

Bill Wolff

Non-Profit Communications, Spring 2016

Hope, Purposes, Engagement, and Appreciation—Connecting it all Together in Small Groups

---

1. Toward the end of *One Thousand Wells* Jena Nardella has her faith in humanity shaken so much so that she considers leaving Blood:Water Mission altogether. But her mentor, Steve Garber, tells her to live “proximately,” which Jena initially sees as a “defeatist’s manifesto” (p. 235). In response, Steve says, “Choosing to live proximately does not mean you’ve lowered your standards. It means you’ve decided to be honest about the world. And still live by hope” (p. 235). After reflecting, Jena concludes, “True hope is always hard. It is not a passive wishing. It is an active exercise, a choice, an intention. Hope means giving up apathy and despair and instead embracing the uncertainty that terrifies you. It is the sacrifice of keeping your heart soft.... We don’t seek love so we can win. We seek love for love itself.”

There is a lot going on in Steve and Jena’s discussion, but I’d like you to think about their ideas about hope and intention and love. What do you take away from it? Do you agree that we must have limitations on our reach? What might be some of the benefits of a proximate approach, not just on protecting yourself from over-reaching, but in terms creating opportunities?

2. We’re going to try to make a leap and connect Jena’s story—her passion, her travels, her successes, her concerns, and her proximate realizations—to Aaker and Smith’s and Vaynerchuck’s discussions on social media engagement. Aaker and Smith write, “engag[ing] is about . . . compelling people to care deeply, maybe even fall in love. Engage is [very difficult] because love occurs so infrequently, and engaging others is more of an art than a science” (p. 75). Several pages later, Aaker and Smith list the nine Characteristics of Highly Engaging Campaigns. Vaynerchuck suggests that “Social media works best when you evoke an emotion in the people to whom you’re reaching out. It pulls. . . . If you’re going to launch a campaign, it has to be one that evokes an emotion—positive or negative—so that people feel compelled to share” (p. 133).

How can we take what we learned from Jena and think about it in terms of Characteristics of Highly Engaging Campaigns and Vaynerchuck’s ideas on sharing and evoking emotions? In other words, what can real-world successes teach us about engaging on social media spaces?

3. Yesterday saw the following on the #bsocials16 twitter stream:



**Kat Weber**  
@kweber12376  
In the reading assigned for tomorrow, a different outlook on social networking is discussed-“object centered sociality”  
[#bsocials16](#)



**Chandler Lutz**  
@chandlerlutz  
Zengestrom challenges the way we think of [#socialobjects](#) and [#networking](#), 'the most connections wins' mentality is out. [#bsocials16](#)



**Bill Wolff**  
@billwolff  
[@chandlerlutz](#) [@kweber12376](#) So, what's the [#socialobject](#) of [#bsocials16](#)?

Answer that question for our class. What is the social object(s) for our class, both in person and online? What is it that makes those things the social objects?

4. (if time) Thinking of engagement, take a look at [@JenaLeeNardella](#) and [@simonsinek](#). What do you notice about their engagement, sharing, and outreach? Which would you want to emulate?