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Doing the Work

HEALING OUR BODY, MIND & SPIRIT
BY GETTING TO KNOW THE SELF



BY **JILL LOREE**
WITH **SCOTT WISLER**

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Doing the Work

HEALING OUR BODY, MIND & SPIRIT
BY GETTING TO KNOW THE SELF



By Jill Loree
with Scott Wisler

Self. Help. | Book Three

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ISBN-10: 1548121010
ISBN-13: 978-1548121013

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Preface

From Part III: Doing the Work, in *Spilling the Script: A Concise Guide to Self-Knowing* by Jill Loree.

In the course of this work, we develop on various levels of our being:

- In our spirit, we move from the separation of duality to unity.
- In our mind, we move from images and vicious circles to truth.
- In our will, we move from forcing currents and withholding, to receptivity and a willingness to give.
- In our emotions, we move from being blocked and numb, to being flowing and changing.
- In our bodies, we move from being frozen and split, to being open, breathing and integrated.

The Way Out

Following is an overview of the work we can do to heal our souls:

- Something triggers an **Emotional Reaction**
Bring reason to our emotions to discover the cause.
- Come out of **Blame** and being a **Victim**
Take responsibility for seeing cause and effect in ourselves.

Preface

- **Pray & Meditate** to see the truth
Use mature ego to connect with Higher Self.
- Find the **Image**
Clearly express the statement of the belief.
- Release **Residual Pain**
Feel the pain of unmet needs.
- Find the **Duality**
See the misconception and open to seeing reality.
- Feel and unwind the **Forcing Current**
Or find the collapse into hopelessness.
- Connect with **Negative Pleasure**
Discover the pleasure in being destructive.
- Recognize **Faults**
Reveal the triad of pride, fear and self-will.
- Transform **Negative Intention**
Find where we need to give.
- Search for a **No-Current**
Find faulty thinking that undermines fulfillment.
- Uncover **Real Needs**
Pray and meditate to connect with our longing.
- Impress soul substance with **New Awareness**
Re-educate the inner child with the truth.
- Pray for **Healing**
Divine energy fills and heals the wound.

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Introduction

This is not the only book you will ever need to read to sort yourself out. At best, it can point you in the right direction if you want to do the work of self-discovery. You'll need to reference other sources, such as the *Real. Clear.* seven-book series of spiritual teachings, to fill in all the blanks about topics touched on here but not fully fleshed out. We can only cover so much ground if we want to stay focused on the task at hand—namely, how to heal ourselves.

This isn't a simple task and trying to make the instructions too step-by-step may give the wrong impression. Doing the work of self-knowing isn't easy. The goal of this guide isn't to make short work of reaching the Holy Grail; this isn't *Seven Quick & Easy Steps to Nirvana*.

Instead, think of this book as providing a compass for your journey. Of course, as any halfway-decent Girl Scout can tell you, you will need more than just a compass when you're lost in the woods. You need to know how to read the darn thing. You need to have some idea what direction to head to get out. And you may need to have made some preparations for surviving a few cold, dark nights before you do.

Truth be told, no one gets out of planet Earth alive. But we can come out ahead by learning to make the best use of our time here. And that starts the day we begin doing the work. So let's get at it.

—Jill Loree

Introduction

After a couple decades crawling around in my psyche's basement with a flashlight, I've come to understand many patterns at work that have driven parts of my life in destructive circles. Most were completely unknown to me previously; I just didn't see them. It was hard work getting to know and heal these patterns, and of course there is always more to uncover. This is the real work of being human.

As I walk through my day-to-day life, now with more peace and awareness, I see many people struggling with some life issue or another. These are decent, well-meaning people—friends and acquaintances—who are struggling with the same things over and over, without really changing underlying inner dynamics that could be changed. I have the sense that many people don't know what it looks like to do their work.

What “doing your work” means to me is noticing the disharmonies that arise in each of us as we walk in the outer world, and then searching for and clearing the causes in our inner world. Because the real causes are always the stuck places in our emotional, mental, and energetic bodies. Nothing outside of us is ever the cause of our disharmony; our inner world creates our outer world.

This isn't a new idea. It's what Jesus was talking about when he said advised us to pay attention to the log in our own eye, rather than fretting over the splinter in someone else's. He was pointing out the doorway to freedom.

Disharmony with the outside world is unable to change without untangling the stuck places deep inside us. So when we do this work and cumulatively untangle our inner selves, real freedom is possible. Immeasurable peace, joy and inner security are our birthright.

Yet without stepping through the doorway, it is hard to know what's on the other side. Our intention is to give a sense of what it looks like “on the ground” while “doing your work.”

—Scott Wisler

1

Step, Together, Step | The Process

Doing the work of healing our fractured, world-weary selves is both linear and nonlinear. It's often two steps forward and one step back. Consider that no one who has ever executed an elegant dive off a diving board got there without first splashing around in the shallow end. And then somewhere along the way it becomes no big deal to just approach the board and slip into the water—without even having gotten wet first.

But if we're beginners at swimming in spiritual healing waters, it's prudent to go slow, learning the ropes and gradually working our way toward lolling in the deep end. No one needs to be thrown in over their head to see what happens. As this analogy goes, that's a good way to set someone back a fair bit in their learning process.

