

My Resilience Reflection

Chapter 1: Know Myself	
Chapter Aha Moments	<p>Aha moments in this chapter might best be described as Reminder Ahas – Concepts or realizations that I have had in the past, but that Aguilar’s chapter 1 helped me re-realize and re-confirm their importance in my life. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Revisiting the Meyers-Briggs Personality test as one facet of examining self awareness. 2) A renewed realization and the new language of sociopolitical identity regarding my own triggers related to disrespect and not being listened to. Aguilar’s story about Ling on p. 30 where Ling would say to herself “That’s a trigger for me because in my culture, in my house, boys would never think of doing that” [shouting out of turn] held some significant resonance for me and my own family of origin culture. What was the aha moment here was the fact that her recognition and explicit awareness of the trigger allowed her to gain power over it and to no longer feel disrespected when similar events occurred in the future. As I read this I felt that this could directly apply to my own life, especially with some triggers that I have in my own parenting. 3) Aguilar’s presentation of the Disposition of Purposefulness certainly created some ‘Reminder Ahas’ for me. It especially connected with me as, after being laid off from my job and now starting a new one, the questions ‘is this direction right for me and my family’, and ‘when will I find my career about which I am both passionate and can earn money?’ have resurfaced and I am rediscovering my need to pause. Most importantly, pausing to take the time to do some work on re-discovering my purpose, naming it, making it public, and making an honored self-commitment to be true to that purpose and not sweep it under a rug of a purposeless monetary opportunity.
Reflection on worksheets I completed	<p>After taking it many years ago, I retook the Meyers-Briggs from both websites listed in the workbook. Both of them displayed the same result, consistent with my results long ago. I then proceeded to read every word of my personality description from the 16personalities.com website . . . And realized even more that it is time for me to more actively accept who I am and work harder to translate my natural talents, abilities and personality to a career that aligns. I feel that over the last 30 years, one of my horrible patterns in life has been that I complain about my job and that I have never felt any job that I held is “what I should be doing.” This text and work is giving me an opportunity to see that there is some work inside of me that I really need to revisit and perhaps go deeper than I have in the past.</p>
My strengths in this area	<p>I have done lots of work in this area in the past. I am highly confident in my ability to more deeply explore who I am, and my growth orientation provides a skill set that I can use to keep an open mind and take the steps I need to take.</p>
My action step(s)/goals	<p>Actively participate in a re-discovery of my Purpose . . . My Why and create a Mission Statement that is more than just a school assignment, more than just a management workshop. Use the Mission Statement I create to pivot my career to a role that aligns with my purpose.</p>

Chapter 2: Understand Emotions

<p>Chapter Aha Moments</p>	<p>I'm not sure if I have ever seen a description of emotions in the way that Aguilar presents them. The description of emotion as a reaction to an event, followed by the outline of the 6-part cycle of an emotion was an aha to me. As I read it, I found myself mapping this 6 part cycle to other emotional or life frameworks that I have encountered from other personal growth authors or presenters. Secondly, when Aguilar presented that emotions are temporary, I found myself recalling personal times when I felt intense emotions, and I don't think I have every made an explicit recognition that emotions are temporary. While I know that things get better and whatever feeling I have will go away, I am not sure I ever have intellectually had the aha that all emotions are descriptively temporary. It was fascinating for me when Aguilar presented the model where all emotions can boil down to 8 core emotions. This approach suddenly makes the wide universe of everything that I feel more accessible and increases my ability to articulate my emotions. In other words . . . It isn't so big anymore.</p>
<p>Reflection on worksheets I completed</p>	<p>I did the exercise where I went online to www.bemindfulonline.com/test-your-stress and took the assessment that Aguilar recommends. What I thought was most informative, was the nature of the questions that they asked during the assessment. I found myself asking questions in my head like, "is that really an indicator of stress?" "Aren't some of these things just situational?" "Does that really matter?" So as I reflect on the questions I asked myself, it causes me to have a bit of an aha moment that perhaps the things that I think are normal in the course of dealing with the challenges of day to day life, that some of them may be originators of stress way more than I think they are. I am going to try and raise my awareness of those items in the next week to see if they are illicit it more stress than I previously knew.</p>
<p>My strengths in this area</p>	<p>I have gone through my own lessons and growth over the years on the topic of my own emotions. After going through divorce when I experienced a rather intense period of sadness and anger, I found myself telling others my story, "When the sadness comes, the best thing I can do is to let it come, let it be inside you for awhile, so you can then let it go. I find that the more I try to resist it, the worse it gets." My strengths are that I now recognize emotions as a form of energy and am working on getting better at not giving them a permanent life inside of me that eventually could cause great harm.</p>
<p>My action step(s)/goals</p>	<p>Over the next few weeks/months, listen to and explore my own emotions regarding what I am really feeling about my career situation. This includes listening much more closely to my physiological responses as I consider different career options, so that I can detect what my body is telling me about its alignment with possible futures.</p>

