

# ***Making Meditation*** Winter 2019

from Daniel Mack's *The Casual Alchemist*  
1-hour weekly meetings at *Conscious Habitat*

*We are being lived by powers we pretend to understand.*      W. H. Auden



*Artist/Teacher Daniel Mack explores fresh creative and spiritual opportunities for anyone experiencing the distress of transition. Creativity is not about “art” but about finding ways to keep making life meaningful. In what ways can we become regenerative for ourselves, our families and our community?*

***Creativity** is a human resource: the natural, innate, learned and practiced capacity to envision alternatives versions of the future. Practicing creativity eases the difficulty of the many, tidal transitions of being human from birth, growing up, aging and the bumps of jobs, war, physical and spiritual wounds.*

# ***SYMPTOMS of Transition***

**PORTALS SHIFT.** Changes in mood, sleep, body, vision, hearing, memory, centrality, responsibility, visibility, patience, concentration... “Who am I when I am no longer doing, no longer productive, no longer indispensable to so many others? No longer wearing the masks? Where does my attention go? Am I shedding objects, clothes, books, body? Am I grumpy, angry, annoyed, foggy, sad?”

***There’s been a loss, yes, but what’s opened up, awakened?*** Needs are Changing. There’s a Spiritual Hunger. It can be fed. There are **Ways**:



***Trust Curiosity. Distrust Discourse.  
Trust the Body. Be with Children.  
Be with Nature. Make Things.  
Make Order. Take Small Risks.  
Make Time for The Holy.***

***Try this Four-Fold Approach:***

***Be Quiet:*** introspective, interior, patient. Remember dreams. This is private, meditative activity. Mindfulness.

***Be Active:*** intuitive, expressive. Find things to make, fix, build, care for. Learn a new skill. Use your Body.

***Be Public:*** engaging, explorative; Work and Play with others; Mentor, Volunteer. Share a skill you know

***Be Digestive:*** reflective, incorporative; Revisit these other activities. How did they work and feel? Keep a record. This is a Grimoire.

# **1. Quiet Musings** *via curiosity, memory, imagination, patience, solitude, hunches, accidents...*

**Describe Yourself:** Where do you come from? Who are your people? Your birth story? Temperment?

**Be with Nature** Wander Bare Feet? Notice Seasonal Changes:

**Stay casual** This is an exploration, not a debate, argument or sales pitch.

**Recall Stories** experience in Nature with *animals, insects, weather...*

**The gods are in the diseases** Your Symptoms? Spectrum?

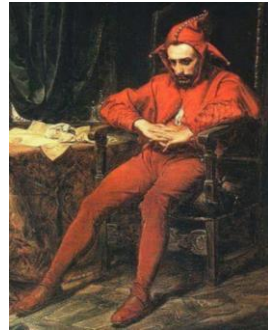
**Follow Present Threads: NOW** What lingers, vexes, haunts, peeves, annoys; *What groups, visitors, meetings, Animals, Dreams, Accidents, Names, Remembered Words, tears, food, Technology, TV shows?* **Welcome Them** as Directionals, Clues, Hints, Puzzle Pieces, Themes to your unconscious. They are not “Problems”. They are Your Familiars. Be alert, also, to the **Emotions** that present.

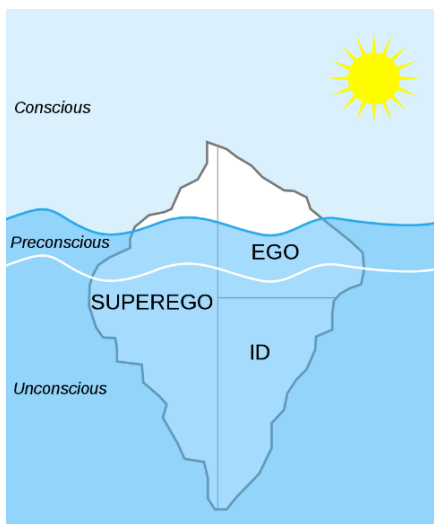
**Survey Needs:** for *Story, Awe, Feral, Making,*

**Consider New Ways, Models for Thinking:** *The Mosaic, The Kaleidoscope, The Loom, The Tapestry, Organic Thinking, Browsing, Cooking, The Ellipse, Tides*

**Learn about “Ancestral Karma”:** *What tasks were you born with?*

**Explore Curiosities:** *suiseki, Haiku, the numinous, “winter fires”, negative capability,*





**2. Matherings:** A wordless language of *Material into Meaning* via pattern and re-pattern *to* bolster/adjust/materialize stories from The Unconscious,



Allow for the power of the indistinct to emerge as tips, clues, hints. It's cooperative participation, not control of the process. ***This is MAGIC***-- ways to access playful, provocative, hidden energy

**Make Marks** Use ***Pounded Pigment*** from stones, mud or flowers.

Try ***Fumage***: mark-making with the smoke of a candle.