So while we're going to need to learn to dance with duality along the way, doing our work isn't a sink-or-swim situation. This is an important point to take in, as managing our expectations appropriately can go a long way in keeping us from coming unglued when the going gets tough. And make no mistake, at some point it will. But it's entirely possible to keep ourselves aright through rough territory, especially if we know that getting water up our nose is a natural part of the learning and growing process.

Even though it's not entirely linear, this spiritual work of healing has an additive nature to it. Do step one, then add step two. Do one and two, then add step three. This means we need to start wherever we are and grapple

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with what's in front of us. Once we've got ourselves stabilized enough to stay upright and afloat, we will naturally become ready to move toward deeper work, with some not-unexpected slipping and sliding along the way.



All of that said, our work is already underway and has been since the day we arrived. (And probably for a few lifetimes before this one, to boot.) To say we are now ready to start doing the work is really saying we are ready to take on our work with conscious intention. Rather than letting life have its way with us—as it will—we're going to face our challenges head-on, going at them with all the goodwill we can muster and getting all the goodie from them we can.

For life is going to teach us the lessons we need to learn, whether we like it or not. And to be fair, on another level, before we arrived at Earth school, we agreed to this. We knew we had some areas of our spirit in need of remedial work, and we came here to sort ourselves out. We took on a task to reconnect some more of our fragmented bits that fractured during our fall from God's grace. (See more in *Holy Moly: The Story of Duality, Darkness and a Daring Rescue*).

Also know this: if life feels like it's a perpetual dunking machine, we've not been paying attention during the lessons we've been given, and that's why we may now feel we're in over our heads. For there is a spiritual law that says we are always given the easiest possible way to deal with any challenge our soul needs to go through for healing. If our way has become choppy, it's only because we didn't make much effort when less effort would have been required. Now it's gotten harder—the struggles and difficulties, due to the Law of Cause and Effect, keep amping up—and we want to continue to blame our way out of our problems. And so it is that we typically begin doing our work by lamenting that—*poor me*—we're a victim.



In Jill's Experience

I was 26 years old the day I stepped into my first AA meeting. It was 1989 and I had just come back from a business trip during which had I enjoyed my very last drink. I'd spent an evening in the bar of a Holiday Inn where I could drink to my heart's content and not have to drive home. I cringe even now over my memory of the evening. Seemed like such a good gig at the time, but also a sad way to be living my life.

I can't say I hadn't seen this coming. I'd been dodging giving up drinking for several years. And truth be told, this was the track I was on since the day I took my very first drink at the age of 13. Yet on the day I picked up my first and only white chip of surrender, I fortunately had a lot of "yets" remaining in my pocket. I hadn't lost a job yet. I hadn't messed up my children yet—in fact, I hadn't had any kids yet. And although I had gone through one marriage already, I hadn't lost a house yet. All things considered, I was grateful. It could have been worse.

One thing that hastened my entry into sobriety was the exposure I'd had to the evils of alcoholism by way of my father's slippery slope. I had been in sixth grade when he went through treatment for the first of four rounds. As one can imagine, there was much slipping and sliding in between admissions, and I saw every single one of his relapses coming. More aptly, I felt them, and it sure didn't feel good.

You'd think a person would avoid those spirits-in-a-bottle altogether then, wouldn't you? But no, that's not the way alcoholism rolls. I have no commentary about the nature-versus-nurture aspects of my genetic predisposition to becoming an alcoholic. I only know I was glad they were saving a chair for me when I got there. Because upon arrival, I was inwardly a mess, humiliated by my behavior and befuddled about how to change it. As they say, my best thinking had gotten me to the doorstep of Alcoholics Anonymous, but that was the best place in the world I could have wound up.

For fifteen years I would show up every week to an AA meeting. I liked the things they said that helped me find some semblance of self, like "AA is not a place for bad people who need to get good, it's a place for sick people who need to get well." I heard, "There's a God-shaped hole in my soul that the wind blows through," and I thought, "These people get me."

It's like they were talking straight at me when they said, "Take the cotton

out of your ears and put it in your mouth,” and “Don’t drink, even if your ass falls off.” Another of my favorites: “Want to become an old-timer in AA? Don’t drink and don’t die.” Their wisdom flowed like water into my soul, and I was parched.

I went to meetings every week because I needed to hear what happened to people who didn’t go to meetings. I went because I needed to learn how a person copes with life sober—people who drink, they pointed out, have a “broken coper”—and I went because my way hadn’t worked. I arrived in a state of humiliation, and stayed because they were teaching me humility.

I was an atheist the day I first walked through those doors. I thought perhaps there actually was a God who had built this place, but he had long ago turned his back on us—or at least he had on me—and had just said, “Go.” I felt I had been on my own since the beginning. So although I didn’t have a God-connection of my own, I didn’t believe these people were making things up when they spoke of having found their own connection to a Higher Power. I wanted that. I was willing to keep hanging out to see if one day I too might find something I could believe in, including myself.

In Scott’s Experience

I was about 13 when I saw the first-ever televised coverage of the Ironman triathlon. It hit me like a bolt from nowhere. I still remember sitting there in the room, watching. I knew right then and there that I was going to do that; I would be an Ironman. Through high school, then college, then grad school, that urge was always in the back of my mind. I swam, rode and ran in the background as best I could while completing my degrees. After finishing grad school, I made a five-year plan to get to Hawaii: build a base for three years, then a half-Ironman, then Ironman. I was going to tattoo the Ironman logo above my ankle.