Chapter 3: Tell Empowering Stories

Chapter Aha Moments	Deep Dive in Our Zoom Group for this one.
Reflection on worksheets I completed	
My strengths in this area	
My action step(s)/goals	

Chapter 4: Build Community

Chapter Aha Moments	<p>I felt a few ahas during this chapter. First, the definition of Trust as an emotional state stuck to me a bit more than I expected. Typically, I don't think of trust as an emotion, but rather something more relational . . . which is why the second aha was Aguilar's description of a subset type of trust called relational trust. This was a new one as well since if I was asked to define it I would have said it was trust between two people. Aguilar describes Bryk and Schneider's research about the trust that happens in a group setting. Both of these concepts resulted in a call to explore my own definition of trust especially assessing based on the four areas she outlined: respect, personal regard, competence in core responsibilities and personal integrity. While she describes these facets in the context of teaching, it is very clear to me how I can apply these to my own profession and life in general.</p> <p>I really enjoyed her description of expansive listening and remember my own transformation when I discovered how dysfunctional some of my own past listening practices have been. As I read her list, I was reminded of other grow literature I have read that makes reference to "listening in a zero response mode" which helps me focus on what the other person is saying much more fully, not worrying about what I will say, or messing things up by instantly trying to pose a solution to the speaker's problem.</p>
Reflection on worksheets I completed	<p>Instead of reflecting on a worksheet, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the topic of Community during this time of COVID-19. We are currently in a global situation that is running diametrically opposed to Aguilar's summary of Matthew Lieberman's research results that, "social connection is our primary need." In an already techno-heavy society, the world is moving toward supplanting in-person social connectivity with whatever virtual social connection we can muster through digital screens and audio. While the world has always coped with difficulty and social isolation, never in our history have we normalized a planetary electronic substitute. While the internet has enabled our ability to stay in a state of quasi-auditory and visual connectedness, I think it is profoundly critical to take active efforts to ensure real presence with each other remains our primary goal. As Lieberman writes, ". . . Our biology is built to thirst for connection because it is linked to our most basic survival needs." To extend his infant metaphor, an infant cannot have her needs met by a device that presents recorded audio and video of her mother that is no longer available. If we are to continue</p>

	toward Dr. King’s legacy of a Beloved Community, we must strive boldly in our efforts to implement tools, processes, methods and protocols that enable the most number of people to safely have real live interactions with other people – long term and regardless of the presence or absence of pandemics or vaccines.
My strengths in this area	My strengths in this area originate from my own conviction and value that I hold of the importance of relationship. In whatever I do, I try to build teams that are based on authentic relationships where we help each other to create a safe environment, where it is ok to be wrong and make mistakes, and we recognize the imperfect humanity in each other. Building small community is something that I am extraordinarily confident in doing.
My action step(s)/goals	I would very much like to take relational community building and purpose it toward something larger than just me or just my job. To do so, and in alignment with my other action steps, I will begin to explicitly and actively explore what opportunities can move me toward this goal.

Chapter 5: Be Here and Now

Chapter Aha Moments	<p>The first ‘aha’ moment I had in this chapter is that I realized, after hearing the word and using the word (often actually), that I don’t believe I ever read an explicit definition of Mindfulness. In Aguilar’s definition, “Mindfulness is the nonjudgmental cultivation of moment-to-moment awareness.” She continues by highlighting that, “It’s a mental state in which you are focused and without judgment.” (p.126) Bang! Hit me on the forehead . . . I realized I had never understood those two facets – presence in the now, and non-judgment. The implications of this for me actually have some deep personal triggers, as I had an ex-wife who would make reference of “being in the present moment” as what I saw as an excuse not to look toward the future. But this definition made much more sense to me, became much richer and deeper, and connected the dots for me, clearing past anxiety I felt around that phrase.</p> <p>Another ‘aha’ came for me as I read Aguilar’s guidance on how to meditate. Because I am her classic example of a mind wandering quickly upon trying to begin meditation. I am so entrenched in an active-state world, one that rewards keeping multiple threads active as close to simultaneous as possible, that if I ever try to slow it down and sit and attempt meditation, my mind reports a cacophony across the bow of my brain jumping from thought to thought like a pirate ship attacking the British Fleet in a windstorm.</p> <p>My ‘aha’ is that this is normal and expected, and that it gets better with practice.</p>
Reflection on worksheets I completed	<p>Tagore on Joy: “I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.” What does this quote raise for you? What connections can you make with it? How does it make you feel?</p> <p>Honestly, this quote raises for me a furrowed brow. I get the principle: life=joy, life=service, ergo, service=joy. I also</p>

