



**Close your eyes and think of the first place that comes to your mind where you have felt completely at home, safe, calm, nourished, and supported.**

Just by being in this place, you feel stronger and like you can accomplish, get through, and over anything in the world. That place is your querencia.

**I was introduced to this word and concept this week during my virtual choir practice.** For those of you who may not know it, I have been a Soprano in choirs on and off since college. My current choir is **Voices From The Heart**, the name truly does this amazing group justice. In our virtual gatherings, we sing together, then connect through some talking points and writing exercises. This week's writing exercise was all about querencia.

**Querencia is a Spanish word that comes from querer or to want or desire.**

Here's how Ernest Hemingway describes it in his 1932 book *Death In The Afternoon*:

“A querencia is a place the bull naturally wants to go to in the ring, a preferred locality... It is a place which develops in the course of the fight where the bull makes his home. It does not usually show at once, but develops in his brain as the fight goes on. In this place he feels that he has his back against the wall and in his querencia he is inestimably more dangerous and almost impossible to kill.”

**To give you an idea of how this concept may apply to you, sharing my querencias here:**

- **the stillness within me**, the one I practice connecting with every day in meditation and self-healing.
- **my grandmother's house**, sleeping under the heavy-woolen comforter she set over us children, feeling the warmth of the wooden oven (pechka), and inhaling the delicious aromas of her food.
- **being in saltwater**, swimming, sitting by, being near the sea, taking a warm salt bath in my home, or at my favorite outdoor warm [spa in Canada](#).
- **connecting with the people I love**, hugging, talking, laughing together, sharing our inner and outer lives.
- **feeling the life and the beauty of Earth**, in the special places that call out to me, where the Earth or previous generations have left gifts for us to enjoy, lying down on the grass, walking barefoot on sand, appreciating centuries of prayers in Hagia Sophia, touching the Earth at America's Stone Henge.
- **feeling the life that is here and now**, sitting on my favorite spot on our couch with my daughter and cat climbing over me, sitting in my meditation nook with my crystals, sleeping under the safety and warmth of my comforter.

**It feels like we are all going through an inner and outer fight these days.**

Sometimes we are not even sure what we are fighting and why. This certainly feels like the perfect time to remember and re-member the feeling of being at home.

**I invite you to take a moment to close your eyes and imagine yourself in**

**your querencia.** Better yet, take yourself to your favorite sanctuary spot right within your home while you do this. Your querencia can be just one place or it can be all the places where you have ever felt at home. If you find yourself listing more than one place, feel into what all these places have in common. How do they make you feel? Are they indoors or outdoors? Is there any other quality, memory, or sensation that connects them? Feel deeply into how you have felt in your querencias and bring them right here into your heart space.

**Our querencias, whether they are inside us or outside, are sanctuaries.**

Just like the bull in a fighting arena, they give us a chance to catch our breath, regroup ourselves and take on life again with greater resolve.

**Your querencia is a place you cultivate with your intention and attention.**

You can make any place sacred with your loving intention and attention. If you look closely within, you'll find that all the places you've ever felt at home have been living within you all along and waiting for you to stop by and visit them to give you more strength.

With love, light, and deep gratitude,

Damla