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Dear Friends,

Meet people where they are.

Inevitably when we start a project together--knitting, baking, researching something, it really doesn't matter what we're doing--Feliks has a meltdown. It's sometimes hard to begin projects, knowing that an outburst will be the outcome. I brace myself for this inevitability. It's frustrating, but more than that, I feel for Feliks, unable to finish a project because of his *own* frustration. It feels like he is missing out on so many things he might enjoy.

Today, it was Shrinky Dinks. He couldn't get the parchment paper down smoothly to put the Shrinky Dinks on before baking them. He wrinkled up the paper in his fist, threw it, and started shouting, upending all the little Shrinky Dinks he wanted to create.

"Feliks, **why** do you get so upset?" I asked in exasperation, fearful of (and already exhausted by) the meltdown that was coming.

"I DON'T KNOW" he yelled in response.

This, I can work with.

This melted my heart. He doesn't know. As an autistic kid, it is in his wiring. He doesn't know. How frustrating that must be for him. I'm just a bystander.

A friend once mentioned to me that she deals with anxiety issues. "What are you anxious about?" I asked. "Anything I want to be anxious about" she responded. It was the best possible response. I told Feliks that story and he smiled in recognition.

There sometimes is no discernible reason for our anxiety, our frustrations, and meltdowns. *We don't need to be able to explain them to be feeling them.* "I don't know" and "whatever I want to be anxious about" are fine answers, if we need answers at all.

Sometimes the question "why" is disempowering. It calls for people to defend themselves. Simply accepting that the why doesn't matter calls on us to deal with the "how," as in "how can I best help you?"

Links you might appreciate

[This](#) gets three thumbs-up from Feliks. He decided it would be even better with [icing](#).

[The Injustice of This Moment is Not an 'Aberration'](#)

Next up at our house is [a recipe](#) my friend Robert Ruder sent to me.

Coming Up

ORGANIZING YOUR WRITING LIFE



WRITERS IN THE PANDEMIC (June)

Are you having a hard time making meaning of what is happening internally for you in this pandemic? This 2-week course is for writers and non-writers to start exploring making-meaning of all this <waves hands around wildly>. Over 200 people have participated thus far, some calling it "life-changing." If you're ready for some structure, some meaning-making, and exploration, join the next cohort of this class on June 1. Two weeks, two Zoom

classes, an online classroom with daily prompts, and a private FB group. Just \$37 (Pandemic pricing). [Go here](#) for information.

If you have already taken the Writers in the Pandemic course, you might want to continue with ["Writers in the Pandemic - 2"](#) or ["Writers in the Pandemic - 3,"](#) both of which also start on June 1.

ONLINE FREE WEEKLY GATHERINGS:

During this pandemic, I will host a weekly tea-

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time on Zoom for whoever would like to show up with a cup of tea, a quote, or poem to share, or just a need for conversation. You can join me on **Thursdays from 4-4:45 pm Eastern** in [this Zoom room](#). We have an innate need for community, and the technology to create community spaces... Bring paper and pen in case we start writing.

Thanks for reading. If you like this newsletter and want to support it, forward it to someone who'd like it. If you're seeing this newsletter for the first time, [you can subscribe here](#).

Ask how, not why,

Patti

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