	<p>understand the intention behind it – that it is our focus on service to another and movement away from turning selfishly inward that will provide us joy. So in that way, I can make an intellectual connection with this quote. However, it makes me feel . . . mis-aligned. Is that an emotion? It makes me feel . . . inauthentic. For me, in my life, in my story, it is never the service, the selfless act, the servant-leadership, the kind deed, the thoughtful task . . . that brings joy. For me, joy is found in the relationship between two or more parties that is created as a result of the service.</p> <p>This does not mean that we cannot be joyful alone. Joy is a state that I experience because I am in right relationship with others and my environment. My heart is light, I am happy and I experience exuberance because of my meaningful connections in that relationship. Connections, that similar to Aguilar’s definition, bring satisfaction, contentment, presence, fulfillment, acceptance, groundedness and peace.</p>
My strengths in this area	My strength here is that when needed, or called upon, I can have a remarkably disciplined mind.
My action step(s)/goals	<p>Leverage that disciplined mind, combine it with a decision and commitment to perform meditation and see how it can help my ‘monkey brain.’ Use the strategies from Aguilar, and have faith that . . . “What you’ll notice, as you practice returning to your breath, is that it gets easier. You find yourself staying with your breath for longer and longer stretches. When your mind jumps away, you notice more quickly. You redirect it with less drama.” (p.129)</p> <p>I look forward to that goal.</p>

Chapter 6: Take Care of Yourself

Chapter Aha Moments	<p>So . . . I took one of those crazy online assessments designed to steer you toward purchasing a self-improvement program of one kind or another. I took the assessment on a day in the past week where I was not exactly feeling the best about myself. I surprised myself by rating my physical health in terms of ‘where I want to be’ a 3 on a scale from 1-10. “Things are not that bad,” I thought . . . but I realized . . . this is how I am starting to feel. As a person who lives with cancer, I cycle through many versions of self talk that says, “Does it have to feel this way? Or have I just grown accustomed to a new normal, and if I do (this) or (that) treatment, I can move to restore a better state of health. On my difficult days . . . I’m a 3 . . . and building my own personal resilience has a lot to do with growing in my ability to accept that answer and be strong and clear enough to have the energy to take action about that answer.</p> <p>The ‘aha’ moment in this chapter came on page 150, where Aguilar outlined four reasons that we do not take care of ourselves. As I reviewed the four reasons: 1) Knowledge Gap 2) Skill Gap 3) Will Gap 4) Emotional Intelligence Gap, I realized I own all four, at least at this point in my life I do. The one certainly in the lead is the last one . . . as I read what Aguilar wrote, “We feel that our value is tied to our output and that if we don’t work hard, people won’t respect us, like us, love us, or want us” I recognized this message as a deep part of my story. I have spent decades honing my</p>
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	<p>intellectual and (non-physical) skills that are directly tied to a career that is defined by a sedentary lifestyle. I hate it . . . and I have for decades, but I don't know how to break the cycle. I experience massive difficulty in trying to start any type of exercise program because any time I have made a start, there eventually is some reason that it stops and starting up again becomes more difficult.</p>
<p>Reflection on worksheets I completed</p>	<p>I completed the Self-Esteem Reflection. A few things that I noticed/learned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I realized it was very difficult for me to answer the question, "If I left any of my communities, people wouldn't care." Because my answer to this question is Not Applicable. I realized in answering that question that due to lots of circumstances over time, I belong to very few communities. I just got laid off from a job that I held for 5 years, and starting a new one, no one knows who I am. My family counts, but of course, we are all in this together, but other than those things, I have not had the time or been willing to take the time to be a part of very many other communities. I am beginning one, over this summer to be in a community of UWSP, but this is fledgling and due to COVID, all online with very little connection after classes. So one realization is that I really have an absence of community in my life. 2. While I generally have high self-esteem, there is an area that popped up as a pattern that I perhaps thought I had resolved a bit more than it appears I have. The pattern is managing other people's perceptions of me. As I answered the questions that were related to this behavior pattern, I found that this has not completely resolved, and I still am insulted or ruffled when someone rejects my ideas or criticize me. Perhaps this is related to my still present challenge of feeling disrespected if I feel that I am not being listened to. 3. I probably do still feel that it is important that everyone like me. If I am in a conflict at work, for example, I still act from a position that I want the other person to like me and think well of me. This assessment reinforced the idea that I still have some work to do in that area of my life.
<p>My strengths in this area</p>	<p>If there is any strength I have in this area, it is that I was formerly exceptionally active. I greatly enjoy movement when it is not inhibited by fear or pain. I also feel that because I have done a great deal of internal work, my mind and emotional health are sound.</p>
<p>My action step(s)/goals</p>	<p>My goal here is probably the same as it has been when I contemplated restarting an exercise program a few years ago: Sweat 3 times/week. Maybe I should amend that now . . . because of how out of shape I feel: Move 3 times/week. Another goal is for me to stop being concerned about who is reading and begin to more expansively use the voice and talents I have been given – toward a more authentically spiritual life.</p>

