



Hello / Ciao / Bonjour / Hola!

Last night's workshop, got me thinking about how we greet each other. We discussed weaving old traditions into new rituals and it reminded me of the first time my Dad came to Montreal. My Dad lives in San Diego, the city's close proximity to Mexico, and the abundance of Spanish spoken in the region means that even he has learned to speak "Gringo" Spanish. Fast forward to him doing some solo sight-seeing in Montreal and being greeted with "Bonjou, comment ça va" (French for hello how are you) to which he responded "Bueno y tu" (Spanish for I'm good and you). I share this antidote with you because to this day, when he hears Bonjour it brings a smile to his face, and his pronunciation brings a smile to mine.

For many of us, new languages are incredibly difficult, and yet we weave languages together almost instinctively as we try to piece together a coherent sentence. Overtime we use more and more of the new language, it does not completely take over our native or communicative language, it does become part of the way that we communicate and therefore part of our identity.

This is a powerful way to look at how we weave our lives together, sometimes unknowingly coloring the fabric of our lives in ways that surprise us.

Using new languages can also be fun whilst on holiday,

and almost painful when trying to make an appointment for something as simple as a haircut, not to mention the added challenge of doing this wearing a mask while social distancing.

Yet, we persevere to get internet into our homes, children into school, and of course get that much-needed haircut. For me speaking non-native languages can still be a stress-inducing, sweaty palm experience, and when my nerves get the best of me the results are far worse than when I'm 'calm cool, and collected' to borrow that phrase.

A simple technique I use to keep 'calm cool, and collected' is:

1. A few deep breaths
2. A reminder that I'm doing the best I can
3. A 'well done' once the exchange is complete

*you might have to rinse and repeat one or all of these tips a few times during the exchange

If we can weave language into our lives without even thinking, imagine what we can do when we give conscious thought to our actions! If this sounds overly ambitious to you, start small and create some calm to make space for some conscious thinking. Check out the video from the workshop below to help you get started.

Enjoy these last few weeks of winter, spring is just around the corner.

Best,

Allyson

p.s. below is my March calendar, since I know you are all spending too much time behind your screens, make it your background so you get that daily reminder.