

I Am Still Floating & Uncertainty Is My Certainty

BY GABRIELLA GUGLIELMINOTTI TRIVEL

The ground is moving under my feet and I feel as if I am still on a boat, even if I know that I am standing on firm ground.

I feel spaced out and tired because of the recent travelling and even if I can't say it is because of the jet lag – Italy is only an hour ahead of the UK – I am feeling not completely with it and am longing for my bed.

I went to Turin recently to celebrate my mother's 90th birthday and went afterward for a short break to Venice, as my partner has never been there and I promised him many times that one day I would take him to see 'La Serenissima'.

The joy of travelling

Coming back from any destination is never easy for me, I always feel a sense of loss and disorientation both in my body and my mind, all sorts of emotions are stirred up and I feel a mess.

It doesn't matter what I go back to, either I am in a well-appointed position in my life or I am in transition, the feeling of uncertainty and reshuffling keeps coming up and I struggle to cope with it.

In this particular instance, I am really floating physically and emotionally and on top of everything else, I have this very disconcerting sensation of rocking continuously, as one feels when one is on board of a ship.

In Venice, there are canals everywhere and to walk all the time can be extremely tiring by going up and down the countless bridges. So to reach a particular destination quickly, taking a boat called a 'vaporetto', makes life much easier and gives one the opportunity to see the city from a different perspective.

I am not normally seasick. I quite enjoy being on a boat and feeling the rocking motion. I love the lulling of the water. I find it irresistible, so when I am in Venice, I gorge on it and take boats whenever possible.

I was hoping that once back on the ground at home this feeling would go away, but I have been back for over four days now and am still floating, even if I am sitting on a chair and writing this blog.

What is going on?

In the last few years, my body has been changing and so has my mind as I entered my perimenopausal years; my life has become a bit like a rocking boat. In my new rocking existence, I can't feel firmly planted on the ground anymore, everything is fluid and changing all the time.

It is not easy to express the whole complexity of this time of a woman's life, furthermore, not many women go public about it, as menopause – like menstruation – is still a taboo for so many.

For me, it is a big adventure and I'm taking it in stride without wanting it to go away and pretending I am still in my youth.

Even if it feels strange to write this

and be open about it, I think somebody has to do it as the more women speak about it the better it is for all of us. Isolation has kept women in check to the advantage of men for so many centuries, millennia rather, but things are slowly changing – and recently not so slowly!

As I was saying at the beginning, when I come back from any travel I always feel disconcerted, I have my head in the clouds and find it difficult to readjust to my normal life.

This time is no different. I'm feeling especially unsettled with the rocking motion of my body, so focusing is definitely tough for me. This time, though, I decided to accept my uncertain feeling and, in fact, to explore it with curiosity.

The joys of the present moment

There are many factors that are bringing more uncertainty into my life at present: my iron level is very low in my blood and causes a constant feeling of fatigue and being spaced out. Any decision is a super difficult endeavor, the lack of energy has killed my chronic enthusiasm and I am not sure any longer where I am going.

Last month my partner sold his property and moved in with me temporarily, so my routine and my personal space have endured a reduction/squeeze and I am still adjusting to that, too. We both have to review our life and our goals including where we want to live – which is not necessarily something that can be resolved quickly and easily.

So much like Venice?

Venice is actually a good metaphor for my life, as it offers so many parallels: it was born out of uncertainty in a time of huge change (the local population fled to the lagoon to escape the Huns invasion led by Attila), the location wasn't the best but the people helped it become, within time, a wonderful masterpiece.

Since the beginning, this city-state had a pretty democratic government that kept the city independent for a thousand years, until Napoleon came along and wiped it all out to satisfy his lust for power.

Venice is sinking, but still marvels millions of visitors every year and has something for everybody. I can relate to all those aspects and can find bits of them in my own life.

Especially in the last few years, I have been feeling like I'm sinking and dying slowly, as if a new me wanted to emerge.

Instead of feeling ashamed of the way I feel at present, I want to accept it and make it work for me, as we all know that what we resist persists. So I want to embrace it and take advantage of this particular situation I am finding myself in – let's rock and roll!

Transition and uncertainty

I think not many women talk about this transition openly because we live in a society that appreciates youth over maturity, therefore mature women are considered less appealing. A woman who is in transition during her perimenopausal years is not as available as she used to be, hence she is perceived as more demanding and difficult to please compared to when she was younger and inexperienced.

Realising that things are changing for oneself means reviewing

one's own life and re-evaluating what is important for oneself. Therefore it can upset the status quo and how things have been done so far. We all hate change and find it difficult to cope with in a large or small scale, so we tend to hide our uncertainties and keep them to ourselves.

This time of a woman's life though can be very tough indeed and keeping everything to oneself might not work to save one from falling, just the opposite.

I personally think that in this phase of our life as women we need – more than ever – the support of other sisters and especially older ones that can help us go through the transition seeing that there is light at the other end of the tunnel.

Isolation

My second big declaration is: besides feeling like I'm dying and going into disrepair I also feel super isolated.

This is a difficult thing to say for a women's coach who wants to empower women, but it is true and I know that possibly I am not the only one feeling this way. Is that true?

We have been kept isolated for millennia, but we don't need to do that anymore. We can come into the open and say it as it is, or as it feels!

Yes, in this time of life, feelings seem to multiply a thousand times, as if they weren't already enough.

Our perception is amplified and it seems that any protection is not enough to keep the 'world' at bay. Everything is too much.

The fact that we feel that maybe we have to steer the boat in a different direction exposes us to the fact that we don't know yet which is our new direction and our society doesn't like that either.

If we don't know, we don't know – period!

It is no good pretending that we do know, when, in fact, inside we simply feel like sinking to the bottom of the sea for no reason. Does that sound familiar to you?

To change something just for the sake of changing and reassuring ourselves doesn't solve the problem – just the opposite. When a little later on, we might find ourselves worse off having squandered a lot of energy for nothing at a time when we tend to have less energy anyway!

So what next?

I don't know is my honest answer. For the time being, I enjoy my rocking – physical and emotional – and go back to the wonderful fresh images of 'La Serenissima'. I feel majestic like Her, sinking slowly, slowly in the Venetian lagoon and smiling at millions of visitors coming from all over the world to admire Her.

It's time to rock and roll sisters and make lots of noise!

If you relate to any of the feelings and thoughts that I have tried to express here, I would like to hear from you, as sisterhood is the only balm that can soothe our wounds at this time of our precious life. Don't be shy – get in contact with me!

Photo by [Ryan Christodoulou](#) on [Unsplash](#)

For more self-study, [The Urban Howl](#) recommends [Courage: The Joy of Living Dangerously](#) .

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DANIELLE DULSKY

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