Chapter 7: Focus on the Bright Spots

Chapter Aha Moments	Deep Dive in Our Zoom Group for this one.
Reflection on worksheets I completed	
My strengths in this area	
My action step(s)/goals	

Chapter 8: Cultivate Compassion

Chapter Aha Moments	<p>First, I've got to say thank you for introducing us to this text – this is a great book! In the chapter on Compassion, I found that I had many significant aha moments, enough to text my sister, (a now retired grade school teach) several times during it. The first moment I want to recognize is when Aguilar quotes research from Zolli, 2012 and writes, “In social communities that experience extreme challenges, those with high levels of trust and cooperation fare better.” While I do not know the context or specifics of this research, I think this has profound meaning in our post Covid-19 world. This message, combined with the text just above it (p. 203) where Aguilar reinforces that, “Recent studies of compassion argue persuasively for a take on human nature that rejects the preeminence of self-interest and suggest that, at our core, we are wired for compassion . . .” My aha with this is that in our currently global predicament, our future is not dependent on the choices or rules our governmental leaders make, but it is the compassionate each of us takes in our local small communities; the little everyday decisions to trust and cooperate with one another, that will allow us to survive and thrive. This sounds cliché, but my aha when I read those passages, is that perhaps some cliches are right.</p>
Reflection on worksheets I completed	<p>I did the Empathic Fatigue exercise. While I know this book is written from the context of education and the classroom, I found myself drawing a picture of our family. As a father or stepfather of 5 girls, and a wife who manages approximately 30 people, the number of bubbles that are in play for interactions to happen on a continuous basis is fairly large. I drew my picture with a line between the bubbles representing the empathic channels and energy that we exchange with one another. As I did, I realized I had to draw all the connections that impact me, from my perspective anyway, and the diagram quickly became a web of empathic energy that was very interconnected.</p> <p>Perhaps more than most, I understand this “bubble” strategy to be a way to reinforce our personal boundaries and establish strong defenses against taking ownership of another’s thoughts, feelings, loves, dreams, etc. when those are not yours. Regardless how interdependent our groups are, and how much the actions of one person can influence</p>

	<p>many others, we all are still responsible for the actions and emotions we choose.</p> <p>However, it is critical that we also understand how many ‘bubbles’ we must encounter each day, as Empathic Fatigue has as much to do with the number of times we need to hold the integrity of our bubble as it does with the fact that we keep one up at all.</p>
My strengths in this area	I feel that my strengths in the area of empathy with action are strongest with my wife and children. As a father, I can acutely feel the emotions of those in my family and pursue great lengths to take action to relieve their anguish or suffering.
My action step(s)/goals	While I am extraordinarily empathic to strangers or people at large, historically, I have not been the best at behaving in a self-compassionate way. In certain areas of life, I am notoriously hard on myself (enter career cliché here) and while extending kindness to myself in my head, fail miserably at extending emotional kindness to myself far enough “ . . . so that [I] can have the strength and energy to examine [my]self and make changes. (p.206) While perhaps this is not a perfect representation of my behavior toward myself, I do know that my goal is to open up more, give myself a bit more permission to stumble and make new kinds of mistakes so that I can indeed follow through with some of the changes I have initiated for myself.

