Enjoying tough issues

Dynamics of innovation and stagnation

There is no shortage of tough issues in and around organizations: whether it is collaboration between professionals, external oriented government, sustainable economy or development cooperation. These issues are both nobody's and everybody's problem. They are characterized by complexity of different kinds. This pertains not only to content (issues can be multidimensional, ambiguous, dilemma ridden and systemic). *Complexity* can also be social, contextual and psychological. Tough issues involve many actors with different interests, values and ideas. Limits on who to involve seem arbitrary, the outside world regularly interferes, and the awareness that much remains unknowable and unmanageable can be unnerving. It makes tough issues hard to pin down and impossible to eradicate. It makes successful actions hard to predict, select or pretest while every action in itself is irreversible: whatever you do, there are always real consequences that affect people in a real way.

While other issues are (eventually) resolved in organizations, tough issues tend to persist regardless of good intentions and brave efforts. Knowing that it is difficult to solve them successfully, employees are tempted to circumvent these issues. As a result tough issues can disappear from the organization's agenda. Their symptoms can become regarded as perfectly natural within the organization. Trying to address them can even become a controversial idea. This is a pity as tough issues are often related to the primary process of an organization, the purpose of a societal movement or the common practice that binds a community together: that's where complexity of issues is greatest, that's where value is added to the outside world. The subject matter is therefore not just tough to deal with, it is also the kind of puzzle that is at the heart of workers' profession: it touches on what motivated them to choose their line of work and challenges their professional pride. This is reflected in the terminology used for these issues. Where Rittel and Webber (1973) focus on the toughness, calling them 'wicked issues', Kunneman (2005) prefers to label them as *slow questions*: issues you do not want quick fixes for, but want to live with, unravel, get better at, learn about. It's the stuff from which life derives meaning. In focusing on tough issues, this book does not try to eradicate them, but rather use them as a way to enrich work and make more of a difference to others.

Copying and rolling out standardized large-scale change programs is not the answer to tough issues. Such programs lose sight completely of the complexity that is at the heart of the problems. Tough issues can much better be dealt with by many small incremental and interrelated decisions and actions, which together bring a change strategy to life. A recipe, best practice or snazzy seven-step plan is thus not offered here. Instead this book describes what the dynamics are that make the dominant change repertoire so ill equipped for tough issues, while they suffice quite well for simple ones. Most of all, this book describes what change repertoire addresses tough issues effectively and what the dynamics are that explain why. Ironically, issues are tough partly because what works to address them is controversial. In short: this book is about understanding WHY certain actions work or do not work. The good news is that such *insights* have much wider applicability than plans and recipes do (Engeström, 1994). They are less specific to a particular situation. As a result readers can translate these insights into action perspectives tailored to their own issues and own organizations.

The dynamics described in this book are based on multiple case study *research* at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. About thirty change processes were studied over a period of six years. Most of these changes took place at embassies in developing countries, employing with both expatriate and local staff. These processes generally spanned 1-2 years and were focused on tough issues such as development cooperation. Networks and communities of practice emerged around these organizational changes and these were also studied. The whole endeavor can be regarded as action research: organizational change, professionalization and academic research were tightly coupled throughout these years. This means that researchers also worked as interventionists and participated in communities of practice, while participants also learned to facilitate their own change processes and many participated in collecting and interpreting data about the dynamics of the changes taking place. The data collected was qualitative and extensive, ranging from participative observations, transcriptions and reflective notes to the paper trail of evaluations, mission reports, intervention plans, emails, surveys, etc. Most important were 'rich descriptions' of meaningful events in each of the change processes, inspired by naturalistic enquiry. A process of 'grounded theory building' helped distill the insights presented in this book: a process of interpretation, coding, reflection and construction in which triangulation was purposefully built in.

Overview of working mechanisms

In terms of knowledge, the main yield of this research process are 'working mechanisms' that seem to capture the dynamics we observed: twelve innovative and twelve stagnating mechanisms. The *stagnating mechanisms* are not something to condemn: there are perfectly good reasons why the associated behavior and ideas exist in organizations. For one, these ideas do work well on tame issues. Also, the associated measures are better known and easier to grasp, their effectiveness is often (though falsely) presented as fail safe, and the behavior is historically accepted and deemed appropriate. As a result people would be unwise to disregard these options too quickly. But adhering to these mechanisms were they do not work is, of course, another matter entirely. They then become *fixations* that work against innovation. Levitt and March (1988) refer to these as 'competency traps' where the dominant repertoire of the organization becomes an effective barrier to explore other avenues that might work better: avenues that are needed to deal with tough issues.