I started with 15 training hours per week the first year, growing to 20-25 hours per week by year four. When the summer racing season finished, I’d take a very short break and begin base training for the following year. I was hungry and relentless and developed a sharpened focus to keep pushing through the fatigue and discomfort. And there was A LOT of fatigue and discomfort. After 30+ short distance races, I finished a half-Ironman on a hot August Sunday. I was ready. I signed up for an Ironman race the next year.

The “crash” the following year was sudden and I didn’t see it coming. I went from being able to run six miles at any time, no matter what else I had done that day, to—*bang!*—not having the energy to walk up the stairs. My autonomic nervous system and endocrine systems went haywire, unable to control my pulse, body temperature and most basic functions.

At work, I would stay at my desk all day because walking to the bathroom was so taxing. Still, even then, I could not let go of the dream of Ironman. I was angry with my body. Doctors couldn’t figure it out any better than I could, and I had to confront the possibility that I might not recover.

Eventually, after all traditional-medicine recourses failed, I realized I needed more than to just heal my body. I needed to understand why I did this to myself, so if I did get better I would not repeat it in another way. At age 30 I took out a piece of paper and wrote: “I am going to heal myself, mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually, as deep as I can go.” I drew a little boat sitting on the water’s surface and drew little streamers down into the unknown depths for each category, and focused all my relentlessness into healing.

Of course, I had *no* idea how to do this. None whatsoever. I had been studying Tai Chi Ch’uan for six years, so I asked my instructor if she had any ideas. She advised me to sit for an hour every day, and breathe through my hui yin energy center. (The hui yin in Chinese medicine is known in India as the root chakra).

The point is located roughly halfway between the anus and genitals, and I would sit up-right and visualize I had a tube running up from root chakra into my lungs. As I breathed in, I would visualize air flowing into this chakra and up into my lungs, then reversed on the out-breath. Nothing much happened for a long time. But, I couldn’t physically do anything other than sit, and had no other options, so I persisted and kept my commitment to healing.

After three months I felt a tingling sensation at my hui yin that I had never experienced before. I went back excitedly to my teacher to tell her the news. She just nodded and told me to continue. That was all. Two weeks later, she simply told me to now breathe through another place, and she touched my back in my lower lumbar to show me. Again nothing happened for a long time.

Since I could still do little other than sit, and had little other option, I

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kept at it. Two months later, I reported a tingling. She simply nodded and touched another place in my lower back. After another couple months of practice, I felt a tingling there plus two new places I had not been told of. I continued and after a year I had the most basic opening and awareness of all my chakras. It was my first step in a now two-decade long experiential learning of the human energy field.

To say this was mind-blowing, for an engineer no less, is an understatement. I needed to have this ground-shifting experience to break open fixed ideas I held about life. This was my slow process of stabilizing. Open chakras pull a lot of new information in from the world, and it takes time to metabolize the changes.

People often ask me how to become energetically aware, and I tell them to practice breathing through their hui yin. I have not had a single person come back to me. No wonder. In our fast-paced Western lifestyle, I doubt I would have had the discipline to stay with the meditation without being in such a critical situation with my health.

It took a few years, but I came to understand my experience physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. I eventually found a doctor who figured it out physically. It seems that although I willed myself to compete in triathlon, unfortunately nobody asked my body. Physiologically I was born with enough fast-twitch muscles to specialize at running the mile, not to go 144 miles in the Ironman.

Crudely simplifying things, I was training at too fast a pace, using too much fast twitch muscle, eating too many carbs to load my tank again, and crucially, creating too much acid waste in my blood stream. The body uses alkalinizing minerals such as calcium and potassium to buffer acids in the blood, until it can't anymore. Then the body shuts down. It took me many years to alkalize my system again.

On a deeper emotional and spiritual level, it took a little longer. Why did I push myself so hard through such deep fatigue? In the Pathwork lectures there is a concept called an image, which we will discuss in a later chapter. My image here: "If I am strong, I will be loved." What better way to show I am strong than via Ironman?

Looking back, sitting on the floor at age 13, I watched those athletes drive themselves to exhaustion, to finish and fall into the arms of their loved

ones who were cheering them on and who were so excited to receive them. So I drove myself relentlessly in order to show myself and others I am strong, mostly in order to be loved. It was a misguided notion, which obviously didn't work. But that is the nature of unconscious images.

The deeper meaning of our story rarely comes out right away when we first start out on a path. I could never have discovered my hidden wrong belief regarding how to go about getting love without a slow process of seeing myself. It takes time and patience, but eventually—if we proceed, step by step—a picture starts to come into focus that makes sense.

2

Living in a 100-Story House | The Setup

Stories, stories, stories. Man, do we have some stories. And chances are, we like to bend the ear of anyone who will listen to our tales of woe as we work to bring everyone and their brother over to our side—to our way of seeing things. The point is not that we shouldn't have our stories. Nor is the point that we should stop telling our stories. We sometimes need to vent or we'll just explode, right?

