

## PART 2

### **The Mistake of Identity: You are not just a body**

The problem with identity is that our initial identification with the body is a mistake. You're not just a body.

As Dr. Deepak Chopra points out, anytime we talk about "the body," it's always a question of what body we're talking about.

- Each day millions of cells are dying and millions of cells are being born. Our bodies are never the same from one moment to another.
- Most of our cells have lives of less than six months. For example, we replace every cell in our liver every six weeks, we replace our stomach lining every four days, etc.

Identifying with the body is a mistake from a scientific point of view, because the cells in our bodies are always changing—being born and dying, while you read these words. Until recently we didn't have this understanding, just as once we didn't know the earth was round. Most physicians still treat the body as though it were a machine, and are looking for how the machine has broken down, and what needs to be done to fix it.

- Your heart is not just a pump—it has feelings. It responds to chemical messengers (neuro-peptides) that make it physically experience emotional pain and pleasure in a palpable way.
- Gut feelings are real and intelligent; they “think” just like brain cells do.

You’re not just a body.

And yet most of us spend a good part of our lives proving we are some body (identity) called Rita, the doctor, or John, the lawyer.

Question: If you’re not a body, then what makes all of those incredibly complex (physical) things happen?

Answer: **The Source of who you really are, which is expressing itself through your body, mind, and emotions.**

And as strange as it may sound, don’t you really have a sense about this already? And I don’t mean by reading it, or by thinking about it.

Haven’t you at least some time in your life looked at yourself in the mirror and thought: “This isn’t me—no way”? Behind that thought was a sense of who you really are—the real you (the Source) that sees your body in the mirror with true Inner Sight.

Or perhaps you've had the thought, "This can't be happening to me," and you clearly felt like it wasn't happening to who you really are.

- Even if you haven't had those thoughts, haven't you at least had the thought "I am much more than my body"?
- Haven't you ever experienced an awareness that who you are is beyond, or behind, or deeper, than the circumstances that are occurring to your body?

Haven't you ever known intuitively that the real you is someone who is aware that your body is experiencing certain pleasant sensations and certain unpleasant sensations? Yes? No?

### **In the groove, in the zone**

Almost everybody has had the experience of being in a groove, where everything just happens perfectly: everything goes just right, and you don't seem to be exercising any control over it. There is no thought at all; you're in the zone, and your body and mind just do their job—at work, in sports, or just driving your car— when you lose all sense of time and place, and your body just functions without any conscious thought.

Artists and athletes are always talking about “getting out of their own way, and just letting it happen.” By that, they mean giving up mental control, and just letting the talent express itself through their bodies—in the zone—beyond the mind.

Who is doing all of that? The answer is: the real you, the Source. There are a lot of names for this Source, but it's not necessary to get the mind involved in an intellectual or philosophical discussion about this. Just so you recognise there is a Source, and know that it is the real you. What gets in the way of the zone is the mind, which worries, is under stress, compares itself to others, tries to “get out of a slump,” etc.

### **The Source contains mind, body, emotions**

Mind, body and emotions are all servants to the Source. But the mind begins to think it is a separate identity by having the thought: “I am a my body—separate from the “other—and have to take care of myself, and that is frightening.” It would be like a wave thinking it is separate from the ocean, while in reality, it will always be a part of the ocean.

Your mind makes the mistake of thinking you are a limited body, mind, and emotions, and we overlook the (unlimited) Source that animates the body, mind, and emotions.

It is only when you become aware of the illusion of (separate) identity that you can realize that Inner Strength, Inner Knowing, and Inner Worthiness are the Source— never separate from—(your) body, mind, and emotions.

Replacing the identity-needs of control, security, and recognition with Inner Strength, Inner Knowing, and Inner Worthiness is just realizing that they are your true nature. You don't have to go anywhere to find them. Identity is just waves: thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations that come and go, and are contained within that Ocean of Source.

Let the waves of body, mind, emotions, and circumstances of your life rise and subside, and be awake and steady in knowing your true Self as the Source of body, mind, and emotions. Then—and only then—will your identity-talents flow effortlessly as a natural expression of who you truly are.

