

Lesson 101: Exploring the Underlying Layers of Personal Reality

There is much more to the fabric of physical life than what resides on the surface. However, it is up to each individual to explore the underlying layers of their own personal reality, which then has an impact on the collective reality. As change must begin from within, it is every person's responsibility to activate such changes. Unfortunately, not everyone feels the impulse to seek a measure of internal change, let alone to activate change that ultimately would be to their benefit. Many undetected psychic barriers block changes from within that in turn blocks desirable changes on the external plane of personal reality, all of which must be explored if one is to experience stability in every aspect of their lives. The intent of this discussion is not only to explore the underlying layers of personal reality, but also to encourage an exploration of the inner self.

Reality has both an inner and an outer layer of experience. Unfortunately, it is generally the outer layer that most people are inclined to set the focus of their intention on. Generally speaking, it is but a brave few who set the focus of their intention on developing the internal aspects of their reality, as opposed to only focusing on developing the external aspects of their reality. For most people, embarking on a journey of inner self-discovery is often the result of external affairs having sufficiently gone bad enough to warrant the worthiness of an internal investigation in an effort to seek out the root cause of their external suffering; otherwise, they would not seek to know their inner most selves. Seldom do people embark on a journey of inner self-discovery just for the heck of it unless they are on a personal quest of discovery for the sake of their spiritual growth.

The reasons why people are not anxious to set sail in these uncharted waters are that the process of internal self-discovery does not come without its mental, emotional and sometimes even its physical price tag. It takes no less determination and courage to see the journey through than it does to see a college education through to its completion. Just as it takes no less mental or physical effort to embark on an endeavor that requires the utmost dedication and commitment to reach the finish line – to actually achieve the goal that was intended to be accomplished – to realize the dream and for the fruit of the labor to indeed manifest externally. Unfortunately, many people operate in a mode of instant gratification, that is, gratification without effort or with the least amount of effort and, therefore, are generally unwilling to invest their own time and energy to see a goal through to its completion. On the opposite side of the coin are those people who are inclined to pursue their external interests, and are willing to invest some or a great deal of time and effort to achieve their goals. Even in today's fast pace society, it still takes effort to reach the throne of personal success, whether in a relationship or any other endeavor.

But regardless of which side of the coin a person operates from, it is seldom that anyone thinks to look below the surface when the external things they pursue in life do not manifest in accordance with their desires, or their pursuits manifest in ways they sometimes regret having ever pursued to begin with. This is especially true when it comes to the pursuit of relationships. There are tangible reasons why limited effort or the investment of limited time does not always produce the desired effects and why the return on a limited investment is limited at best. These reasons are not found on the surface of personal reality, they are discoveries made below the surface in the underlying layers of the exterior reality. It is always important to remember that things are not always, what they appear to be, but are very different underneath the surface of personal reality. What lies on the surface is often an illusion, a perceived reality that when examined beneath visible reality is an entirely different reality that is actually real.

When a person embarks on a journey of self-discovery, there is no possible way of predicting what the outcome will be in terms of knowing ahead of time what truths will be revealed. The unfolding of such personal truths is a process of discovery. Each discovery made will unfold and reveal something more profound about the initial discovery and as this occurs, reality on the surface begins to look and feel quite different. The experience itself equates to peeling back the many layers of a large onion until finally the core of the onion is revealed. The peeling away affect is no different when one examines his most inner sanctum, which is his internal self and is where the secrets of his entire physical life experience, all its causes and effects are there to be found, as well as the whole of his entire existence.

These discoveries appear as secrets because they are held in the confines of the unconscious region of the mind, which on the surface is not the least bit aware of the information that is contained within it. However, the psyche, as a whole, is very aware of the contents it holds within itself and will make every attempt to convey its secrets either as blatant awareness's, those Ah Ha moments, or it will deliver the message by way of symbols, metaphors and archetypes and will do so in the wake states or in dreams. The dragon portrayed in the Dragon of Personal Drama book and on this website was indeed an archetypal image held in the mind of the author. The extent of mental or emotional reactionary responses to the appearance of an archetypal mental image varies within the context of every personal experience, depending on a person's mental and emotional state of mind. The more stressed the state of mind is, the more the image will portray itself in various symbolic forms and will even show up as metaphors – all in an attempt to communicate the basis of a personal problem that appears to reside on the external plane of personal reality, but in fact, lies beneath the surface. This also includes aspects of financial related problems. Seldom does a person consider the state of their inner self as the source of their financial problems, especially when it appears that the basis of the problem resides on the surface of reality, and appears clearly obvious that it does so. Looks can be quite deceiving!