What would be more helpful though is for us to start paying attention to the pitch of our stories, to the way we're making someone or some situation out to be the bad guy while we whitewash our own part. It's called the Blame Game and what we're really jacking with here is reality. We only see how we've been wronged, and don't realize that in some way, via our unconscious attitudes and beliefs, we set the whole thing up.

Let's briefly recap how and why this is so. For starters, before we were born, our soul had acquired some unsightly dirt spots that needed special attention. These areas-in-need-of-cleaning were considered and reviewed at great length, in conversation with older and wiser Guides. Together, we created a punch list of sorts, delineating what we should try to knock off our house repair list during our upcoming lifetime. (See more in *Pearls: A Mind-Opening Collection of 17 Fresh Spiritual Teachings*, the chapter called *Preparing for Reincarnation: Every Life Counts*.)

Our parents were carefully selected for their exquisite ability to bring our

distortions up to the surface in this lifetime. This is not done as a punitive measure but rather as a means for us to become abundantly aware of our soul dents so we will be compelled to work on resolving them in this lifetime. For none of us are nearly as inspired by the prospect of happiness as we are by our fervent desire to avoid unpleasantness.

As the Guide teaches, all our imperfections—including our faulty thinking, illusions, distortions, destructiveness and otherwise all-around negative tendencies—are merely twists on something that was originally positive and divine. And we are the ones who have done this twisting, prior to this current incarnation. So in accordance with the Law of Cause and Effect, also called karma when it spans over many lifetimes, we now need to do the cleanup work resulting from our own misguided ways.

In short, we're here to rediscover our original face—our true beauty—and we can't, or won't, do that if we don't clearly see the aspects of ourselves that have lost their shine. We can collectively sum up all of these less-than-positive qualities under an umbrella called the Lower Self. We're here, then, to transform our Lower Selves and return our souls to their more God-like condition. The aspect of ourselves that has never been tarnished or lost its direct line to God is called our Higher Self.

There is one primary difference between the Lower Self and Higher Self and it is this: the Lower Self serves separation and the Higher Self serves connection. Make a note of this. For every time we lose our way, we can reorient ourselves by asking whether our choices in life are leading us in the direction of separation or connection.

Of course, in reality, few things are so black and white. Often, through a series of unfortunate choices, we find ourselves face-to-face with All Bad Options. The way out is to start making choices that connect us more deeply with our own selves—as best we know how in that moment—for that is where we will find our alignment with our Higher Self. And getting squared up with our own inner divine self is what will put us square with God's will. If we get that right, the rest of our lives will begin to fall into step.

The Lower Self can be characterized by its signature moves, which include being destructive and cruel. It is highly charged, since it takes Higher Self energy and perverts it, and it has no intention of changing. So another character trait of the Lower Self is laziness. In its childishness, the Lower

The Setup

Self wants what it wants when it wants it, and it is not willing to pay the price for having a better life experience. Ergo, the Lower Self is not going to transform itself.

This piece is critical for us to understand: the work of transforming the Lower Self is always an act of the Higher Self. We will do ourselves a great favor by continually tending to and strengthening our Higher Self container—our efforts with meditation pay off right here—so that we are able to better hold onto ourselves when the Lower Self kicks up a fuss. And that, friends, most assuredly will happen as we wend our way along any conscious path of healing.

In truth, this is no different than when we blunder our way through life just hoping for the best. Lower Self attempts to undermine our best efforts at every step. Only now, armed with the tools of these teachings and the help of someone who has gone this way ahead of us, we have a heads up. *Caution, watch for Lower Self at play.* This can go a long way in making turbulent times a tad easier to navigate.

For example, here is one of those cautionary signs we need to watch for: building a case. When we hear ourselves telling the stories of what's happening in our lives, we need to start noticing any tendency to build a case against someone else. This is a sure sign Lower Self is at play. And the more we go along with this, the more we are colluding with the devious intentions of our Lower Self to keep us in separation.



In Jill's Experience

I'd been doing this healing work for almost twenty years, following the path laid out by the Guide, when I had the good fortune of connecting with Scott, a fellow traveler on the same path. Over the course of our lengthy email exchange, which is how our relationship started off, I found myself still bringing up stale stories about 'how they done me wrong because I'm a woman.' And a part of me is thinking, 'Really, we're still on this?' (See more in *Word for Word: An Intimate Exchange Between a Couple of Kindred Souls.*)

This, it seems, has been the story of my whole life. It started when I was born to a woefully young couple who already had a two-year-old and a four-year-old boy by the time I arrived. I heard “the boys and Jill” throughout my growing-up years. So they were a pair and I was odd-man-out, so to speak, all because I was a girl. In fairness, no one got a lot of needs met in my family, but I felt a particular form of exclusion that stemmed from my mother never fully embracing her own place in this world as a woman.

But be that as it may, I am also well aware now that I had this piece to work about being a female. For never in my life have I considered my female persuasion to be a good thing. Oh briefly, just out of college, I found myself confused by the apparent upside of having benefitted from affirmative action. But, I countered, I don’t see how being girl did squat for me on a chemistry test. I earned my good grades exactly same way the boys did: I worked for them.

In my adult life, I ended up charting a trail of unsatisfying career choices, until one day, in pain and despair, I had a blinding glimpse of the obvious: the problem must be me. And that’s about the time I found the Pathwork. The Guide’s teachings began illuminating my many areas in need of work, and I began doing this transformative work in earnest.