Chapter 9: Be a Learner

Chapter Aha Moments	<p>While I have heard of the concept of “Mind the Gap” before, I do not recall seeing it defined and detailed regarding the components from which it is built. While it is easy to see that skill, knowledge, capacity and will are components of the gap between desired ability and current ability, my ‘aha’ came in realizing the importance of cultural competence and emotional intelligence. What was also an ‘aha’ was Aguilar’s treatment of the Mind the Gap concept as a hierarchy, and that cultural competence and emotional intelligence are foundational to closing an ability gap. Two elements on top of which everything else is built. This makes tremendous sense to me and aligns with my own experience and values. Because my own bias in ability recognizes the key importance of relationship in almost everything we do, our competence within a specific environment’s culture – work, community, school, home or otherwise – does indeed establish a foundation onto which we build the other elements to close ability gaps.</p> <p>Similarly, emotional intelligence, a prime facet of relational dynamics, is critical in building abilities in both individuals and groups. I also agree with Aguilar these two foundational domains, “are those most neglected.” (p.233) during moments of learning and change. I know in the workplace, where there are organizational needs for closing ability gaps, the focus is almost purely on delivering content and context that has to do with the domains of knowledge and skill rather than those of cultural awareness and the affective domain. Especially in publicly traded companies, the focus continues to be on quarterly monetary performance, sometimes sacrificing the long term “gap minding” that would</p>
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	likely help an organization sustain and thrive, and serve better its mission, employees and customers.
Reflection on worksheets I completed	Lessons on Learning from Merlin (p. 477 in the workbook) – I make several connections with this passage. I recognize that in it, Merlin is making a case for the critical importance of learning, and indeed the fact that it is among some of life’s most important elements. This is significant in my life, since earlier in my life when I was finishing my teaching license, I wrote a piece that expounded on the fact that teaching is one of the most important things (see Chapter 11 aha moment #4). While that was long ago, and perhaps expressed a naïve view, the importance of learning to the human experience has, throughout my life, continued to make repeated appearances on my journey. While it might be hubris to declare that learning is one of the “most important” things, superlatives notwithstanding, the arc from where I was to where I am to where I want to be is a common thread that all people share. And as Aguilar so aptly describes at several places in her book, it is learning that guides us along that arc.
My strengths in this area	I believe I have a growth mindset and hope that I am continuing to do well in my goal of being a lifelong learner. I view myself as being connected to my emotional intelligence. I am often aware of my position on the Conscious Competence ladder (or at least I have the capacity to know where I would be on it), and I believe I am quite adept at time management and have good skills at placing boundaries around my time and energy. In the past, I created a company that had a mission to improve life through learning and had an intent to create and innovative learning organization that served both individuals and businesses. This company didn’t really get off the ground for a variety of reasons, but it does convince me that I understand the principles and importance of learning organizations. Additionally, I am a curious person, and often find myself wondering about a variety of different phenomenon including contemplating ultimate entities, ultimate concerns and humanity’s place in existence.
My action step(s)/goals	While I feel I am generally connected to my emotional intelligence, I do sometimes fail miserably in my ability to name my own feelings and realize that they are temporary. Sometimes I recognize that I am not good at separating emotion from action, and if I am in emotional distress want to immediately “fix” rather than doing the more prudent thing of sitting with my emotions and provide myself space to process them. My action step here is to begin to better recognize when my emotions are beginning to get the better of me and to take the moments necessary to pause and reflect on how these emotions can help me learn.

Chapter 10: Play and Create	
Chapter Aha Moments	Deep Dive here on FlipGrid
Reflection on worksheets I completed	

