

# Getting Under the Covers

October 11, 2006 by [lifeshifting](#)

Ok, so I didn't sleep too well last night and therefore I probably shouldn't try writing this blog today...but maybe... since I'm not very well rested, my post will be short (which many of my loyal fans will be pleased to read!)

Today I thought I'd share a real-time example of what I was trying to point to and begin to discuss in yesterday's post: the idea that the "self"—that elusive sense of me, myself, and mine—is always in flux. I realize that depending on how you read into this idea, it can be good news or bad news. It can wake us up to the reality that **EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE** because there are no constraints **AND** it can bring us down to the depths of despair as we realize that there is no solid ground on which to stand anymore. In the world of "Life-Shifting", you can't just turn to the politicians, or the priests, or even the psychologists to get the "right" answer for how to live your life...you've got to do the work. Yikes.

It is all so simple...but not ever easy.

Last night I lived through a granular example of Life-Shifting in action. Let me explain. I live in one of those old fifties apartment buildings that was built after the invention of central air conditioning but before the addition of individual thermostats. What that means is that every year on a certain day in April and again in October, my building superintendent pulls the switch. In one fell swoop my apartment goes from having a/c to having heat. It is all very cut and dry: one day you get cold air and the next you get hot. No regulation. No choice. Nada. Well, yesterday was the day we went from a/c to heat, which might not have been so bad except the temperature outside was still almost 70 degrees when I went to bed. TO make matters worse, I really don't like to sleep with the windows open in the middle of New York City. Only as a last resort do I turn to earplugs!

So, you can probably guess why I didn't sleep well. The temperature was too hot and I was too hot and there wasn't any way to regulate it. Lying in bed under the covers I was aware of two things most of the night: 1. My body does not have an a/c vs. heat kind of temperature gauge. It is quite capable of feeling hot, cold, warm and everything in between all at once; 2. My mind seems to follow my body down the rabbit hole of either pleasure or pain. When the body feels comfortable, the mind may relax (or not!), but when the body feels uncomfortable the mind tends to fuel the negativity. The bottom line on the experience: It all kept changing minute to minute, breath to breath. The movement from comfort to discomfort and back again is fluid, complex and dynamic.

The world that we deal with everyday often seems to operate in hot/cold kind of ways, yet the human dilemma is that we are not black/white kinds of beings. We are both/and kinds of beings. There were moments last night when my toes were cold, my head was sweating, my head was aching...and yet my thoughts were elsewhere. So where was I? Was I on HEAT or A/C? Yes and yes?

So here is a micro-level example of how the key principle of “Life-Shifting”—that all is in flux—can be the starting point for creativity and possibility. It is all about choice. At the end of a couple of hours of fluctuating and frustrating hot/cold bedroom drama, I made a choice: turn off the heat, plug in the earplugs, open the windows and change blankets. And more importantly, I chose to surrender. Let it be. Deal with the outer world’s constraints in the most creative way I could think of in the moment...and then just accept what is. At about 3am, after tossing and turning and finally deciding to follow my cat’s lead (he had been sleeping soundly through the whole drama), I relaxed...put down my head...and slept.

So, next time you are feeling frustrated, irritated, or down...ask yourself: what is under the covers? Is it all black/white, good or bad? Is there something going on underneath that you may be missing? Is there a creative response to what appears to be a bad situation? Is it possible to just let go and relax? Won’t it all change anyway...no matter what you do today?

Perhaps you just need to sleep on it.

Peace,