

CHARLYNE GELT, PH.D.

Encouraging Self-Discovery and Empowerment



Home: What is It and Where Do I Find It? by Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D.



A Hero

Home, a feeling, a building block for a far different future where the heart can fall apart, break open and breathe again new life.

Challenges to Change

What makes people change? That is still the Big Question. When resistance to change is practically universal, what events or personal circumstances finally bring us to our knees, begging and praying for a way out of our pain, our destructive patterns, and our inner prisons? What kind of life story lives beneath, where ghost-grey parent figures stalk about and seeds of memory slip in succinct messages that can play a key role in keeping our attention distracted and unfocused when we could be improving our own lives instead?

Change is even harder when we're not yet at that desperate stage, when we have achieved some successes and met some of our goals and feel a degree of self-sufficiency and emotional independence. What, then, would make us stop to consider an inner journey? Why not wait until our backs are up against the wall before coming to grips with the broken parts of ourselves that may be preventing us (although we don't see it) from wholeness and emotional intimacy?



Usually, something has to get our attention, something that holds up a red flag within us and says, “*X, Y or Z is broken inside and it needs fixing.*” That doesn’t always mean we have to sign up for formal psychotherapy. A valuable lesson for clinicians is that change can come about *outside* of the therapeutic setting. Indeed, it can come about in emotional environments that offer a healthy space to learn to sit with anxiety and pain, rather than acting it out or withdrawing from it. It can also occur in empathic emotional relationships in which the dynamics offer ample opportunity for corrective emotional experiences.

“No tree, it is said, can grow to heaven unless its roots reach down to hell.”

C.G. Jung

Opening of the Cage Door

As a nation, the Pandemic has forced us to be confined to “home,” in virtual lockdown, for more than a year now. “For some when I think of this pandemic, with two people sequestered together, it is a frightening thought of how many people are in an abusive situation and not able to either see it clearly, or leave,” states Michelle. For others, home has become far more than a location. It has become a safe container, an emotional environment, an inner space, a place of psychological self-awareness and self-reflection, a place to confront the fears, uncertainties and the reality of our lives, and even further, a place to welcome change.

For some, home has, in fact, become such a “secure” base that many of us may find ourselves reluctant to leave it and move on, now that the Pandemic is unlocking the cage door to freedom. We need to know when to cut the psychological cable, what to hang on to and what to discard — and then what? How are we going to handle this new-found freedom? By going back to the way things were before? Is that wise? Is it even possible? Has the Pandemic taught us too much? Psychologically, have we passed the half-way mark so we can no longer thrive the old way?

First, when it comes to feelings of resistance about leaving the cage, it’s okay to acknowledge it. It’s normal and for most of us it passes as new opportunities present themselves. For example, being home may have provided you with needed insights into some of your personal or professional relationships, and decisions may need to be made in this regard. Ties may need to be cut. Boundaries may need to be redefined. In one’s work, there may also be decisions to make. Have you discovered that you actually *prefer* working from home? If you get called back to your old job site, is that where you really want to be? Or are you thinking about changing jobs or even professions? Many people used being at home to be physically active, to do more things, such as writing a book or starting a home business, that they never had the time to do before the pandemic. What are the trade-offs when you consider big changes? These new questions that pop up need to be thought through, answered, and possibly acted upon. It’s not always easy, but our national crisis has shown us it’s necessary for change to happen.

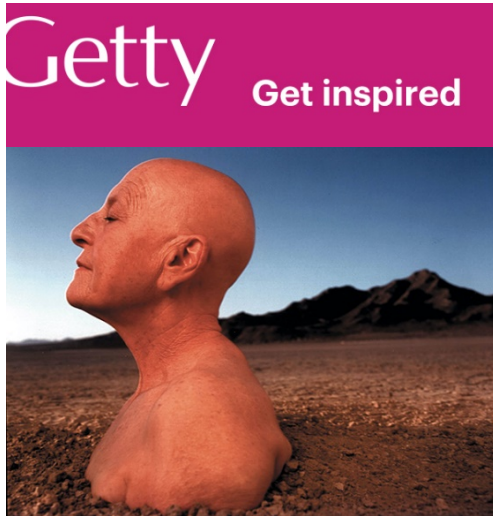
As a nation, the Pandemic has taught us that we are resilient! Together, we are coming out of the dark tunnel of COVID-19. We have learned it’s rarely the situation a person is in that’s the problem; it’s the person’s *subjective assessment* of their situation that paralyzes us. Re-evaluated, a new inner sense of home has the ability to take us to a space that can empower us to reclaim our dignity and reassess how to be the drivers of our own destiny.

WELCOME HOME! WELCOME TO CHANGE!

[40 Years Ago Today](#)

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Resources



Rachel Rosenthal, 1991.
Photo by Annie Liebovitz / Trunk Archive

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD...

ONLINE EVENTS

Unfinished, Fraying: Processes of Exhibition Making

Tuesday, April 27, 4:00 p.m. PT via Zoom

Most of us think the work of a museum curator involves conceptualizing, researching, and then completing an exhibition before moving on to the next one. But exhibitions often morph and evolve after opening, prompting revisions and generating further connections and ventures. Curators Lynne Cooke and Thomas J. Lax discuss the lives of museum exhibitions beyond museum walls.

[Register in advance for this free online event](#)



Lines (detail), Zoe Leonard, 2020. Courtesy the artist, Galerie Capitain, Cologne and Hauser & Wirth, New York

Art Break: Mapping a Dutch Drawing

Thursday, April 29, noon PT via Zoom

New York-based artist Jen Mazza takes a closer look at drawings from the Getty Museum's collection with assistant curator Edina Adam and invites viewers to join them on an exploratory journey. In this conversation they examine *Wooded Landscape*, an 18th-century work by Dutch artist Paulus van Liender.

[Register for this free online event](#)



Wooded Landscape (detail),
about 1780–90, Paulus van
Liender. Pen and gray ink
and wash over black chalk.
The J. Paul Getty Museum