Like an old can of paint with the lid sealed shut, you can’t pry the thing off with just one attempt. You have to go around the top, slowly working your way through layers of old dried paint. Eventually, the thing will come loose, but not after the first little prying. That’s how this issue of grappling with being a woman has been for me.

Because it showed up in my work, and it showed up in my marriage, and it showed up in my spiritual community. Of course. The problem lives in me and so it’s going to show up everywhere I do. It’s even in my unshakable bad habit of picking on myself by picking at my cuticles. What I had never connected was that one of my other lifelong pains—the experience of being raised in a family in which I wasn’t spoken to much—was integrally connected with my belief that there was something fundamentally wrong with me: namely, that I was a woman.

I had brought this misconception in with me and then, as we do, manifested a life in which it seemed it was true; it seemed I wasn’t spoken to for the simple reason that I was a girl. Had I been a male, I could have fallen in

The Setup

with “the boys” and lived happily ever after. Ok, that’s not true either, but so it seemed.

So after years and years of work, I connect with this guy Scott, and we have a situation happen in which I feel he’s not talking to me. Up go my defenses, down come my walls, off runs my wounded inner child, and I am left feeling helpless and hopeless. *Why does this always happen to me?*

Here was the setup. Scott and I had gone on a ski-vacation together out West. Unbeknownst to us, the snow was insanely deep and still falling, and the day we arrived, another five feet of fresh snow fell. Here’s proof you can have too much of a good thing, as powder up to our knees was like skiing through a flour factory. Both of us were struggling but doing the best we could.

The following day, an avalanche closed the road to the ski hill. We delayed our start and then finally headed out to brave the elements. With Scott driving in these tough conditions, I was unaware of the funk descending over him. Fear was bubbling up and he was in his own inner reaction, but I just felt I was being tuned out. He felt very far away.

Unbeknownst to my conscious mind, this “not-talking-to-me treatment” fell into an old slot in my unconscious; *Oh, here it is. I expected this.* Because in this hidden part of my being a conclusion had long ago been made that the reason people don’t talk to me is I’m a girl; this is the basic, unchangeable flaw that is wrong with me. Without my conscious awareness, this wrong conclusion caused me to see Scott’s reaction through my distorted lens, and caused me not to check out what was happening. I bought the story that ‘Oh, this is always what happens to me.’ I didn’t know to challenge my own inner misbelief.

In Scott’s Experience

I love to ski. I ski every week all winter long in the east, but this was my first time to the resorts of western US. I had a high hopes for the trip, and wanted to experience the big mountain skiing I’d heard about. Spirits were high in Sacramento when we picked up a 4x4 Jeep, but the weather deteriorated into heavy snow driving up Donner Pass.

When the windshield washer fluid froze, I had to focus all my attention seeing through the smeared front window. I’ve become a seasoned winter

driver living near Buffalo, but Lake Tahoe that evening was another world. Snow was piled 20 feet high everywhere we turned and coming down hard. It's hard to turn off the stress of navigating that.

Following an arduous drive to the resort the next morning, we found only a few trails open. Squaw Valley was struggling to open the mountain after five feet of snow overnight, and it was *still* coming down. We're here, we thought, so we headed up the lifts to make the best of it. Without the right skis, technique and experience, though, it's just a very tough time in such deep snow.

This was a huge disappointment. We found ourselves in a white-out blizzard high on the mountain, made a scary descent, and called it a day. It snowed all night, so the avalanche across the road to the resort wasn't a good start to the next day. We struggled through a second day of impossible conditions.

I tend to turn inward in difficult conditions, particularly outdoors in nature. Some people yell, or curse, or act out, but I tend to become quiet. Some of it is listening inwardly, but some of it is the inner child in me hunkering down until the storm passes. I'm still discovering how much of each is happening, of which is which. No doubt, I was really affected by the conditions. By the third evening, I indeed had some funk on me, and I didn't really know why.

What I didn't have was Jill's story about not being spoken to as a child. There was nothing in my consciousness about Jill's ability to keep up, or handle the conditions, or the fact she was a woman. She "checked out," but I didn't think it was about me. To my way of seeing things, it isn't like I wasn't talking at all, I was just quieter than usual for a time. In truth, I wasn't able to stay present, and things went downhill from there. Not a steep downhill, but a subtle, gentle glide.

A lot of learning was just around the corner...

3

Building Castles in the Sky | Reality

Always, always, always, awareness is the key. When we start out on a healing journey, we have no idea of just how much of reality we are not aware of. And this is the crux of the matter. The parents and life situation we experienced as a child handed us our work. They showed us exactly where our soul dents are by way of the painful feelings we suppressed, and which we now blindly plan to spend the rest of our lives avoiding. We crafted conclusions about how life works and strategies for surviving, using all the fine logic of a seven-year-old, and then pushed our faulty misunderstandings down into our unconscious—out of our awareness—where they simmer and then later boil.

The real problem with this—which by the way, works exactly the same for every human on this planet—is that once an idea gets shoved down out of our conscious awareness, we can no longer get at it with our adult conscious reasoning. As we grow older, this wrong thinking about life causes us to behave in ways that bring about life experiences that seem to validate our faulty premise. And so, as though in disbelief that this painful situation could be happening to us—*again!*—we tell our stories about how the universe has done us wrong.