Now the quality or quantitative outcome of one's own inner self-discovery is unique just as every individual and their experiences are also unique, even though individuals are a part of the collective whole of humanity. Some people become aware of certain aspects about their inner selves much easier than others do. There are contributing factors that determine the course one will take in their journey of inner self-discovery, such as their own personal constitution, the nature of their external experiences, the severity of their experiences, how well they assimilate new or contradictory information, as well as the scope of their knowledge, wisdom and insight and the extent of their spiritual growth. Obviously, the more difficult the external experiences of physical life are, the harder it is to come to terms with them, as this often involves coming to terms with many unforeseen and unrealized truths about themselves that are revealed as the layers of their personal reality are slowly peeled back. In the case of the latter, it often results in many truths revealed, each of which contains its own energy and its own implications and ramifications that must be internally processed and externally applied.

The problem with self-discovery is the certainty of some truths revealed that contradicts well-established beliefs, which all by itself throws up a psychic barrier. Some people who dare to embark on a journey of self-discovery tend to throw in the towel right out of the starting gate and never again pursue getting to the root cause of their particular dilemma, and will avoid doing so. Often there is the realization that a condition, circumstance or event thought to be the dilemma itself, turns out not to be true, anymore than it was the fault of a person(s), place or thing, but that it was something entirely different that contributed to the situation. In truth, an internal influence either manifested the undesirable dilemma to begin with or made an external influence that much worse. Thus, peeling back these layers is not always a walk in the park because no one really likes to admit that, for example, their own thought patterns or beliefs were really the cause of their undesirable experience rather than the thing they believed all along was the actual cause.

Another cause for concern is that attempting to discover why or how such experiences came to be is the tendency to not only want to blame others, but to blame oneself, which is not anymore beneficial or productive than blaming someone or something. Blame serves no valid purpose. If anything, blame is a mental and emotional reaction that does not stimulate personal development anymore than it stimulates spiritual growth. Blame is a psychic barrier. Thus, taking on the needless burden of self-imposed guilt is a deterrent to achieving the goal of mental equilibrium and emotional stability. Assimilating, processing and integrating revealed knowledge about ones' own personal reality is the antidote to resolving external problems, not taking on a mental or emotional attitude of false guilt.

The key to resolving external issues, which of course, is not by way of external inquiry, but is by way of internal inquiry, is in a person's ability to assimilate new information,

which as stated above, often contradicts well-established thought patterns and beliefs. Before one can hope to get past the starting gate, related and sometimes even unrelated beliefs must be closely examined. Beliefs, especially those that are embedded in the sub-conscious mind, are left unexamined simply because they are out of sight; therefore, they are, likewise, out of mind. People seldom go around chanting their core beliefs throughout the course of their day; however, they sure do act on them, consciously and unconsciously. Thus, these beliefs typically formed in childhood and later cemented in adulthood, lay undisturbed, as if they were etched in cement and need no further analysis. However, the cause of many undesirable external experiences can easily be traced back to a person's beliefs, which makes up a vital part of their overall constitution. The undesirable affects from a well-established belief does not stop at the door of experience; beliefs also have a direct impact on one's attitude.

Attitudes are the result of many attributes that includes all sorts of external influences, as one is daily exposed to the environment, such as family, social, cultural, religious, academic, employment and even political influences. In addition, there are the influences of the inner self, which too seeks expression on the external plane of reality and can often erupt in the most unpleasant and surprising ways. Thus, one's own mental attitude is no less an area to be scrutinized as is the examination of one's own beliefs. Just as everything else in the experience of human life becomes outdated, so do beliefs and they too must undergo a regular course of examination if they are to be truly effective, otherwise, they are nothing more than a noose around your neck or a ball and chain around your ankle. An ounce of meager effort is not sufficient to loosen yourself from carrying around the weight of these oppressive and unnecessary burdens. So for this reason alone, it just makes sense to occasionally clean out your internal house as you go through the stages of your life by exploring the underlying layers of your personal reality.