At work, awareness of The Identity Factor is critical to allow your talents to serve the business instead of serving identity. Once removed as a factor, Source will guide you to produce the best products of the talents of your physical, mental, and emotional bodies.

## **Life as a movie**

Identification with body, mind, and emotions is tantamount to believing that a movie is real life.

It's true, when we go to the movies, sometimes we get caught up in the movie, and identify with the characters on screen. But when the movie is over, we know it was just a movie, even though the images may stay with us as reality for quite a while—or show up in our dreams.

At any time during the movie, we know we can turn toward the projector and realize that everything on the screen is just a result of the light projected from the back of the auditorium. In fact, when we go to the movies, we do realise what is real, and what is illusion. But we (deliberately) forget that reality so that we can identify with the story on the screen.

We identify with the movies of our own lives, because our senses are so convincing in telling us our movie is reality. Only a few of us ever turn toward the light (Source) of who we really are, and realize “This movie is not real; it is a dream. I must wake up from this dream and see I'm just watching a movie that is projected by my mind (identity).

Until we see that movie-stories of moving AGAINST, AWAY from, and TOWARD “others” will not give us ultimate fulfillment, we will continue to project movies of discontent that contain only occasional interludes of fulfillment.

Our job is to fully realize these movie stories are just pale shadows of the true magnificence of who we really are. And yet, the movies of our lives are part of—and contained within—the Source of who we really are (Inner Strength, Inner Knowing, and Inner Worthiness).

You can spend a lot of time in therapy or in personal development seminars learning how to make a better movie of your life—a romantic comedy, a thriller with you as hero, or a frothy, escapist piece. You can even try valiantly to be the director of the movie. Ultimately, however, we all know we’re not in control of the script of what life deals us—we can’t stop earthquakes or predict the stock market any more than we can stop the earthquakes and market crashes of our lives.

In fact, any movie we think is real has the same ending: our bodies die in the last reel, which is terrifying and unacceptable to an identity that is trying desperately to be in control.

What if you could fully realize the real you will never change? What if you experienced everyone around you that you either like or dislike as having the same Source? What if this game called life can be played on a completely different playing field—one of Source, awake to our own true nature?

## **The Power of the senses leads us to the wrong conclusion about who we are**

Question: Even if we realize that who we truly are is the Source, why do we continue to mis-identify with the body (“I am my body, named X”)?

Answer: Our identification with the body is stronger, because our senses constantly bombard us with evidence that everyone has a separate body.

Since this evidence is undeniably true, we leap to the conclusion that who we are must be that which makes us distinct (our bodies).

The other (obvious) choice goes overlooked: the sameness of life at the deepest level—as any quantum physicist will tell you. We are not separate from “other” life—we share the exact same elements—we are animated by the same Source.



The mind might be able to wrap itself around this idea of sameness, except for the most disturbing and undeniable observation about the body: we know that all bodies will die one day—the ultimate fear.

## **Recognizing that Identity Power comes from the outside**

The root of the mind's terror about the death of the body is its identification with the body. Identity knows it will die one day, and it never has certainty about when that will happen. It spends a lifetime trying to figure out how to postpone that terrible eventuality.

Since our identity's job is to protect the body (“I will protect this body”), it goes about this formidable task by gathering as much external power as it can. It believes it can control its physical environment, protect itself against other physical bodies through power and money, gain enough knowledge to dispel fear and doubt, and to form alliances and connections that will help protect it.

Our identity (mind) knows that it doesn't have any real power of its own, so it looks to the external world.

I would say that this is the mind's greatest mistake (looking outside, rather than inside to the true Source of who we are), except that it isn't really a mistake for a mind that can't really grasp that true power comes from the

Source, not from external objects. Source is beyond thought, beyond mind, beyond identity.

