

Getting to Know Your True Self

Have you made contact with your true-self yet? Do you know that core aspect of yourself that is always so calm, loving, kind and compassionate?

Every single human being has a true-self who is always calm, caring and compassionate. Some meditation teachers talk about finding our 'observer self' or 'inner witness' but our true-self is not just a neutral witness to all our thoughts, moods and life experiences. Our true-self is so much more than a passive observer of life, because our true-self really cares.

When we calm our over-active, highly reactive thinking mind down for a while we can get in touch with a core part of ourselves that is unbelievably wise and kind! Then, as we get to know this core-self, we find that although we still have some highly neurotic and reactive aspects to our personality-self, we do not get quite so lost in our neuroses. Or at least, when we do get lost in them, we can more quickly come back to a much calmer, stronger, wiser part of ourselves that can hold all our neurotic parts in a warm embrace of unconditional loving kindness or compassion.

I have now been on my own healing/awakening journey for over 30 years and so I can finally differentiate between my core-self and all those neurotic, self-centred, childish aspects of my personality-self. For example, I quite often merge into the part of myself that loves to be right about any worldly conflict. This aspect of 'me' just luxuriates in getting on her high horse about a particular political issue. But I no longer take that part of myself quite so seriously. I can now say to myself, 'Oh here I go again, thinking I am the only person in the world who has a rational response to this particular problem!' Who am I kidding??

How do I now know whether I am centred in my core-self or lost in a pre-programmed or hurt part of myself? I can usually feel the difference in my bodily sensations. If I am lost in an angry or frightened child-like part of my personality-self, I can feel tension or tightness in my jaw or my solar-plexus. On the other hand, if during a deep meditation I calm my over-active thinking mind and tune into my core-self, I feel a really soothing, pleasurable, warm energy flowing within me and notice a deeply relaxed tone to all of my muscles. I also have a

sense that my heart is open and soft rather than closed up to defend myself against some kind of emotional pain.

So now if I have any problem to solve in my life, or I simply do not know what to do in a particularly challenging or upsetting situation, I try to remember to sit and meditate – usually with some soothing, flowing music on in the background – until I feel that inner switch into my core-self. I then bathe my whole being in the incredibly powerful energy of pure self-compassion that pours out of my core-self until all that agitation I was feeling about a particular situation just melts away.

After I have done this, I very often do not even have to think about the right action to take in any complex or challenging situation or relationship. I am just prompted to do the ‘right’ thing with the greatest of ease.

Now in my experience, getting to know our true-self is not a quick fix to all the pain and suffering we experience in this world. It does usually take quite a bit of time and effort to make contact with our true-self and then learn how to access this part of ourselves at will. But it is so worth it, because if we do not keep connecting to that infinitely loving and compassionate core part of ourselves, we may spend our whole life drowning in a stormy sea of endless suffering inadvertently created by the hurt parts of our psyche.

So many wonderful individuals try so hard to get some control over the over-reactive parts to themselves, such as a part of their personality that is addicted to over-eating or drinking too much alcohol. However, they usually fail miserably to exert any meaningful control over the addictive part of themselves because this part is so strong and determined. Some alcoholics for example try so hard to control their drinking but fail over and over again until maybe they reach rock bottom and join Alcoholics Anonymous. They are then guided to admit that they are powerless to overcome their addiction without surrendering to and asking for help from a much higher power which some people might call God.

But what if we all have access to a wise higher power within our own psyche? We have just never been taught how to access it. In my experience, our true-self or core-self has all the power we need to heal, or at least calm, our over-reactive, wounded child-like parts that can easily get into an inner conflict with one another - like small children fighting in the playground.

If you find the idea of parts of your personality fighting amongst themselves really weird, I highly recommend a book by Richard Schwartz called *No Bad Parts* that explains all of this in great detail. As well as going into detail about our personality-self being made up of a whole inner family of squabbling children, Schwartz also dedicates a whole chapter in his enlightening book to describing our true-self as 'Curious, Calm, Confident, Compassionate, Creative, Courageous and Connected.' Amazingly, I discovered these very same qualities in my own core-self long before I read *No Bad Parts*.

This true-self is so awesome - and please remember that we *all* have one. It is just extremely well covered up in highly disturbed or aggressive individuals. This self has a really deep desire to create harmony within us and between us and others. The more we connect to this true-self, the more our identity begins to shift away from defining ourselves as broken, inadequate or maybe even as superior to others. Then, the more we actually live day to day and moment to moment from this true-self, the more we realise that Life Itself is truly kind, beautiful and joyful beyond measure.

Additionally, when we do find ourselves lost in a hurt, neurotic or arrogant part of ourselves once again, we realise there is absolutely no need to panic. We finally know exactly what we need to do to calm down the over-reactive part of ourselves so that we can then reconnect to our infinitely loving and compassionate self that is limitless in its power to heal us and to make us whole once again.

Everyone in this world is on their own unique life journey. However sooner or later, we will all converge on the very same awakening path in which we connect to our true-self whose only goal is to love and to serve all sentient beings. Wow!

So whatever challenges you may face in the month ahead, and however much a neurotic child-like part of yourself comes out to play from time to time this month, please just remember this:

At any time this month, you can simply press the pause button on your hyperactive life to sit still for a while, go within, and touch base with your true-self. The more you do this, the more you will come to know that your own true-self is *always* loving, peaceful, kind and filled with a deep joy that far surpasses all passing worldly pleasure or pain. Then your primary goal in life will become

to share this deep, unconditional peace, love and joy with everyone you meet or even think about. Doesn't that sound wonderful to you? It certainly does to me!

Peggy Foster
August 2023