This blaming tactic is one of the many ways we hide from reality, and better yet, hide from seeing our part. Since we don't realize we have a piece in this action, we feel we are victim of the crummy things that just always

seem to happen to us. For no good reason. And it makes us crazy. This is that highly charged Lower Self coming through, causing us to build cases against other people and continually turn a blind eye towards our own destructive nature.

Bottom line, when we view the world through the distorted lens of our own Lower Self, we are not in reality. We are building castles in the sky with the hope that one day we can escape to a land far, far away from the pain and turmoil confronting us. But life doesn't work that way. It never has and it never will. To continue to stay in wishful thinking that 'if everyone else would just do right, we would be ok,' is to attempt to live in a fairy tale that ends with happily ever after.

If we, in fact, had a fairy tale soul with no floors in need of scrubbing, this wouldn't be such a bad idea. But then we wouldn't have come here. No, we came here to clean house, and that's what we now must do. No amount of finger pointing will allow us to evade this simple reality. It's time to roll up our sleeves and stop hiding. It's time to come down out of our make-believe castles and see what's really going on behind the inner walls we have built which are intended to keep painful feelings at bay.

Here is a reality that can be hard to swallow: where there is a victim, there is also a victimizer. Whatever is being done to us, we do that to others, in some clandestine Lower-Self way. Everything we identify outside ourselves that creates a certain feeling of disharmony inside us is only doing so because the outer event resonates with an inner distortion. The place to look for the solution to our problems, then, is never outside of ourselves. The real problem always lives inside us, and the bigger problem is our lack of awareness that this is so. (See more in *Finding Gold: The Search for Our Own Precious Self*.)



In Jill's Experience

When Scott and I each bumped up against our work while we were in Tahoe skiing, I didn't connect the dots at the time between what was happening between us—in some ways, seemingly nothing—and what was

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happening in my body—also seemingly nothing. Two days in and nothing had moved through my intestines. I was starting to get very uncomfortable. We stopped at a drug store in search of a remedy that would kick-start my shutdown digestive system.

Days later, after Scott and I had each processed our way through much of what had bubbled up, I had another blinding download of insight: my lifelong battle with constipation is related to this situation of people not talking to me. But that, in fact, is only the tip of the iceberg. What I really react to is the lack of presence, the unavailability, of the one I love.

As this awareness came flooding in, I reflected on my last days with my previous boyfriend; this same thing had happened then. I'd eaten an apple on Friday and felt it was still in my stomach late Saturday. I'd noted Brian hadn't been talking to me, but what I hadn't keyed in on was that this just reflected the fact that Brian was already checking out. I wasn't the one to initiate the end our relationship, he was. And my body knew it.

Sometime later, Scott and I were enjoying our final morning together before a three-week-long stretch of being apart. To use the word "enjoy" is probably misleading as both of us, we came to realize, were somewhat out of sorts. We'd made love that morning, but honestly, my heart wasn't in it. I didn't feel the fire that's usually there. But I wasn't clueing in to what was happening between us. All I knew was that once again, I felt adrift.

Familiar and old as this feeling was to me, it didn't prick my ears to tune in more carefully. I did notice though that once again, my bowels were taking a break. This time, it occurred to me try something different and check things out with Scott: "Scott, me stomach is feeling stuck. What's going on with you?" In fact, a lot was bubbling with Scott that day. Accustomed as we both are to doing this work, he took the time to get in touch with his insides and surface the turmoil causing him to check out. He felt like he had to do everything on his own, that there was no one on his team. This is an image we both share.

By letting the dam of tears break through, we were both able to find a more comfortable way to be with each other, even as we were still faced with the unhappiness of the upcoming time apart. To feel the sweetness in that sorrow felt way, way better though than sitting in the walled-off pain of our self-made separation.

In Scott's Experience

When Jill and I both bumped up against our own inner work in Tahoe, I also did not connect the dots of what was happening between us. I got some of it, enough to know to look deeper in myself, but not nearly all of it.

I realized Jill wasn't present, and it affected me. What I didn't realize was how much *I* wasn't present in return. It turns out there are a number of different ways to not be present. The ones we use feel so familiar, and often justified, that they don't fully register. The ones other people use, well, they can feel just awful to us.

To step back into the middle of the story, I sensed that Jill had "run off." This was both figuratively and literally true. It can seem like the person suddenly "isn't there." Often their eyes are unfocused, staring into the distance, and they can't hear what you say. On another level, parts of their energy bodies move backwards and become somewhat separated behind them.

I frequently experienced this energy pattern growing up. I remember standing there as a toddler looking up at this huge adult that just energetically vanished before me. Back then I felt energetically abandoned, and that pattern became existentially terrifying to me. I've done enough inner work over the past 20 years that I now respond more smoothly to it.

Still, a part of me went into a funk. For my part, instead of these young parts of me leaving out the back, they tend to pull inward. They just freeze and try to hide in plain sight. The feeling of abandonment comes out in an old story that I have nobody on my team, nobody backing me up. I have to do it myself, whatever 'it' is.