## **Identity Attachment to objects of power**

Identity attaches itself to external objects of power like people or things (money, status, circumstances), and creates an image of power through stronger and stronger “I-AM” thoughts, often called beliefs about identity:

- I-AM powerful, because I am in charge of X.
- I-AM noble, because I give money to the poor.
- I-AM a hard-working provider, responsible for my family’s welfare.
- I-AM successful because of all my possessions and wealth.
- I-AM special because of my sensitive nature.
- I-AM superior because of my expertise in a difficult subject.
- I-AM a loving spouse, because I sacrifice my own desires for my spouse.
- I-AM indispensable because I save people’s lives.
- I-AM the life of the party.
- I-AM holy, because I go to church every day.
- I-AM a good father because my children all have prestigious jobs.
- I-AM invincible because my mind is razor-sharp, etc.

And yet, all of these thoughts can be eradicated by a change of circumstances—getting fired, having a heart attack, being left by a spouse, disease, children on drugs, etc.—anything that attacks the object of power that our identity is identified with.

Identity knows that thoughts, beliefs, and circumstances can come and go. It is constantly afraid of losing its power.

It is always either running “TOWARD” its attachments to pleasure and power, or “AWAY” or “AGAINST” its aversion to physical or psychological pain and suffering.

Our identities believe that circumstances are the driving force of life and are the cause of our internal states; identity perceives that both its attachments and aversions force it to react to external circumstances over which it has no control. That perception makes our identities either fearful, powerless, and/or angry.

It also links internal states (emotions) to outside circumstances: “I had so much anger, I had to leave the room,” or “My fear got in the way during my job interview.” These mental body cause/effect beliefs are major distortions of identity, and are themselves the real cause of most of our discomfort and/or suffering.

## **The importance of a strong identity**

While it is possible at any point in time to transcend identity, most of us don't develop enough awareness of ourselves as Source without first experiencing severe identity fear, and learning to deal with it.

Each of the three identity stories represents a part of a journey that a human being needs to take to have a relative sense of safety in a world it sees as dangerous and hostile. A healthy identity acquires enough power from learning the lessons from the three identity stories to feel adequate to the challenges of these circumstances of life.

- The lessons of all three of these identity stories must be learned to the degree that the identity can stabilize: all identities need to learn to get a certain amount of respect, recognition, connection, and love, need to learn to feel reasonably safe and secure in their identities, and need to learn to know they have some control.
- Sometimes the lessons are learned because the suffering gets so intense that the only way to deal with the pain is to develop an awareness that the Source is the true strength, and surrender to it. For example, this can

happen to “victims” of extraordinary tragedies, who sometimes rise like the phoenix from the ashes of the tragedy, and have the sudden, direct experience that the tragedy set them free from the fear of death that identification with the body always brings.

For other people, identity is strengthened gradually to the point where the next natural place of growth and learning is transcendence of the identity by realising more and more fully that who you really are is the Source.

### **Concentration of identity power in one story**

Generally, we feel more comfortable with one of these three stories: we concentrate our power in one story. We develop a strong talent from a very young age for using either the physical body story (control), the mental body story (avoiding danger), or the emotional body story (connection), in order to protect our bodies.

In addition to the identification with a primary story, we (partially) identify with one of the other two stories, while most of us are often quite asleep to (or feel incompetent in) the third story.

We have a million scripts that play out the archetypal stories of these three needs of control, security, and recognition:

- endless stories about achieving success and status, and/or romances about finding fulfilling love relationships (emotional body),
- stories about power, control, creation, and conquest (physical body),
- stories about overcoming fear and doubt and acting with intelligence, courage and resolve (mental body).

We develop strategies for filling these identity needs that we repeat over and over until we become expert at being the hero of our movies.

Eventually, however, we tire of these stories, because we finally recognise they are not fulfilling us in the deepest way.

## **Power symbols**

Additionally, in each of these stories, our identity is strengthened by developing power symbols. We assign value to—invest symbolic power in—an external object. As long as we possess these power symbols, our identity will be satisfied, and we will be relatively happy. But since we have assigned symbolic power to this external object, if we lose it, our identity will lose power (self-worth).