The *innovative mechanisms* describe what those other avenues look like and what makes them work. By definition they cannot be 'more of the same' of the habitual way of changing. Instead of adhering to what is best known and deemed appropriate, interventions are used that are uncommon in the organizational context. March (1988) speaks here about a 'technology of foolishness'. His combination of two contrasting notions is quite meaningful: 'foolishness' refers to a conscious choice to venture outside the dominant repertoire in search of more effective ways to act. 'Technology' refers to the craftsmanship that is involved in bringing these other interventions to life. In other words: this other repertoire is characterized by *playing* with (and against) the rules. This however is not a license to embrace all things different or frivolous: innovative behavior might seem foolish, but not all foolishness is innovative.

Part and parcel of innovating around tough issues is the need to work simultaneously on *two fronts*. Half of the job is to deal with stagnating mechanisms: to de-fixate what works against innovation. It is inevitable that innovative approaches will be met with reactions like 'This is not how things are done around here' or 'I don't see how this would work'. The organizational surroundings always

act a bit hostile to innovative approaches. An uphill battle against the dominant repertoire is part of any real innovation. Reducing fixations enlarges the space to try something different and transformative. There is no way to compete with this repertoire, without problematizing it first. Waiting for optimal conditions is not an option: they will not emerge spontaneously. The other half of the job is to put innovative mechanisms to good use in the space available: to use new repertoire to handle tough issues well, to enjoy doing so and to transform the organization at the same time. It is inevitable for most of the people involved to 'learn on the job' how to pull this new repertoire off, as the organization lacks experience in this area. This again stresses the need to link organizational change with professionalization throughout the process.

The working mechanisms that are at the heart at this book are intertwined, but can nevertheless be separated for better understanding and transference. They touch on different aspects of organizing: some focus on interactions, others on cognitions, the design of change or the anchoring of change in the organization. The book is structured in such a way that six working mechanisms are distinguished related to each of these aspects, half with an innovative impact and half with a stagnating impact. An *overview* in key words is given in table 1. This table looks a bit cryptical without further explanation. I will give a rough impression by aspect which can partly remedy this slightly. Luckily, Engeström (2004) suggests that half explained (new) insights can serve a useful purpose in and of themselves to stimulate exploration and interest. He calls them 'springboards'. I hope this brief elaboration of working mechanisms can serve that purpose in this summary. Please regard them as teasers of what is explained at length in this book where it is illustrated with cases, interspersed with related theoretical notions and richly referenced.

Dynamics related to interactions

Organizing interactions around tough issues is a challenge as they transgress individual mandates, departmental boundaries and organizational layers. Who to involve and who to exclude? How to make decisions with so many people? To what extent should one address the tensions that invariably arise between them? Stagnation occurs when collective conferences are though off as the answer to coordinate the activities of all these actors. This can bog down the organization as people use these conferences to voice their opinions and argue their point. In doing so one argument elicits another, increasing the number of opinions, interests and feelings attached to the issue at hand. Meetings multiply quickly to work through it all. Cohen, March and Olson (1972) refer to this as 'garbage can decision making'. This in turn can lead to a discussion about mandates: to assign responsibility clearly to individuals as this might reduce the frequency of meetings. However, those individuals are later faced with growing passivity of others whose contributions they dearly need.

Frustration with these dynamics can lead employees to call for management to step in and supply clear directives on behalf of all. However, complex issues cannot be dealt with effectively by instructions from the top: they cannot comprehend or control such issues by themselves. Also, the professionals involved - while calling for management to step up – will often try to evade management's control when it comes to their own work.

When all these coordination efforts - both horizontal and vertical – reap disappointing results, a discussion about blame can ensue: this reduces the complexity to an actor or factor that is at fault and should better his life. This obscures the systemic nature of the issue. It also puts a damper on the work atmosphere. Fearing for damaged relationships (which could come back to haunt one later on) choices are made sooner or later to cover up the conflict. This too obscures characteristics of the issue.

