

## *Unfold Your Own Myth*

*The world is not made of atoms. It is made of stories.*

-Muriel Rukeyser

Science is the predominant paradigm of our time. Observable data. Measurable outcomes. Neuroscience that maps how the brain fires, how decisions are made, how to optimize efficiency and productivity.

Cutting edge science may help explain how we can reduce our cortisol levels or smooth our rough edges, but it does not help elucidate our essence or connect us to what really matters: love, illumination, beauty.

The scientific worldview is both revelatory and limited. To ignore the gifts and benefits of science and technology is foolish. As an insulin-dependent diabetic porting an insulin pump, my gratitude toward science and technology is deeply personal. And yet. To imagine that scientific discoveries or technological breakthroughs can answer our most important questions is folly.

*Who am I? Why am I here? Where will I go? What is the point?* Questions that explore what it means to be human invite us to shift from the domain of fact-based truth to the realm of story and myth.

Reporting the facts is one thing. Crafting a story is something else entirely. Simple reporting describes what happened: "The king died, then the queen died." Storytelling allows us to connect the dots: "The king died, and then the queen died of a broken heart." A well-crafted story explores and reveals intention, impact, alchemy.

We don't just live a string of facts and events. We chew, digest and metabolize the stuff of our lives into a coherent narrative. We are each crafters of our own story, weavers of our own personal myth.

The word myth comes from the ancient Greek for "tale" or "story." In the scientific worldview, this is interpreted pejoratively to mean an invention or falsehood, as in a "tall tale." But the original definition of myth, from *muthos*, simply means "word or narrative," which does not carry such a negative slant.

Words are potent. When we string them together, they have the power to uplift or belittle; to open or shut; to box us in, or encourage us to abandon the veils of our assumptions and beliefs. Like dreams and rituals, *muthos* (story) speaks in images and archetypes rather than *logos* (logic.) Myth-making is a bridge that links the personal and the universal, the mundane and the



Don't be satisfied with the stories,  
that have come before you.

Unfold your own myth,  
so everyone will understand  
the passage,  
We have opened you.

Start walking toward Shams.

Your legs will get heavy and  
tired.  
Then comes a moment  
of feeling the wings  
you've grown  
lifting.

- Rumi

numinous abiding in each of us.

We can fall into a web of our personal myth without looking, almost by accident. Or we can be thrown into it through misfortune: a diagnosis, a death, a heartbreak. But we can also be intentional in shaping our own narrative. With words and images we can consciously weave our many parts into a single, lucid fabric: the timeless, ephemeral story of me.

Starting next month, I will offer a series of teachings that use the power of myth to inform and support our personal and collective transformation. These include:

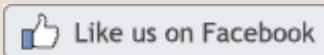
- Please feel free to download talks on this topic which are available on the new [Appropriate Response website](#).
- If you are local, you are welcome to drop in any time to my Wednesday evening meditation group in San Francisco through [SF Insight](#) where these talks are given.
- On November 20 I will offer an interactive online session, "The Bodhisattva's Path of True Leadership" as part of the Coaches Rising Leadership Summit. [Click here for more information](#).
- On December 1-7 I will be offering a 6-night silent meditation retreat. It includes alternating periods of sitting and walking, mindful yoga. [Click here to register](#).
- In the Spring of 2015, I will lead a second "Being Bodhisattvas" seminar through SFI integrating story and myth to support the deepening of spiritual practice. If you would like to learn more, please join our [mailing list](#).

[Pam's Teaching Schedule](#)  
[Recorded talks](#)

With love and appreciation,  
Pam

[www.appropriateresponse.com](http://www.appropriateresponse.com)

**Pamela Weiss** is the founder of Appropriate Response. She is a coach, meditation teacher and recognized pioneer in integrating the principles and practices of mindfulness into leadership development and organizational transformation



awakening **Wisdom** in leadership and life.