

## Katy Brown's Testimonial (1/30/2013)

I bled for the non-profit environmental organization I worked for - bled for three years. But, unfortunately for me, this particular organization never provided a transfusion. This Job was my life. This Job was my first after college. This Job made me blossom and wilt simultaneously – throwing me into an aggressive kind of dormancy that continually threw my work and life out of balance and undermined my sense of self. I was in the process of quitting This Job on not-so-neutral grounds when I signed The Agreement.

I encountered The Agreement at the 2012 ISEA conference. I needed a break from non-profit chaos, from my employees, and from Buffalo. I was burnt out and on the verge – verge of what, I don't know. I abandoned my employees for a week, flew to New Mexico and hitched my wagon to few friends presenting at ISEA. I wouldn't consider ISEA my “stomping grounds” but I liked the company and needed sunshine.

I've known Curry, though not intimately, for a little over a year. I've never met Dillon. She engaged with me during the performance via Skype, projected and beautiful on the back wall. Curry sat next to the computer, professional and courteous in a suit so sharp it could cut knives. I was interested, though totally ignorant about the performance when I decided to attend. It was scheduled, unfortunately, in the most remote venue, at the earliest time slot, and in heavy competition with some big names. Consequently, attendance was sparse, which compelled me to participate and put me at ease. If more people would have attended, I probably wouldn't have been so thoughtful in my admission of need (or even admitted need at all). It was the perfect environment and time for me to lay it bare.

What I needed was the non-obligatory, one-sided, totally selfish kind of support that I, in the past, have provided for so many people. I didn't want to talk about my work – I tortured my partner Jordan enough with that and didn't want to relive any negative transgressions. I didn't want to provide intimate details regarding my feelings – I would feel guilty if I did that and didn't provide reciprocity. I didn't want to talk about future plans – I didn't know what they were and that spelled freedom to me. What I wanted was someone to tell me to breathe, to keep my chin up, and to actually think about myself. Curry and Dillon provided that for me. The Agreement made them my “Sisters of Support”. Yes, it was a single email a week, but each provided a little kindling to feed my fluttering flame. I needed those unapologetic, get off your ass, stop treating yourself like crap kind of statements that they provided. One of my personal favorites was: You Are Your Personal Vessel. That single statement catalyzed a sense of self-awareness and compelled me to exercise in the morning and actually eat lunch during the last throes of my departure. I didn't do either because I didn't make time. I didn't make time because I treated myself like crap.

Curry and Dillon helped me to conquer that part of my life with the support they provided from our agreement. It is my pleasure to testify.