The beliefs you hold as a child and the attitudes they formed, when examined, and perhaps even much to your surprise, is that they are outdated and no longer apply either to the current conditions of your life or the current mindset of the times. As technology and other advances are made in various fields of scientific and even religious and spiritual inquiry, the outdated and otherwise old hand-me-down beliefs passed down from prior generations, like it or not no longer apply in the face of empirical evidence. With this awareness in mind, what good does it do to keep hanging onto beliefs and debilitating attitudes that in of themselves are obstacles to your own personal development, as well as your spiritual growth, which is the ultimate goal in life? Not only are they wreaking a fair amount of havoc in your life or are holding you back in some manner of speaking, these beliefs and attitudes, as well as the debilitating effects of them, is useless information stored in the sub-conscious. Your psyche often has to resort to drastic measures to rid itself of this outdated and purposeless data and does so in many ways, some pleasant, some not so pleasant.

However, as life on the physical plane is all about the experience of your experiences as a whole, nothing is ever wasted. Everything serves its own purpose one way or the other. Every experience you have thought to be good or bad, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable contains within it elements of truth, revealed if you are willing to peel back the layers. It is when these layers are not pulled back, are not examined that the path of life continues to play out, one hardship after another. Now that is okay, if this is the kind of lifestyle you desire to experience. However, it is not okay to blame others for the choices you consciously make. No one can determine for you the path of your experiences other than yourself. However, the paths you choose on the physical plane are just that, they are your choice, thus the consequences encountered are nobody's fault, not even your own, but only in the sense that you cannot hold yourself responsible for information you do not have at any given sect of time. But when such information comes into your awareness, you are very much responsible to act on it in constructive, useful, positive and purposeful manner, because if not, well, therein lies the root of your karmic problems that must be resolved in this lifetime or in a future lifetime, as nothing in life is given for free.

As fear is the ultimate cognitive and emotional crippler and is supported by any number of crippling beliefs, life itself is not about living or dying in fear, it is about living life abundantly and that too is self-defined with respect to how a person relates to what abundance means to them. Naturally, the way one person perceives abundance is not how another person perceives abundance, just as how one understands the true nature of abundance is not how another person understands the same principle. And as the case may be, the principle of abundance comes under a great deal of religious and lay scrutiny with all sorts of criticisms when its principle is not properly understood. The point for the sake of this discussion is that everyone is living their lives at an entirely different place and is doing so at an entirely different pace with respect to how abundant they are living their lives within the range of their knowledge, wisdom and insight. Their experiences will always be unique and will correspond to the level of their own understanding that works to stimulate their personal development or does not, works to enhance their spiritual growth or does not.

Some people get it sooner than others and some people just do not get it, at least not in this lifetime. Sometimes those who do not get it, who do not come to terms with their inner selves, who do not see the forest for the trees or even know they are standing in the forest and that the objects they keep bumping into are the trees, might get it by way of one or more dark night of the soul. This is a very marked and poignant experience because it is in the darkness of one's soul where issues that plague them on the external are wrought and worked out from within and is when one has no choice but to take responsibility for that which he is accountable for while alive in this reality. It is during these darkened moments, when the matters of life come into the light of truth and one is said to have had a spiritual awakening. But this is not the only means of an awakening.

Examining the nature of your beliefs typically leads to an excursion into the unknown, your inner self, which is where a host of outdated beliefs resides in quiet seclusion, although the effects on the external plane of your reality are very much felt and manifested in your experiences. Not only are some of these inner beliefs outdated, some of them are not the least bit useful or productive, are best discarded or at the very least altered to serve in a more purposeful way. Thus, the examination of core beliefs can lead to an awakening, where new awareness's are pivotal moments of subtle or dramatic change that spurs personal development, furthers individuation and expands your spiritual horizons. As beliefs and attitudes are but two attributes that reside in the underlying layers of personal reality, there are many more that too must also be closely examined.

Your thinking can get you into just as much hot water as can your outdated or limiting beliefs. The way you think and the reasons why you think as you do are a part of your overall constitution. Your thinking is a conglomeration of your own past experiences, as well as environmental conditioning no different from your beliefs. Thus, if you really want to change your present circumstances and really want to positively affect your future, you must take into consideration not just the nature of your thinking but also the nature of your very thoughts. The kind of things you are most inclined to think about and the predominance of those thoughts in your day-to-day affairs will determine the course of your day. Thus, if you think in terms of fear, resentment, anger or jealousy, your day will follow right along these same lines. The level of vibrational energy you are emitting into the fabric of the collective energy will produce a like result that is in keeping with the fundamental principles governed by unseen spiritual laws of cause and effect, attraction and manifestation. But even more so is the fact that the nature of your thoughts will generate very specific experiences that will be either desirable or undesirable and which you may very likely be prone to want to blame something other than the nature of your own thoughts.