Table 1 Overview of the working mechanisms described in this book

Aspects		Stagnating mechanisms	Innovative mechanisms
Interactions	Inclusion	Dividing & conferencing	Transactional organizing in multiple parallel work systems
	Influence	Forcing & evading	Co-production by spreading and differentiating contributions
	Affection	Blaming & covering up	Optimizing task conflicts and resolving relationship conflicts
Cognitions	Windows	Singular perspectives & anecdotal knowledge	Introducing cognitive diversity and meta-language
	Mirrors	Untested practices & habits of organizing	Tightening the coupling between theory and practice
	Ambivalence	Unquestioned values & denial of defensiveness	Reclaiming thinking space by problematizing and humor
Design of change	Process variety	Blue/yellow print – dominance & interference between change strategies	Switching between contrasting change processes
	Development principles	Isolated teaching exercises & poor learning practices	Intertwining learning processes in and around work
	Planning of change	Paralysis by analysis & initiative-itis	Emergent planning and incremental deepening with small wins
Anchoring of change	Facilitative relationship	Wavering participation & passing on responsibility for change	Paradoxical interventions, swift trust, and steering based on reflective reasoning
	Embedding of change	Centrally driven change & implementation interference	Decentering, unblocking, and pluralist evaluations
	Continuity of innovation	Isolated successes, institutionalization & cloaked disciplining	Organic diffusion in networks, change processes and communities of practice

Apart from unveiling the stagnating effect of the interaction mechanisms just sketched, innovation is furthered by organizing participation specifically around issues: it is then not the organization's structure that determines who is involved (in terms of departmental affiliation of hierarchical position), but whose contribution is needed to get the job done. This is often referred to as organizing in 'activity systems' or 'work systems' (Hoebeke, 1994). There can be many of parallel work systems at the same time. They allow people from all kinds of backgrounds to be involved on an equal footing. This helps to deal with complexity more effectively, as 'only variety beats variety'. At the same time it keeps unnecessary 'onlookers' at bay. How the limits of work systems are defined is never objective, but rather a professional consideration based on the ambitions and abilities of those involved.

Within these work systems many contributions are desired, whether they are related to content, processes, contacts, skills and so forth. Basically all involved are stimulated to pitch in sufficiently to cover all bases. By increasing differentiation of contributions these can build on rather than interfere with each other.

Frictions are not avoided, especially since many of them will be related to the tough issues themselves: think of the different viewpoints, responsibilities, loyalties and interests involved in these issues. In such instances reframing conflicts as NON-relational, regarding them as task related instead and optimizing them to make good use of variety, strengthens innovation. The few remaining relationship conflicts benefit from resolving them, as they can get in the way of working together productively.

Dynamics related to cognitions

The assumptions and convictions people have, can get in the way of tackling tough issues. These can be ideas about organizing, about learning, about change, etc. For instance: notions about organizing are riddled with machine metaphors, learning is associated with teaching in institutionalized settings and organizational change is equated with linear planned endeavors. All three are of not very fruitful perspectives when dealing with tough issues. It is hard to pinpoint these (especially by organizational members themselves) when the available knowledge on these subjects is one sided or anecdotal.

Where awareness of alternatives falters, testing one's practices might still unveil where such cognitions frustrate progress. However, such testing cannot be taken for granted. Attention if often forward focused, knowledge of one's change history is often scarce and evaluations are often too superficial or political to yield useful insights. So, such lessons remain hidden in the organization and dysfunctional habits of organizing can persist.

The examples of assumptions given above are not arbitrary: there is a tendency for mental models to (implicitly) prevail that favor and further unity, control, transparency and stability. Much management language pays lips service to these values. However, such mental models also have a down side as they devalue and decrease variety, entrepeneurism, richness and vitality: all of which are more conducive to innovation. In any case the longer these mental models go unquestioned, the harder it becomes to deviate from them.

Such stagnating mechanisms can be countered by 'playing' with cognitions. This can be done in more than one way. The least confrontational approach is introducing cognitive maps containing contrasting perspectives: these are 'windows' on alternative viewpoints and courses of action. These help understand complexity and legitimize contingency thinking: that different ideas and actions hold value for different situations.

A more confrontational approach is to look at the effectiveness of current practice. Where issues are experienced as tough, dominant approaches seldom suffice. So looking in the 'mirror' of established practice will show how cherished cognitions do little good, while controversial ideas seem to work much better (already).

