

In my middle fifties, easing into cronedom, I did about four years of dreamwork and questioning with a gifted Jungian analyst. One of the points of such analysis is to free the soul – Psyche – to continue the lifelong process of transformation with greater confidence, freedom, and peace. A few years after my work with the analyst was done, I re-read all the journals I had kept during my time with her. These thoughts grew from that re-reading.

Our culture, our time and place, tells us that we are able to change ourselves – but I have come to believe that these attempts to change the self, adjust the self, fix the self – these attempts only get in the way of authentic transformation. And so – somewhat in the spirit of a field guide offering careful guidance on how to distinguish a long-billed curlew from a marbled godwit – here are my field notes on the difference between transformation and change.

What is the difference between transformation and change?

Transformation

Can be slow, can be fast
 Bad things are transformations, too
 Directed by Psyche
 Transform into a person who
 loves to dance, walk, and move
 Transform into a person who
 can work with her dragon
 Transform into a person who
 is confident in intimacy
 Transform into a person who observes
 the sacred duty of adorning the body
 Caused by making room for God and Psyche to work
 Marked by joy
 Powered by love

Change

Stepwise, but needs constant shaping
 Bad things are changes, too
 Directed by Ego
 Change into a person who keeps at an
 exercise program
 Change into a person who can keep
 her dragon tied up
 Change into a person who can
 tolerate intimacy better
 Change into a person who can make
 herself look ok.
 Caused by effective self-manipulation
 Marked by relief
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