



FROM THE TIDELINE TO LIVING SYSTEMS: THE EVOLUTION OF A CONTAINER

The One Who Sees, Stands, and Participates

Writing the poem for the Soil-Water Dragon Track marker felt, at first, like a way to mark the end of one leg of the journey. I had arrived at the marker. I had followed the thread from the beach-art interruption through dreams, symbols, old memories, and the Medicine Wheel. I had begun to understand that the shoreline container had changed, but the work itself had not disappeared.

I was beginning to understand that poem was a doorway. The days that followed became the ground for Tracking Insight and Growth. Dreams, synchronicities, symbols, old memories, hikes, conversations, and the Medicine Wheel Plan all started pulling together in a way I could not have arranged if I had tried. At first, I thought I was tracking intuition, symbolism, and perception, yet now I was learning to trust what I saw.

Again and again, the same pattern appeared. Something would arise inwardly first: an image, a phrase, a dream, a symbol, a strange visual impression. Then, days later, something in the outer world would echo it back. A flower. A log. A dragon. A shape on a hillside. A phrase. A place. The details varied, but the sequence kept repeating. Inner image. Outer encounter. Recognition.

I became less interested in proving how it worked and more willing to admit that it was happening often enough to matter. The point was not to explain the mechanism. The point was to honor the pattern.

The process itself became a kind of choreography—seeing, standing, participating—all centering at the marker. In the weeks leading up to writing the Ceremony Becoming Living Water, the question I held was evolving. Standing at the Dragon Track Marker, I found myself at a new threshold. This was not just about the edge between water and land, but about the moment water moves into land—rain slipping into soil, roots beginning to drink, life quietly receiving nourishment.

That changed everything. The shore taught me about meeting. The Soil-Water marker was now teaching me about entering. The question became: Can what is seen enter deeply enough to become part of the living system? At the time, it felt personal. Now, I recognize it was also ecological, not just individual.

That realization mattered. The ranger encounter had felt, at first, like a rupture. It was easy to interpret it as a stopping point. But the dreams and symbols seemed to be saying something different. They were saying, in their own language: stand where you are being called now.



The Thread Receives a Name

By the time of the June 3, 2026 Empowered Allies meeting, something in me had softened. I was not exactly confident or certain, yet I was less interested in proof and more willing to stay curious.

The Soil-Water Dragon Track had become a focal point. The Medicine Wheel had helped me name the qualities of a larger container. The question was no longer whether something was emerging. The question was what shape it might take.

When I tried to describe it to the group, I said it felt like holding a box of yarn with no pattern to weave yet. There were so many threads: the ranger encounter, the interrupted beach work, the sand spheres, the filtration imagery, the soil-water marker, the possibility of Mexico, and the sense that the old container was finished, but the new one still unclear.

What mattered in that meeting was that the uncertainty was not dismissed. It was met.

During the meeting, the group met my uncertainty. CK recalled a dream she'd once shared with me—my sand spheres resting in water, the water moving through, filtering, then expanding outward. This time, the image landed differently. The spheres were no longer just beach objects. They pointed toward something bigger: water, movement, clarification, relationship, transmission. Filtration returned as a bridge.

Then collaboration surfaced. Until that point, so much of the discernment had felt personal. I was the one watching dreams, tracking symbols, listening to the land, trying to understand what was happening. But in the Empowered Allies meeting, the inquiry began to become shared.

LiF's uncertainty about her own gifts mirrored my uncertainty about this next chapter. In one moment, she had wondered if she could trust what she received, and in the next, she helped name the next thread of my work. Connecting with LiF, who received a clear answer from SL, my non-speaking Autist connection, to my question about next steps, was an incredible relief. The project was no longer just about water, soil, and symbols. It was beginning to teach collaboration. The sense I was part of a communication triad that could collaborate on this unfolding project made me feel immediately supported.

Then Mexico entered the conversation. Months earlier, SL, had conveyed that I would travel to Mexico to work with water in some way. At the time, it was compelling, but not concrete. I had a few synchronistic connections, including JK in Mexico City, but nothing that gave the thread a real form. So the idea sat on a shelf.

In the Allies meeting, the idea returned—first as Mexico, then water, then canals, then agriculture, and finally, a place with a long name and an X: Xochimilco. That mattered. Xochimilco is not just a name or a vague destination. It is a living landscape. Canals, chinampas,



water, soil, plants, agriculture, and relationships. The field narrowed, and what was once an abstraction became a place where water and soil remain in conversation.

What struck me was how closely the imagery matched the direction my own inquiry had already been taking: from shoreline water to soil-water, from visible flow to hidden nourishment, from art object to living system, from solitary making to collaborative listening.