Exploring the nature of your thoughts is not akin to the nature of positive thinking in the framework most positive-thinking gurus present it, whose vested interest is how much of your money they can stuff into their bank accounts and how fast (eg, The Attraction Factor by Joe Vitale). The principle of positive thinking, like many other spiritual principles, is often taken out of context for the sake of profit versus exemplifying internal change on a spiritual level. The truth is that forcing yourself to think positively, when in fact, you do not feel the least positive is an exercise in futility and in of itself can contribute to a host of negative feelings such as frustration, anxiety and even anger vented at yourself or someone else. This serves no fruitful purpose. It is not your inability to think positively that is the problem; it is what lies under the surface that is blocking you from thinking positively, which must be examined first. Above all possibilities, fear is the number one culprit. Once you come to terms with the fact that you are indeed fearful of someone or something or some future event, whatever the case

may be, you can begin to sort out what steps you can take to alleviate the stress that is causing your fear. The same process applies to whatever emotion lies beneath the surface that is acting as a hindrance to thinking positively. When underlying influences are removed, the door is open wide to positive thinking that is not forced, but is a natural and free flowing occurrence.

Although there are many other layers of personal reality left to explore, each of these layers needs sufficient time for its contents to be digested. Going against the grain of established beliefs and equally well-established thought patterns is no easy feat. It equates to going into high school only to discover that everything you learned in elementary school was wrong, distorted or conditioned in very inaccurate ways and you have to start the learning process all over again. Sorting through the information gleaned in each layer can amount to making subtle or dramatic changes long before root causes are revealed, not to mention there can be different causes that relate to different experiences. For example, financial difficulties may be associated with fear, lack and trust, whereas relational difficulties may be associated with unrealistic expectations, issues of self-worth, fear of rejection or abandonment, just to name a few.

Unrealistic expectations, in of themselves, are often the catalyst to many perceived failures, so closely attached to the fear of failure, the fear of success and even the fear of freedom. Many great inspirations, ideas and visions are squelched by fear and fear itself blocks many ventures that would lead to success if pursued in an attitude of courage, dedication and commitment. This includes relationships as well. The fear of rejection or abandonment, associated with an adverse childhood experience will wreck what otherwise could potentially be a very complimentary and harmonious relationship. Thus, the relationship deteriorates not because so and so does not understand so and so, but because there are unrealistic expectations, as well as a host of underlying influences such as fear, insecurity, low self-esteem and many other contributing factors that destabilizes the relationship. Not to mention that the attraction of a healthy relationship is not likely to occur under adverse circumstances, but that does not mean there is no hope for the relationship to become stable and harmonious if both partners are willing to learn and grow together, which requires patience, tolerance and acceptance. People do learn from their mistakes and the passing of time and the acquisition of right knowledge can overcome adverse situations.

However, the damage caused by expectations does not just wreak havoc with respect to fear, failure, rejection, insecurity or abandonment. Expectations are problematic when they are unrealistic. People often expect things of themselves and others that in some manner of speaking are not the least bit realistic and wonder why an endeavor collapses or someone lets them down. Expecting too much from yourself or from others has just as much an adverse affect as expecting too little from yourself or from others. There is a happy medium, but this middle of the road mindset can only come about by exploring

the layers of your own personal reality, as no one characteristic or attribute is solely responsible, there are other influences attached, both internal and external that too must be examined.

Now all of this peeling back sounds like a lot of hard work and requires a lot of invested time and effort. It is, but only to the extent that you are able to assimilate your own discoveries, are able to process, and integrate them into the fabric of your day-to-day affairs. However, exploring the layers of your own personal reality is as much as you can realistically be responsible for and always should, because your path is your path just as others have their paths to walk on. It is never your place to say yea or nay to the reasons why anyone chooses to walk their path such as they do, unless of course, there is eminent danger to someone or something, in which case it is right to take applicable and safe action.

In closing, we hope that we have encouraged you to explore the underlying layers of your own personal reality, which we know is a venture well worth the investment of your time and exerted energy. Although, a journey of inner self-discovery is not always a pleasant experience, especially when it follows on the heels of many undesirable life experiences, it is safe to say that no one has ever walked away from such an experience not mentally, emotionally, spiritually and even physically liberated from the stronghold of inner conflicting influences. Such a journey does indeed bring closure and resolution to every adverse external situation, condition or event, whether encountered in the past or in the present.

Many Blessings,

Linda, Z and the Collective We

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