Some common power symbols are:

- money for identity stories of self-worth, or power, or freedom,
- a successful relationship for identity stories of family loyalty, or romance, or status, or security,
- leadership for identity stories of heroism, or acknowledgment, or pride,
- a special job for identity stories of competence, or responsibility, or stamina,
- difficult tasks that require brilliant intelligence,
- creativity in the arts or in writing for identity stories of fame, or uniqueness, or attention
- youth, physical strength, and/or beauty

In our movies, these symbols are perceived as real, and attachment to them leads us to identity heights (pleasure) and identity depths (pain), when they are taken from us.

People sometimes kill themselves because they don't get the promotion they had invested all their power in—even though a promotion has no true intrinsic value.

Attaining power symbols may deepen the illusion of the identity story

The power symbols we create and attain assist us in gaining identity strength. Those same power symbols usually become the primary obstacles to transcending identity at a later stage of development. We can become

so attached to the power symbols that it can become extremely difficult to surrender the external power symbols for the true internal power of a transcended identity.

In a typical identity-example, you may have developed a great talent for connection, and gained identity strength by achieving great success in sales in your early life. Later in life you might begin to discover that your achievements (objects, money, and recognition) are not really giving you the fulfillment you initially found so rewarding. Your identity might then despair, because the only thing you really thought was important (the power symbol of a success) turned out to be hollow.

You invested all your power in that symbol—your pursuit of fulfillment was completely dependent on (financial) success, but now you realise that you haven't put any energy into your relationships, and you've lost your family.

The more sublime the symbol, the more difficult it is to disconnect from it. For example, if your identity's power symbol is helping people, and you help many people, your identity will develop the power of pride, and everyone will tell you what a good person you are. You will feel wonderful, and it will be very difficult for you to



see that you did all the helping out of the (identity) need for acknowledgment.

We need to discover what external symbols we have given power to in our lives, in order to disconnect the power from the symbol. No matter what the symbol is, its power is limited and illusory, and comes from the identity story.

Remember, there is no problem with power symbols per se; it is only identity-attachment to the symbols that creates the problem.

## **When the Warrior-identity wakes up from Story #1**

In the archetypal Warrior-identity story, “I am my body,” is the contracted form of “I AM the Source of Inner Strength that animates the body/mind. When a person identified with the physical/instinctual body wakes up from that limited identification, and identifies with the Source that animates the body:

- the power of true Inner Strength is realized,
- the instinctual body becomes a pure servant to Right Action,

- there is no more struggle, because there is no more doubt about the outcome: a continuous groove of spontaneous action,
- the concept of personal doership, which carries the burden of responsibility for failure—and the glory of success—is surrendered to the realization of true Inner Strength,
- the individual personality remains, without the attachments and aversions of identity—a heroic and powerful Servant to the Universe for whom “Honor each other” and “Win-win” are the true commands

## **When the Seeker-identity wakes up from Story #2**

In the archetypal Seeker-identity story, “I am my mind” is the contraction of the true knowledge that “I AM the Source of Inner Knowing that animates the body/mind.” When the Seeker-identity wakes up from that limited identification, and realises itself as true Inner Knowing,

- the mind quiets, and becomes peaceful
- intuitive wisdom flows directly into consciousness from the Source of Inner Knowing

- faith in true Inner Knowing replaces belief in the abilities of the rational, cause/effect-oriented mind,
- the once-questioning, knowledge-worshipping, mind now serves by “honoring the true Self” with full realisation that it is part of the Source.

### **When the Achiever-identity wakes up from Story #3**

In the archetypal Achiever-identity story, “I am my emotional experiences,” external approval for the emotional experience of worthiness is needed. That neediness is the contraction of knowing ourselves as the true Source of Worthiness. When a person wakes up from the limited Achiever-identity,

- Worthiness is continuously realised as your true Source, no matter what circumstances in life appear,
- “All is One” is expressed by knowing you are connected to everything and everyone—a universal family of Inner Connection,
- Kindness, Compassion, Joy, and Love flow effortlessly as natural expressions of the Source of True Worthiness.

