



Before This Series Begins

A few days ago, Christine and I were sitting in the office talking through a 9-part series of posts I'll begin releasing tomorrow. They had taken many hours of work and stretched weeks longer than I expected. Throughout, it felt like I was reaching for words to express a reality I've been encountering every day for many years in construction.

At one point, she paused and said something that caught me off guard.

"I know you even better outside of construction than I do inside of it. And what I find surprising is that you're such a hopeful person. But when it comes to business, you're a complete realist. That hopeful side doesn't come through as much."

My answer came quickly.

"The hope I live with every day finds its root in challenging or even painful experiences. As I learn to sit with them, to observe them without judgment, and to stay with them even when I'd rather move on, I find myself grounded in reality. And as I explore those realities with my people (apprehending and metabolizing them over time) hope grows."

I have an almost allergic reaction to false optimism. But the kind of hope that emerges slowly, from staying with something long enough, is different. Many of the experiences that shaped this way of seeing weren't clear in the moment. They were difficult, and at points discouraging. I couldn't move past them quickly. I had to turn them over, try to understand what was actually happening underneath, and give them space.

This series came out of that.