, either from your own life or the observations you've made if others, um, `cause I think that the experience of not being alone in this process for those who are listening, um, is enhanced to, when we share little bit of what that journey has been like for others.

Ray Foote: For me, this journey, um, has been a long one and it also feels like it's gone by, on unbelievably fast. And I think that one of the, one of the big intentions that I've been holding for myself during this time, this particular transition for me and transformation for me, um, is to be gentle with myself and to be patient, um, to be able to go through this process and actually learn from it and, and to figure out how to be with it as, um, almost befriend the process rather than looking at it as something to get through, but to actually be something to be with. And that it's part of who I am.

Marty Janowitz: It's two things that come to mind that I, I, I feel like sharing, uh, one is to acknowledge that I've been struggling for the last few minutes around the cocoon image and the gentle piece. And I agree with all of that. And thinking of my own experience, sometimes you just need to slap upside the head and the needles gotta, and the needle is gotta puncture to the balloon or the cocoon.

Jerry Colonna: (laughing).

Marty Janowitz: (laughs) And, uh, and it's, it's in the penetration and the fresh air that we, we realize, okay, I have to step, uh, because the other thing I, I, I, I know from experience and, and, um, great mentor is, is that the path is always energetically

connected. We, there's always a ground where we are now in all its complexity. And I think, you know, Jim, when you were talking about the whole journey, it starts from the ground. And the bottom line of the ground is, is not a fucking thing you can do about it.

Jerry Colonna: (laughs).

Marty Janowitz: I always is where you are and whatever we do or don't do today is now part of tomorrow's ground, same condition. And as we've been talking, we're trying to open up to the fruition. the possibility and all the ways we've discussed, the only thing, however, we can actually do something about is the energetic connection, which is the path. And, and they are yes be kind, allow, et cetera. But step there's always a path from the new ground.

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Marty Janowitz: Weird that I'm finding myself the tough love side of, uh, of love

Jerry Colonna: (laughs).

Marty Janowitz: (laughs). Oh, no.

Jerry Colonna: (laughing). Anything to add Jim?

Jim Marsden: Yeah, there, I think, um, two things that come up for me as well, what one that I'm sitting with right now, thinking about what it was like and what it has been like for me, it's the word daring, you know, that, um, and maybe even daring to love and daring to imagine, um, which already it's like my palms are sweating just telling you that. Um, and I, I feel like this is a time there's an invitation there, it's a letting, but it is daring because if you really, for me, daring to really love what, what I love is also to be risking heartbreak and disappointment.

Jim Marsden: And, and yet in hindsight, I, I, I can connect with that, uh, in my journey of loving the mountain so much to dare to (laughs) take a trip that wasn't common. Um, for me, that was daring. Uh, but it wasn't about daring. It was just heading towards love. And that's where the real thing was.

Jim Marsden: Um, and then even thinking in terms of career transitions and coming into this work, I remember there was a time, well, before I think it is even before I went on a first quest was the whole idea of becoming a vision quest guide. I thought that is amazing (laughing) What would that be like? And it just was like too hot to touch. I couldn't, uh, that, that just was like blowing my mind. What would that be like? And, and to, uh, now come through that and, and be more of that, that it's, there's an opportunity to dare, to love what you love, uh, dare to imagine it really coming alive. And, um, that's, that's what sits with me with this right now.



Jerry Colonna:

Well, I'll close this out by just saying that, um, I am the luckiest man on the face of the earth because I get to have conversations like this all the time. And to connect to each of you on these topics, these topics that have been so important to me, it's just a real gift. And I am, I'm imagining somebody listening to this in the future and being helped, and that just makes my heart, you know, expand. So thank you for the work that you do. Thank, thank you for being who you are. Thank you for joining this conversation. Thank you for being my friends and for teaching me as much as you have.