



Element of Surprise, by Margaret Wheatley

Very little about the emerging nature of life supports who we have tried to be. Life invites us to play along, discovering as we go. Life wants to work with us in surprising ways. We could make our lives so much more interesting, and develop so many new capacities, if we sought to work with the unknowns of emergence, rather than try and plan surprise out of our lives.

What do we do with surprise? What do we do with a world which cannot be known until it is in the process of discovering itself? It requires constant awareness, being present, being vigilant for the newly visible. We need to notice things we weren't looking for, things we didn't know would be important, influence we hadn't thought of, behaviors we couldn't predict.

An emergent world invites us to use our most human of all capacities, our consciousness. It asks us to be alert in the moment for what is unfolding. What is happening at this moment? What can we do because of what we just learned?

An emergent world welcomes us in as conscious participants and surprises us with discovery. "To recognize that everything is surprising is the first step toward recognizing that everything is a gift," says Brother David Steindl-Rast.

Our plans are nothing compared to what the world so willingly gives us.

--Margaret Wheatley