My strengths in this area	
My action step(s)/goals	

Chapter 11: Ride the Waves of Change

Chapter Aha Moments	<p>There is tons of great stuff in this chapter! Many moments that we could call 'aha'. Because of the experience I have had throughout my career in information technology and my more recent experience in project management, some could consider me a professional in change. With this context, here are a few 'aha' moments that struck me while reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Human beings like control, yet at the core of change . . . is a grand shift in our relationship to control. (p.269) This is a fantastic perspective on change. I never thought explicitly about change as tampering with our relationship to control. While there are many instances where the change that I have managed brings about fear in people because the thing that they control will be modified by the 'new thing' I am implementing, I never examined that change's impact on an individual's own relationship to control. That is brilliant! Definitely going to use that perspective in the future to help mitigate the risks of changes and people's response to it. 2. While I have encountered the Spheres of Influence many times in my educational and professional life, once again Aguilar's language not only reminds me of its importance, but also curates a different type of 'aha' moment in me. Essentially, she focuses on the Sphere of Influence's power in the domain of personal energy. She describes how, "The essential question to ask yourself is, Where do I want to put my energy." (p.272) Again, while this concept is nothing new, she continues by providing 4 key strategies to cope with unwanted change that have a direct relationship to the expending of one's own energy. Love that. 3. Aguilar reveals her biggest secret for dealing with change: Deal with the Fear. Again – nothing new. But the language by which she describes the importance of this and how she is able to call out the how important it is to identify the kind of fear that a person has when encountering change serves as a wonderful aha moment. In my own management practice, whether projects, processes or people, I often know that fear has a central role to play and how it is treated is critical to moving initiatives forward. What I now realize, is the importance of naming both the kind of fear that a person has, but what exactly they are afraid of. This reinforces Aguilar's point's in chapter 9 about the foundational nature of emotional intelligence. 4. Finally, I actually had a mini-cathartic moment as Aguilar reminds us, "That Change Is About Learning." (p. 280) As if that heading wasn't enough, Aguilar drives home her point as she states, "If you want people to change, you're asking them to grow. If you're asking for growth, you're asking for learning." (p. 280) YES, YES, YES!!
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	<p>Why is this cathartic for me? Because throughout my life, I have encountered in different places, in difference times, the values of learning and growth. I have led a life where I recognize a primary career in information technology, often for the purpose of monetary necessity, but very much rooted in skills related to managing change. But I have also carried an almost subversive parallel career in education – one where sometimes it becomes monetary, but has more been an intellectual hobby, carried forward as I have time or opportunity. There was a time early in my parallel education career, when I was studying for my teacher certification where I wrote about the primacy of education as one of the most important things in life. To this day, I have not had the time or availability to explore this to the degree that I would like. And I am not sure I bought what I was selling there. Aguilar’s statement quoted above, brings together: 1) My monetary career and the place I have spent the last 27 years 2) My personal growth experience though one of the darkest times in my life 3) My subversive parallel career in education. Aguilar’s if/then logic she uses above: Change = Growth, Growth = Learning, therefore, Change = Learning reflects a Geometric Transitive Property of Change and Learning that has both a mathematic beauty and salient affective criticality that strikes in me a deeply rooted chord. A chord that for far too long has placed analytic skills and career as more important than affective ones, a chord that has not played in harmony with the deepest song of my soul, a discord that has not allowed me to live a life that unleashes my full gift to the world. This aha is a very big and deep one . . . one that finally says that learning really is that important, that learning really is of prime value. Because also in my experience is a concept that I encountered, which I have come to align with that says: All Growth = Spiritual Growth . . . and this, in the depth of all of us, means that Learning = Touching the Spirit . . . and Spirit = Ultimate Concerns . . . and in the end, what can be more meaningful and important than that.</p>
<p>Reflection on worksheets I completed</p>	<p>How the Light Gets In (p.568) “The wound is the place where the light enters you.” This quote connects with me fairly deeply. One of the darkest times of my life was when I was both going through a divorce after 16 years of marriage – a divorce that was not my idea, and one that I was surprised by . . . all at the same time as my father was in declining health and passed away. There were many moments during that period where, while I knew I was going to survive and things would eventually be better, I had no idea how, and I had no idea what that eventuality would look like. Now, in retrospect, I do see that it is through some of our deepest wounds that we grow the most as individuals and are able to touch the lights of truth and love. It seems to me that if you are not overtaken by your wound, it becomes the conduit through which everything that really matters passes into the light of a new life.</p> <p>I have heard the message of this quote in a similar one, told in a story about King Arthur’s Knights. The Knights were seeking the Holy-Grail, symbolizing the vessel of the redemptive substance, but none of them knew where to look. So to look for the Grail, each of the Knights entered the forest at the point of which looked darkest to him. This story is told well by Dr. Jordan Peterson, and as he describes it, the story is representative of our own paths that the place that looks darkest to us, the places that we fear and detest, those are the places to which we most need to go.</p>
<p>My strengths in this area</p>	<p>As mentioned above, my profession has granted me the opportunity to build many skills regarding adaptation and management of change, at least the planned kind. Regarding unplanned kind, I have learned those skills through facing difficulty, which has no broadened my perspective on the difference between those two types of change and the</p>

	sometimes differing skills required to cope and metabolize each kind.
My action step(s)/goals	My goal is to continue my career pivot into a new one that has education holding a major part. To do this requires some fairly massive change related to my daily life, and the biggest action step I need to take is likely to simply keep moving in the direction that I have started.

