

THE JOURNEY TO SELF AWARENESS

The process of realizing who we authentically are usually entails much individual effort and many challenges. Living from the truth of who we are is at once the most natural, and the most daunting task. The journey to self awareness can be divided into four phases. In the initial phase, we are seeking something without being aware of the seeking. We will likely look in areas that culture points us to for satisfaction – love and sex, money and security, fame and recognition. We believe the mental fantasy that we have created, imagining the day when we finally arrive at this “end point” where we have “made it” – and all our suffering, fear, and unhappiness is taken away by the attainment of this external circumstance.

Then, one of two things happens – either we succeed in attaining these circumstances, and suffer the disillusionment that they do not, and cannot, satisfy the seeking. Or – we fail to attain them and suffer feelings of failure and inadequacy.



The opportunity is then present to enter the second phase, in which we become aware that we are seeking something. We realize we are experiencing something as missing, that we are looking for a sense of wholeness and completion. We recognize there is a deeper experience available to us, but don't know how to access it. This awareness can catalyze us to begin to turn the search inward.

Everything but the real goal will slip through your hand like dust until you realize you are searching for the courage inside of you to discern the difference between what is illusion in your life and what is truth. You are searching for the power to transcend a lower state of consciousness in which you must deny your higher intuitive instincts that tell you how you really feel, what you really know to be truth, and what you really feel called to do in this life.

– Carolyn Myss, Medical Intuitive

At this point important questions arise. Is my life authentically my own? Are the actions I take, responses I have, thoughts I believe, and feelings I experience really generated from my own Essential Self? Or am I programmed, conditioned, acting out of a trance-like state that keeps me caught up in a repetitive, self sabotaging story? (At the moment I am writing this, I am given a cup of tea. The message imprinted on the tea bag is “the beauty of life is to experience yourself” Isn't Life interesting?).

If we can stay with this investigation, we usher in the third phase of self awareness. We now recognize that we must undertake the disempowering of the false ego, the imagined story of limitation that was implanted in us long ago. We realize it is this false story that we have identified with as “me” that is keeping us from the experience of wholeness that we seek. It becomes clear that there is a battle inside us – the old, familiar, habitual ways of thinking, feeling and acting that support the trance, and the new, unexplored territory of our own inner support, freedom, peace, and love. We see we are being controlled by something and we are not free to make a different choice. We actively enjoy the battle and face what we have been avoiding encountering in ourselves.



Now, we are entering the final stage. We begin to understand the absolute imperative to find our way to the place where choice exists. And as we face what stops us, and break their energetic hold, we begin to experience the spaciousness and power that come when we are free to choose – that we know what we will stand for, what we truly believe in, and how we will live our lives. And we find our way to trust this knowing. Carolyn describes it thusly –

The inner power to make choices, whether silently to yourself or in any conversation with another, that are congruent with the person you really are instead of speaking through a screen of denial and self-betrayal.



In this final stage (which is never complete, since Consciousness is always expanding past limitation) we begin to live our lives with integrity – true to who we are. The focus shifts away from trying to

find ourselves in external circumstance and instead toward finding the courage to live true to who we are. This may cause us to leave situations that do not serve us, to speak up where we have been silent, to risk “rocking the boat” in service of being who we are, to stand for and be an example of what we believe in. Life continues to present challenges and opportunities for growth, but now we have a support system in place to enable us to meet them in a more resourceful, more effective way than we have before. We discover the delicious freedom of not needing life to be any particular way for us to shine. We bring our best to all our circumstances and don't take the ups and downs of life personally.

Then things settle down inside, we begin to feel lighter, our lives start to work better since we are no longer getting in our own way. We develop the courage to play bigger, we understand that living true to ourselves is itself the goal, we find the place inside of us that can contain joy and sorrow, desired or unwanted circumstances, with equanimity and balance. And slowly, so subtly that we may not realize it at first, seeking ends, what was sought has been found, and we sink deeper into the peace and freedom that are our natural state.