Use charcoal, dirt, spices. Try ***Rubbing*** on various nearby textures.



**Make Tools** (Wands/Talismans) Find 2-3 Things: *feathers, shells, leaves, sticks*. Connect with yarn, dental floss, rubber bands; Add color.



**Make Things to Wear** particularly Hats, Masks, Adornments

**Make Gifts** for friends, family, enemies ***Just Leave Them Somewhere***

**Use Fragments and Empties:** Blocks, Jars, Envelopes. *What can you put in them?*

**Simple Activities** : Use Twist Ties, Blocks, Balancing, Make Piles, Bundles

## ACTIONS of MATTERING

Wandering	Noticing	Playing	Finding
Gleaning	Collecting	Arranging	Stacking
Storing	Sharing	Altering	Editing
Violating	Cutting	Heating	Coloring
Shedding	Marking	Boiling	Dyeing
Scratching	Piercing	Carving	Charring
Pounding	Shaping	Breaking	Sewing
Knitting	Defacing	Joining	Hiding
Binding	Bundling	Weaving	Drilling
Repairing	Fixing	Recycling	Gifting
Collage	Assemblage	Re-Purposing	Tearing
Emptying	Remembering	Filling	<i>more??</i>

## COMMON OBJECTS/TOOLS

penknife	sandpaper	paper cutter	needle
clippers	string-yarn	drill	glue(s)
band aids	dental floss	markers	saw
hammer	wire	camera	paper
sticks	rasp	tape	penci
stapler	pins	stirrers	clamps
flower frogs	paper clips	feathers	cards
driftwood	butcher paper	buttons	bones
thumbprint	bark	charcoal	wax
ash	rusted objects	Black dirt	stones
envelope corners	black sand	old stamps	lint
road kill	spills/stains	skeletal leaves	shells
fingernails	leaves	mesh bags	dust
flowers	egg cartons	rubber bands	sticks
<a href="#"><u>window sill bugs</u></a>	small containers	bits of mirror	stickers
fruit	<i>add more</i>		

### **3. Launchings**: *Public Ways to share discoveries, Making The Story Visible; Give Gifts to kindle Others.*

**Create a KunstKammer**: collections of interesting, random objects, old/new, nature/culture, history/future... as Public Portal for Delight, Amusement, Play.

**Find Ways to Share Your Stories**  
Shutterfly? Vlog? Website? Pinterest?

**Find others who share your sensibilities?**



**Find a Community Volunteer Project** to be a part of... perhaps make a mural or a deck of cards that many people contribute to. Surrealists had a practice called



***“Exquisite Corpse”*** where a group of people wrote a poem together, or created a drawing.

*This is a card collage done with 200 fifth graders*

## **4. Review/Digest Often**

**What's Repeating/Appearing?** Are familiar themes appearing? Do Family members/memories appear? Remember, it's all about **MA**terial/**PA**tern

**Consult Hidden Pairing** Not *What's This* about, but *what Else* is this about? If something is *Lost*, what's *Found*? If something is *Here*, what is *Hidden*?

**Do a Tech Bio**: uses of phone, computer? What are you saving, sharing, Making?

**Light Touch!** not full arguments, but allurements. **Take Small Risks** Poetry often enters through the window of irrelevance. M.C Richards



**Try Small Scale Objects:** How little of something is needed to make meaning?

**Find Your Surreal name** an anagram of the letters in your name.

**Start a Grimoire:** *your* record, journal of your *Casual Making*. Your discoveries of what works, what takes on or sheds meaning.

**MORE at [www.danielmack.com](http://www.danielmack.com) and [www.thecasualalchemist.com](http://www.thecasualalchemist.com)**