Chapter 12: Celebrate and Appreciate

Chapter Aha Moments	This chapter held less moments of ‘aha’ and more moments of validation. In the section entitled “It’s Okay to Go,” Aguilar talks about a time when she experienced intense burnout. She describes her experience in her teaching job during that period, “I found little joy or satisfaction in my work and this was exacerbated by the real challenges of my position, which wasn’t a good fit for my strengths and personality . . . But I still didn’t feel content or fulfilled.” While these are indicators of burnout, I am struck by how similar her language is to what I often think inside my head about my most recent jobs. While I tend to perform well in them, I often feel that my efforts seldom make that big of a difference. I often feel that if I wasn’t doing what I do, the organization would simply find another person that is just as skilled as I am, and that there is nothing unique about my contributions. I long to experience the passion and impact that I have heard others describe, and pursue an endeavor that is full of meaning and flush with feelings of making a difference. Aguilar’s strategy talks about paying attention to bright spots, of “noticing when I felt that I was fulfilling my purpose and cultivating gratitude” helped her find her way to the career that she eventually considered her calling (p. 301). While I am open to continue paying attention to these things, I have been trying to do so for so long, the fear that I must recognize that is inside is a fear that I am in a chronic state of not being able to find my occupational calling.
Reflection on worksheets I completed	The Awe Narrative (p. 616) Several years ago, as I was still healing from my divorce, I took my two daughters who were about 9 and 5 at the time on a driving trip from Wisconsin out to Colorado, across the Continental Divide, into Utah and looping back down through Arizona, New Mexico and back up to Colorado and home. Throughout this journey, we saw and experienced many things that inspired awe. The mountains, the vast plains, the weather. One scene in particular sticks in my mind. While I don’t recall the exact location, or the name of the feature, we were driving through the mountains of Utah and were on the downward slope, as we arrived at a certain point, there was a scenic outlook that overlooked what I thought would be . . . well, nice scenery. As I walked to the overlook point with my 5 year old, the dry cold air whipped across our skin and blew our hair to a chill. As I sat her on a rock to take a picture, and I looked out, what I saw struck me with what can definitely be described as awe. Laying below me for what seemed like endless miles was a broad reddish hued expanse of arid, rocky plains that was so immense as to feel surreal. The highway on which we had traveled from above, led onward down onto the plain and from our distance the road looked like a thin, gray string that led into a far off distance, peppered scarcely with moving black dots that I incredulously realized were some shade-size of real automobiles. And beyond that plain, to my left arose a massive red steppe . . . from my direct left and behind outward to my most forward gaze. This huge monolith, seemingly one

	<p>single continuous piece of red rock, easily rose 1000 feet or more off the plain and stretched for what seemed to be 20 miles, where it ended abruptly. The edge facing us was reminiscent of a red version of Yosemite's El Capitan, only lengthened 50 fold. We had clearly stumbled upon a portal to a distant planet, one where the yawn of earth touched the open sky. As if that were not enough, in the far distance directly ahead of us and slightly to the right, was a meandering, epically sized crevice in the earth that looked as if a spidering strike of lightning and been laid flat upon the plain and seared directly down a system of ravines in the earth. Judging by where we were on our journey, I suspected that this was either a span of the Grand Canyon, or a sister-ravine equal in distinction and beauty.</p> <p>My reaction to this sight was one of awe and respect, with deep appreciate and gratitude for the power of the forces that created such beauty.</p>
My strengths in this area	<p>My strength in this area is my belief, similar to Aguilar, in the power of gratitude. I was taught, and so have learned from an early age, that cultivating an attitude of gratitude, focusing on thanks for the things you have rather than those you haven't, orients a persons character toward the other, rather than succumbing to the self-absorbed inward turning that leads to very few good places.</p>
My action step(s)/goals	<p>My goal is to find new ways and new dimensions of cultivating gratitude. Ones that allow me to, in a positive way, discover the path toward realizing my true potential and make a difference to the world.</p>