

Kesson-Driven Thinking — Overview

Picking up discarded errors as questions

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Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|----------|
| 1 | On Waiting | 2 |
| 1.1 | Don't throw away the gap | 2 |
| 1.2 | Solving too quickly shrinks the question | 2 |
| 1.3 | Fear and love — two signals in your body | 3 |
| 1.4 | You can't wait alone | 3 |
| 1.5 | What is your missing piece? | 3 |

1 On Waiting

When something goes wrong, there is often a leftover feeling. A quiet discomfort that lingers after the event itself has passed.

What do you do with that feeling?

Most of the time, we look for a cause, fix it, and move on. Sometimes that is exactly the right thing to do. But have you ever had the nagging sense that by tidying things up so quickly, you missed something?

This is a record of what one explorer has found by watching that feeling closely, over a long time. I do not know if any of it is correct. But if something here catches on a corner of your mind, maybe stay with it for a little while.

1.1 Don’t throw away the gap

There is always a gap between what we expect and what actually happens. Our brains are remarkably good at smoothing over these gaps. Most of the time, we never even notice them.

But sometimes one slips through. A moment where you feel: *something is missing here*. I call that felt sense of lack “Kesson” — a Japanese word that literally means a chip, a missing piece.

Kesson () is not a malfunction. The experience of noticing a gap — of feeling that chip — can become the seed of something new. What looked like a failure becomes a starting point for a question.

Taking what went wrong and turning it into something worth thinking about. Picking up the mismatch that would normally be thrown away, and holding it as a question. That is the heart of this whole exploration.

1.2 Solving too quickly shrinks the question

When we notice a discomfort, we want to resolve it. That impulse is strong, and usually it serves us well.

But here is the thing: when we rush to solve, we often trim the problem down to a size we can handle. A question that was actually large and tangled gets reduced to a small, neat fix. The real thing escapes.

Maybe the difference between a reflexive response and a creative one is simply this: waiting.

Not waiting passively, doing nothing. Waiting in the sense of holding the unresolved thing without forcing it closed. Letting it stay open long enough to reveal its real shape.

You probably already know this feeling. There are times when giving an answer too quickly feels wrong — when you sense that the question deserves more room. That instinct is worth trusting.

1.3 Fear and love — two signals in your body

When discomfort arises, it seems like our bodies run two kinds of evaluation at the same time.

“Is this dangerous?” — a signal of fear. “Does this matter to someone I care about?” — a signal of love.

The same event can look like a threat when fear is loud, and like an invitation when love is loud. Both signals are always running, beneath the surface.

There is something important here: the body knows things that the mind alone does not. Understanding something only in your head is different from understanding it in a way your whole body recognizes. The quality is different.

One way to picture the creative process:

| Stage | Name | What happens |
|-------|----------|--|
| 1 | Field | You are in an environment where something feels off |
| 2 | Wave | An inner stirring begins |
| 3 | Relation | You encounter something unfamiliar — and stay |
| 4 | Vortex | A new pattern emerges |
| 5 | Bundle | It takes shape |

Stage 3 — staying at the boundary with something unfamiliar — is the hardest. And maybe the most important.

1.4 You can't wait alone

Waiting with an unresolved feeling is genuinely difficult. It is not something you can simply will yourself to do.

What seems to make it possible is having someone in your heart. Not necessarily someone physically present. It could be a person who has passed away. A teacher from years ago. A parent's voice remembered from childhood. The relationship lives on inside you, and it holds you steady.

I am calling this Withhold () — the ability to hold something without rushing to resolve it. And what I have come to believe is that this ability does not come from willpower. It comes from relationships. Specifically, from the quiet presence of someone you trust, carried inside.

A stable relationship cultivates the capacity to wait. But you cannot wait alone. You need someone — even if that someone lives only in your memory.

1.5 What is your missing piece?

Everything I have written here is observation from a single explorer. There is no guarantee that any of it is right.

There is still far more I do not understand than what I do. Are fear and love really the two fundamental signals? How can groups and organizations support this kind of waiting? These are open questions, still being explored.

If there is one thing worth taking away, it might be this: the next time you feel that quiet discomfort — that sense that something is off — try not to sweep it aside immediately. Hold it for a moment. Just a little longer than usual.

What is hiding inside that feeling?

This is one explorer's current position. A bundle of hypotheses, and a reading.