The meeting gave some initial answers, but more importantly, it gave the field a name. It also changed the way I was asking. For months, I had been asking for signs. CK suggested it might be time to ask for guidance. That landed. While signs confirm, guidance accompanies. Signs point. Guidance participates. I left the meeting less interested in proving the thread and more willing to follow it.

For now, the thread seemed to run through soil, water, spheres, filtration, SL, Lisa, collaboration, and Xochimilco.

Becoming Living Soil

After that, I began shaping what became the Becoming Living Soil ceremony at the Soil-Water Dragon Track marker in the Port Townsend Dragon Watershed. At first, I thought I was simply expressing gratitude. I wanted to honor the marker, the place, the strange path that had led me there, and the way the landscape had quietly held the next threshold before I knew how to name it. But the ceremony became a teacher.

As I wrote and rewrote, a deeper insight took root. The shoreline had taught movement. The Soil-Water marker was teaching receptivity. The ceremony centered on a central teaching: stone and soil each hold water in its own way. Stone resists, redirects, and is shaped by water. Soil receives, makes room, and creates a relationship. Water that cannot enter stone can enter soil, and water that would overwhelm a closed container can nourish a living one.

That teaching landed in my own life. For years, I have carried out projects, responsibilities, visions, people, and possibilities. I know how to hold things together, how to move first, how to make something happen when no one else will. But the ceremony asked a different question: what carries me? That question arrived with real weight.

Participation had been the lesson of the previous chapter. Receiving became the lesson of this one. Like rain entering soil. Like roots receiving nourishment. Like wetlands holding water. I found myself contemplating what it would mean to receive support, beauty, guidance, companionship, creativity, and possibility. The ceremony gave this movement a name: Becoming Living Soil. I didn't need to become stronger or more accomplished; I needed to be better at receiving support in my life.



Support Becomes Embodied

Not long after, another insight arrived by surprise. Through a swing.

I had been thinking about support as an idea. I could list moments when I had been supported. I could remember help arriving. I could describe it conceptually. But I could not quite feel it in my body.

Then I went to the park and got on the swing. The seat was a little too high, the way swings often are for my vertically-challenged self. I had to jump up, grab hold, and trust the structure. And then I was moving. Held, but not confined. Safe, but not still. Supported, but free.

That was the moment it landed for me. Support isn't control or certainty. Support is being held well enough to explore.

The lesson brought me back to the ceremony. Roots don't make water; they receive it. Soil doesn't force the rain; it opens to what arrives. Maybe support is like that. For the first time, support moved from understanding into embodiment.

The Inquiry Expands

Only after all of this did the Mexico inquiry open with more clarity. Conversations with JK brought Xochimilco into fuller view, and then Lake Texcoco, wetlands, chinampas, hydrologic restoration, sponge landscapes, buried rivers, water memory, and living systems began entering the field. What struck me was that these landscapes seemed to be asking the same questions as the Dragon Track and the ceremony.

The Salish Sea teaches movement. The Valley of Mexico teaches holding. The shoreline asks: How does water meet the world? The basin asks: How does the world receive water? The difference matters.

What had first arrived as symbol, dream, intuition, and question was now appearing as geography, ecology, history, and landscape. The pattern repeated. The image appeared first. The place followed.



Living Systems

The inquiry kept branching. JK sent an article about bacteria living inside fog droplets. At first, I didn't know whether it belonged with this inquiry or not.

Then I sat with it. Fog is not just suspended water. It is habitat. A temporary living system. A place where life gathers, acts, and participates.

That idea landed immediately. A fog droplet. A wetland. A chinampa. A watershed. A basin. A ceremony. A friendship. A creative practice. A human life. Each can become a container for life.

Again and again, the same question appeared: What conditions allow life to flourish?

The Questions Emerging Now

The outer landscape asks: How does a landscape hold water? How do water and soil collaborate? How does restoration happen? What allows living systems to emerge? What invisible relationships sustain them?

The inner landscape asks: What can hold who I am becoming? What does support feel like? What does it mean to receive? How do I become more available to life? What conditions let beauty, creativity, relationships, and emergence flourish?

Where the Inquiry Stands

At first, I thought this was about Mexico. Then water. Then restoration. Now I'm considering if it is about containers. The ranger encounter showed me a container that had grown too small. Tracking Insight and Growth showed me the work remained alive. It also revealed that inner knowing often arrives before outer recognition, and trust is built by honoring both.

The Medicine Wheel Plan helped name the next container. The Empowered Allies meeting began populating it with threads. The Becoming Living Soil ceremony became the first act of inhabiting it. The swing revealed what support feels like inside that space. Mexico stretched its boundaries. Living systems gave it context.

The tideline taught meeting. The Soil-Water Dragon Track taught participation. The ceremony taught receiving. And the landscapes calling now seems to ask a larger question: How do living systems hold, nourish, remember, and carry life forward?

For now, that is the question I am living into.