When defensiveness of dominant notions is strong AND this defensiveness is denied, persistently problematizing or even ridiculing these notions is needed in order to reclaim the open minded thinking that is dearly needed. This is a risky undertaking for change agents. In order to get away with it unscathed they need to boost their credibility and use a sharp sense of humor: a bit like a jester at a king's court. When successful, ambivalence is experienced once again which allows for serious consideration and exploration of more promising perspectives.

Dynamics related to the process design

Organizations tend to over rely on only a few of the available change strategies: top down change approaches dominate. These are based on building coalitions though political maneuvering ('yellow print') and/or use of rational-empirical ways to diagnose and plan change ('blue print'). The first has power behind it, the second one rationality. When it comes to a fight between strategies, other strategies (based on learning, seduction, self steering, etc.) cannot compete and take second place regardless on how well they might work. In cases where alternative strategies are nevertheless selected, lack of experience with them and interference of blue en yellow print reflexes wreak havoc with their effectiveness (De Caluwé & Vermaak, 2006). As a result organizational members tend to prove to themselves that these alternative strategies don't work well.

This seems especially true for learning approaches, which appear to be the most recessive change strategy around. This is ironic as learning is of paramount importance in dealing with tough issues: increased understanding and new action perspectives are sorely needed. In stagnating surroundings learning is equated with teaching individuals - based on a non controversial curriculum - outside the workplace. These are temporary exercises plagued with transfer problems back to the work arena while ignoring implicit knowledge available among the participants. All of these characteristics make such learning practices innocuous and superficial.

The way change is planned can also create stagnation. Understanding of tough issues grows by working on them. Using a linear model of change where you try to analyze them beforehand is thus fruitless. It leads to paralysis by analysis. This breeds impatience that sooner or later tempts those involved to isolate one aspect of the tough issue, create ambitious action plans to address that and implement them forcefully to make up for lost time. This is sometimes labeled as 'initiative-itis' (Hendry, 1996). The most extreme form of this is where action plans are copied from other organizations or management fashion, skipping the diagnosis completely: 'our product is your problem'. Such plans loose sight of the unique complexity of tough issues and are therefore rarely successful.

In contrast innovation is enabled by freely using ALL change strategies available. This makes good sense as issues differ and tough issues have many facets. Sometimes a political maneuver is called for, sometimes rational planning helps, sometimes seduction makes a difference, et cetera. The challenge is to combine change strategies in such a way that they do not undermine one another. This requires situational choice of what strategy works best, switching between them when the situation warrants it and separating them sufficiently that let each one come to life. Such switching is not a skill that can be taken for granted. In stagnating surroundings this can only be pulled off by artificially separating contrasting activities in time and place. As skill increases switching can become frequent, fast and collective which makes change very powerful indeed.

As learning strategies are generally poorly used, consciously increasing space for learning will accelerate innovation, especially if a real effort is made to enhance the design of that learning to make it more impactful. This is possible by intertwining learning processes in and around work as in action learning: to organize learning on the job together with colleagues, relate it to real issues, connect it to the experience already there, reflect on what works, make it an ongoing process, etc. Stacking complementary learning processes (including implicit ones already there) can close learning loops faster and create a snowballing effect. You can picture this, for instance, as combining work in teams with the coaching of team leaders, with knowledge of activity systems, with handling emerging conflict, with a training in facilitation skills, etc.

An innovative change process with such frequent shifts between change strategies AND stacking of learning interventions is hard to predict or pre-design. It works much better to no longer

separate analysis, design and implementation in time. Planning still plays the vital role of continuous reflective steering, instead of a plan that is constructed once and people need to abide to. This keeps planning flexible and makes it possible to incrementally deepen the process in many 'small wins' which remain out of reach in a large integrated change effort (Weick, 1984). Accumulation of such 'small wins' makes a sizable change emerge over time.

Dynamics related to process anchoring

What creates ownership among participants in change processes? How can one create space for innovation among skeptical bystanders and anxious management? And how is continuity of innovation enabled? None of these can be taken for granted when change is controversial, which it always needs to be around tough issues. There will always be people who ask for help in dealing with tough issues, but they will also have doubts about the effectiveness of approaches they cannot picture yet. Their dedication to its execution and their ability to do so skillfully might also fall short of what is needed for such a new approach. Faced with such uncertainty, the burden of proof generally appears to lie with the facilitators, but promising 'magical solutions' and taking over responsibility just erodes agency and slows innovation down (Gabriel & Hirschhorn, 1999).