So here is where we found ourselves: two adults who like each other, going through difficult outer circumstances—enough snow to be literally buried in—without bickering or creating a visible relationship mess on the surface. There was nothing amiss, yet something was off.

I felt inwardly stuck. Jill reacted to my inward retreat and her inner little girl got shaky and backed off. I sensed part of her leaving, and retreated a bit further. Around it goes, again and again, under the surface. Finally, two adults are standing there in confusion, both wondering what happened. Yep, really, that happened. Twenty years on the path, and we both fell into the hole.

So we started backtracking, trying to see how far back into the trip the patterns went. We could only go so far and then lost the tracks. We had no

Reality

idea how it started. Even with hindsight and our continuing work to release the patterns, we weren't able to fully illuminate this.

Keep in mind that we are two healthy, high-functioning adults who really enjoy each other and experience great joy in relationship. My heart is just blown open in love with her. I experience great joy being with her. And yet every once in a while we both trip over each other. We went for quite a while not able to see what was going on in this particular pattern.

Now Jill will occasionally say to me: "My intestines aren't moving. What is going on with you?" And that is my cue to stop and notice what is up inside me. With enough repetition I have become aware of a new level of this inward retreat and able to work with it consciously.

And, I do the same for her. I have walked through the kitchen to get tea, passed her, stopped and turned around to say: "Jill, your little girl ran off." Just in walking past her and feeling her energy field, I can sense it. Jill will go inside and check, look a bit stunned, and then begin to sob. I will hold both of them—adult Jill and the young hurting part of her—until they are present again. And then we start the process of working deeper together anew.

4

I'm Totally Fine, I Feel Nothing | Numbness

People who embark on a spiritual path of growth and healing can be divided into two camps. There are 1) those who are abundantly aware that they have painful feelings they would prefer to avoid, which are accompanied by stories from childhood that tell us where the now-residual pain was created in this lifetime, and 2) those who are not in touch with painful feelings and who just want to be getting more out of life. It's not that those in the second camp don't have issues, and it's not that they won't surface their work as they go along, but in the moment, they are less aware there was so much lacking in their childhood. Nonetheless, they have an itch for more and they haven't yet figured out how to scratch it.

In all cases, we have thoughts and feelings inside us we aren't yet fully aware of, and we have created avoidance strategies designed to keep us safe and help us get our needs met. The only problem with this is that these strategies don't work. Because they cause us to sidestep the very thing we would most benefit from: taking a good, hard look at our difficulties. And that keeps us spinning in a perpetual state of dissatisfaction.

One of the most universal strategies to know about is our tendency to freeze our feelings. This happens on an energetic level at a very young age, accompanied by the holding of our breath, and is the way a child attempts to block painful feelings it doesn't have the ability to deal with. It's a survival mechanism, if you will, but we want to be careful about throwing around

Numbness

claims that ‘this is what we needed to do to survive.’

The classic thinking of the now-separated inner child aspect is dualistic in nature, meaning to the child, everything is black or white, good or bad, life or death. It’s true that as children, we didn’t have much in the way of coping skills. But we can terrorize our still-hurting little inner self if we tell tales about how we needed our defenses to save ourselves. Yes, we thought that was true. But in fact, painful feelings are not lethal. We just don’t like them.

So here we can start to realize how the Lower Self uses the helplessness of the fragmented inner child for its own evil purpose of cutting off life. At that time, with our primitive child minds, we thought feeling pain was akin to dying, and we did what we had to stay alive. Now, all these years later, these same defenses are firmly and habitually in place, but they no longer save us. More rightly, they no longer serve us at all. Instead, they are now the problem, routinely attracting experiences that rub raw our old wounds, generating additional painful feelings that cause us to turn away from others as though in defense of ourselves.

In fact, the pain we feel now is a mixed bag of new painful feelings—which as adults we have the capacity to feel and move beyond—and old, old, old residual pain that has gotten stuck. It’s this last bit that causes so much flak in our systems. If the petrified residual pain weren’t frozen within us, life’s problems would be blips on our radar instead of hurricanes in our field.

Here’s where the spirit-mind-body connection comes in. In our spirit, we have soul dents we incarnate to heal. One aspect of this is that in our minds, we harbor faulty conclusions about life that have sunk down out of our conscious awareness. This hidden wrong thinking remains highly charged and is used by the Lower Self to justify our immature, self-centered behavior and our subsequent efforts to keep ourselves separate from others.

But our bodies are not just along for the ride. They are the vessels, or vehicles, for this journey we’re on. They carry and hold these energetic blocks, which show up in the various ways our bodies armor themselves. There are five basic character structures that result from the wounding which happens at the different stages of child development. (See *Spilling the Script* for more.)

In our healing sessions, our Helpers will guide us to correlate our feelings with where they are actively stored and therefore physically present in our bodies. Where do we hurt? We can learn to identify where the energy is stuck or frozen in our energetic field, which shows up as pain or tension in our bodies. The way to re-energize these stuck places is to bring awareness—via our breath—into the areas of discomfort, and let the wisdom of our bodies open up and talk to us. (See more in *Healing the Hurt: How to Help Using Spiritual Guidance*.)

When we breathe into stuck energy, we bring our life force to deadened areas. We created this dead spot because we didn't want to feel a painful feeling, and guess what: when it wakes up, we're going to have to feel it now. There will be tears; this is not the end of the world. Quite the opposite, this is the beginning of becoming more alive. The healing water of our tears releases a dam that has been longing for movement.

