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Dear Friends,

If you don't ask, the answer will always be "no."

I love [k.d.lang](#)'s voice and music. I have for *many* years. [Watching this](#) thrills me no end. Recently I invited her to sing at my [Life is a Verb Camp](#). Yes, it's a very, very, very long shot. But you know what? If I don't ask, the answer will always be no. So as ridiculous as it sounds, I asked.

What's important in this scenario is my detachment from the outcome. This is, in a way, [a strong offer](#) that I'm making. Here's how I define a strong offer: *A strong offer is an offer without comparing yourself to others, without attachment to how that offer will be received, without a story attached to the offer, and with detachment from the outcome.*

Make some strong offers in the coming week. Detach from the outcome. It is freeing to send that brilliant energy and hopefulness into the world, but carry on as if the answer is secondary to the offer itself.

k.d. lang hasn't yet responded; when she does, I will squeal no matter the answer.

A few links for your enjoyment and edification:

1. [This is beyond adorable](#). Focus on a different child each time you watch. I like the kid on the far left who simply removes the obstacle. Each one of them displays a problem-solving strategy, with which I can identify.
2. My Christmas present to myself was [this book](#). It and [its predecessor](#) are books I wish I had written, in that grand tradition of pasting my photo where the author's photo should be, as in William Gaddis' masterpiece, *The Recognitions*. If you're interested in the author, Elizabeth Strout, [this article](#) might be interesting to you.
3. [What a grand collection of books](#)--one of the best I've seen. I'll be reading my way through this list, even though some of them will be re-reads.
4. [This looks like an important, difficult read](#).
5. I just came across this prose poem by Mary Oliver and wanted to share it with you. It's called "Don't Hesitate." Perhaps it will resonate with you:

"If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it. There are plenty of lives and whole towns destroyed or about to be. We are not wise, and not very often kind. And much can never be redeemed. Still, life has some possibility left. Perhaps this is its way of fighting back, that sometimes something happened better than all the riches or power in the world. It could be anything, but very likely you notice it in the instant when love begins. Anyway, that's often the case. Anyway, whatever it is, don't be afraid of its plenty. Joy is not made to be a crumb."

Here are some of my strong offers:

Life is a Verb Camp - October 29 - November 1, 2020, near Asheville NC. [Go here](#) to get information and to register. Email support@pattidigh.com to get information on payment plans. Fewer than 30 tickets remain available.

Women's Writing Retreat - Fall 2020 - My April 2020 **Writing Retreat for women** sold out in a few days, and there is a waiting list, so I have added a second retreat for 2020. Come write with me in the mountains of NC in September (Sept 7-12). Info is [here](#). This is my most intimate retreat, with only 7 writers for a lot of 1:1 time in a beautiful space. Four tickets remain.

Hard Conversations: An Introduction to Racism - The 18th cohort of this class starts in March. Is 2020 the year you will educate yourself about racism and social justice? In this four-week online class, we address systemic and structural racism, white privilege and fragility, the myth of colorblindness, and how to be an effective ally. This is a great place to start. It begins in March 2020. [Go here for information](#).

NEW COURSE - Hard Conversations: Whiteness, Race, and Social Justice - This new offering will be announced soon for April 2020. It is designed to help white people understand the

history and impact of their whiteness. **"Until you can recognize you are living a racialized life and you're having racialized experiences every moment of every day, you can't actually engage people of other races around the idea of justice."** Whitney Dow, "The Whiteness Project". You'll see the course overview in next week's Orange Desk newsletter, along with an opportunity to register.

Make strong offers,

Patti

Sent to: _t.e.s.t_@example.com

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