Centrally driven change is another way to create stagnation: the more visible an innovation is, the more bystanders will increase pressure to conform to established ways and the more they will interfere with its execution. Think of: new demands on the change program, lowering of budgets, piggy backing of other initiatives, efforts to claim the funds or goodwill acquired. Compromises to ward this off can water down the innovation. The 'inner circle' can collect lessons learned though evaluations, but their findings can easily inspire allergic reactions amongst onlookers who don't share the same experience, ideas or ambitions. All of these interferences require political entrepreneurship to get through unscathed but such a role is often overlooked. It is also rarely popular, especially among OD-practitioners.

Where innovation is nevertheless pulled off successfully, continuity of that change can still be thwarted. This can be achieved in several ways. For one, successes can remain isolated incidents. Pilots, for instance, are given room to innovate linked to an explicit understanding that what is done in the pilot is the exception to the rule and takes place only locally and temporarily. If a decision is made to scale up such a pilot, this is often done by institutionalizing the 'hard' aspects like plans, protocols, budgets, etc. and 'rolling that out' over the organization. But when it comes to innovation this is no more than an empty shell, not really the vital ingredients of innovation such as exploring, learning and playing. In some cases stagnation can be more insidious as new fashionable ideas are used in name only as a trick to increase adherence to dominant practices.

Uncertainty amongst participants is not a feeling to be shunned: rather, it represents a sense of reality suited to the toughness of issues, the newness of change approaches and the reliance on one's own efforts. Recognizing this within the facilitative relationship is a good start for spreading ownership and agency. This requires paradoxical interventions where the facilitator looks for ambition when that is not tabled, and looks for uncertainty when that is obscured. By discussing what really matters to the parties involved collaboration is not based on circling around touchy subjects but on addressing them. Deals that are struck can remain provisional: temporary understandings that are adjusted over time. Trust is swift and thin: it is given if issues matter enough, but also tested while working together (Meyerson, Weick & Kramer, 1996). Doubts can help table discussions about the change processes which help sharpen these processes along the way. Such tests and discussions

are also a means to professionalize those involved in such change processes. It allows the facilitator to transfer more of his tasks to participants, thus furthering co-production. The facilitator still SELECTIVELY takes up those tasks that are overlooked: enough to keep the innovation going, but not too much in order to keep challenging others.

All this happens preferably at the edges of the organization where new approaches can be tried out without too many prying eyes. This is generally where innovation starts anyhow: with 'positive deviants' (Warren, 2003) who are willing to take chances to bring something about that the formal organization is not (yet) calling for. Change is decentered this way. It allows for much less time to be spent on managing the fixating surroundings then is the case when organizing innovation top down. Nevertheless, interferences remain inevitable as innovation becomes more successful, grows in numbers, or meets the formal organization in evaluations, financing, hiring, etc. Preferably these interferences are well anticipated. Sponsors are informally sought early on, the issues 'sold' to them and space to maneuver agreed on. Some orchestration of all these political and professional activities also helps, for instance by an 'insider' who knows the ropes together with an 'outsider' who brings in know how on innovation. They can actively monitor the political games that are invariably played around the change, spot chances and problems and go out to address them with learning interventions when possible, with procedural rigor or political savvy when needed. Learning interventions can and do lead to spin-offs, the other interventions lessen interference. Evaluations need to be pluralist to address the concerns and ideas of all different kinds of actors in the organization that read and use them. In many cases it may require multiple contrasting evaluations that are loosely coupled. All this allows for an embedding of change in the organization that does not impede the change itself.

Continuity is another matter: basically there is nothing that spreads innovation better than keeping on innovating: thus it is not the procedures or structures that count, but a productive tangle of growing networks, change processes and communities of practice. In the growing networks ideas are spread, opportunities sought and contacts shared. In the change processes tough issues are tackled, experience gained and enthusiasm builds. These are the 'hotspots' that fuel it all. In communities of practice, lessons are made explicit and facilitators' capacity furthered. Networks, change processes and communities of practice feed on each other and together enable organic diffusion that create a 'movement' that takes on a life of its own. This seems a better guarantee for continuity than any formal system could ever be. At some point innovation may have spread to the point where it is no longer controversial or transformative. By that time institutionalization may happen without causing stagnation. Innovation then just moves on to other issues.

Enjoying tough issues

This book can be of interest to *academics* who do research on organizational transformation. The lessons learned are made available for their critical reflection. The ideas draw on different academic disciplines and might suggest interesting cross fertilization. How research can be combined with organizational change and professionalization over a long period of time may also be of interest to these readers.

Mostly though, this book is written with *practitioners* in mind: change agents who want to take responsibility for innovation regardless their position (be they managers, consultants, project managers, employees, et cetera). They can use the working mechanisms in this book in several ways:

- First, to help discern and understand the (hidden) change dynamics in their own environment and to supply language to share those insights with the people with whom they collaborate. Change agents can go around wondering if they are crazy or if their organization is. The dynamics described can give them a helping hand to cut through that confusion and isolation.
- Secondly, to consciously learn to step out of stagnating mechanisms with regard to their own behavior and ideas. And, as an extension of this, to help others to do the same by problematizing these fixating reflexes and routines. This can be the QUICKEST win, be it counterintuitive: easing fixations doesn't cost anything and doesn't reduce ambitions either, but does save lots of effort, time and frustration.
- Thirdly, to use already existing (but unrecognized) innovative mechanisms in the organization and build on those. Each mechanism in itself can make a difference, but combining and stacking the innovative mechanisms makes them really powerful. Knowing when to switch to what mechanism is where innovation becomes artful. Sometimes directly intervening where aspects are stuck may help; sometimes intervening indirectly (around the resistance) works better.
- Lastly, to know WHEN these innovative mechanisms are fruitful and when superfluous. What is described here is more complicated than following existing routines, more mechanistic models of organizing, more procedural ways of coordination, etc. There is no reason to choose such a more difficult road when issues are tame and 'more of the same' suffices. Moreover, it is advisable to not engage too many tough issues all at once. Better to take only one or two such issues on and organize innovation in sufficient depth, than to spread oneself too thin over many tough issues. It warrants some soul searching to figure out which issues one deems relevant and inspiring enough to commit to and to declare part of one's circle of influence.

I am sure the last word has not been spoken as to how *generic*, how powerful or how personal these findings are. I see that as a good thing. Let me share some thoughts on these matters. I am convinced the findings are valid for the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Given the enormous contrasts between the thirty change processes AND given the conceptualization in terms of systemic patterns (rather than in terms of stepwise plans), I am quite confident that the ideas are applicable beyond the Ministry's walls. An examination of the literature and my own observations in other organizations seem to confirm that. With regard to how *powerful* the findings are, the cases show change processes that worked quite well in the eyes of actors both within and outside the system limits (of the change) as chosen by participants. With the benefit of hindsight, I now recognize many moments where we stepped into stagnated mechanisms without knowing it and missed innovative intervention opportunities. In that sense I think still more is possible than was achieved and I wonder where the limits lie. With regard to how *personal* these findings are – in terms of bound to me as a professional - my thoughts are mixed. Firstly, the data collected refers only partly to me and more often to behavior of other facilitators and participants. The knowledge distilled from that data therefore cannot be all that personal. However, knowledge is not the same as ability. To use these findings skillfully in change processes, to be credible in doing so, to able to handle hostile surroundings, to relish complexity: that is not something all practitioners will either aspire to or be able to do successfully. Ability and ambition are linked to individuals.

Having said that, I do not feel it is the prerogative of only a select few to work with these ideas. People are faced with tough issues whether they want to be or not. There is no shortage of those issues in and around organizations. Even stepping out of just one stagnating mechanism (like assigning responsibility for multi-disciplinary collaboration to one person) saves some frustration. Even

furthering just one innovative mechanism instead (like organizing teamwork across departments by way of work systems) creates some possibilities. Also, it is not that the mechanisms only work their magic when they are used perfectly. So all who want to might as well try to apply them. At the same time, there is a lot to learn for those who regard innovation as their craft and calling.

At the end of the day, I do not expect we will be able to 'manage' the toughness out of issues. Tough issues will always be partly unknowable and unmanageable. Appreciating that allows us to handle such issues better and enjoy doing so. I find these thoughts comforting.