But before we get into all of this, what we are more apt to notice is...nothing. We numbed our feelings long ago, and until we do the work of freeing up this blocked energy and understanding the false conclusion about life it's holding onto, we may not feel anything. We need to connect the dots that this stuckness in our beings is what shows up as the feeling we're stuck in life. It's one and the same thing.

Successfully cut off from our own selves, the Lower Self has won the hand and put down its cards. Its work is done. But hold on a sec, because lately our Higher Self has been knock, knock, knocking at our inner door, telling us, 'Hey, this ain't it. There's more to life.' And if we're consciously walking on a spiritual path, we've heard this call. We want more.



Feeling numb feels completely different from feeling clear, or feeling empty. In fact, it saps a lot of our life force to maintain the highly unnatural, frozen state of numbness. This is not our original face, not by a long shot. To be numb is to be deadened and lethargic, and there is a self-perpetuating quality to our desire to do nothing. Further, we get an odd sense of satisfaction from doing things we know aren't good for us.

This is the pit we have fallen into when we are depressed and feeling

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hopeless. It may at first seem like it will feel good to let ourselves wallow in darkness and despair, but this is a prison of our own making that we have willfully gone down into. Realizing this may give us some much needed oomph to start stepping our way out. But recall, we got ourselves here over the course of a long, slow fall and getting ourselves out isn't going to happen overnight. They don't hand out vaulting poles for doing this work. In fact, as one might guess by now, there is a spiritual law regarding this: we can't skip steps. If at some point it seems we've finally launched ourselves up and over a lip, this can only be so because we have done the painstaking work of putting one foot in front of the other and didn't give up.

Numbness is a big hurdle and we must overcome its inertia. We must become willing to undo what we ourselves have done. If we have been hanging out in deep darkness for a long time, we may not even feel we have enough of a foothold in the land of light to cross back over the line. But just as swimming around in the swamp of Lower-Self energies is self-perpetuating, so is tapping into the mother-source of Higher Self strength. Living from our Higher Self can be characterized as living in effortless effort. We become willing to pay the price to have the goodies, and doing so taps us into an everlasting source of wisdom, courage and love that continually replenishes our cup.

We need to take in new information that can help lead us out of the hellish situations we too often find ourselves in. For our true home of heaven lies just around the corner, and as Dorothy discovers in *The Wizard of Oz*, it's been right there inside us this whole time, waiting for us to find it.



In Jill's Experience

On the morning of July 4, 1997, I got one of those phone calls no one ever, ever wants to receive. It was my brother telling me Sarah, his 18-year-old daughter, had died in a car accident early that morning. Your heart just stops and you know things will never be the same.

Her leaving was a tragedy of immense proportions, but in it there was also a gift. It opened me up in a way I had not been before. To be fair, this

didn't happen right away. I was eight years sober at the time, but still a frozen Popsicle of energy. I was out of the deep freeze but still hadn't graduated to the refrigerator. So it was several days before I could even feel the pain of her passing and start to cry.

The pain of grief is one that has the ability to heal us in deep places we never thought we'd have to go. And while no one would wish for the experience, I can only say in hindsight that I'm grateful on some level for the passageway that opened when Sarah left.

The morning of her funeral, I sat in the stillness of dawn and looked out over a gently flowing river. With the brand of spirituality under my belt that one absorbs in AA meetings, I had developed a modest rapport with God. But sitting there that morning, I said to no one in particular, "Her spirit has gone to heaven and I have no idea what that means. I want to know."

Those words resonated through me like the depth charge of a prayer they were. And just one month later I was guided to read my first Pathwork lecture called *The Forces of Love, Eros & Sex*, as my marriage was as devoid of depth and presence as my childhood had been. And that, it seemed, opened a door to a whole new world.

As I'd worked my way through the Twelve Steps in AA, I had been challenged by the sketchy instructions for undertaking a Fourth Step in which a person takes a "searching and fearless moral inventory." When I found these teachings from the Guide, it was like I'd discovered an entire library full of directions. A single lifetime could not suffice to work through all that is offered in this miraculous collection. But I got on the stick and started working with a Helper, joined a group, and later went on to become a Helper myself.

Sarah was a light who left this planet way too early. Then again, I honor the Guide's teachings telling us no one leaves unless, on some level, they have agreed to go. Why she died when she did, I cannot say. But she gave me a monumental gift on her way out for which I owe a deep debt of gratitude. I hope one day, in another lifetime, I will have the chance to repay her.

In Scott's Experience

I vividly remember the first time I stood up in front of a Pathwork group to process through a difficult situation I was experiencing. The format was

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that you stood with a Helper in the center of a circle of peers seated around you, and felt the feelings around the situation in question. You go down through the layers of consciousness and feelings until you find the core of the situation.

I had watched other people do it without too much difficulty. Oh, their work was intense to witness sometimes, but the process was straightforward. I stood up... and froze. No amount of coaching me helped. It turns out I wasn't too good at freely feeling my feelings. I had no idea I was that numb. Who knew?

This brought forward a dilemma: how do you learn to fully feel your feelings if you can't fully feel? Well, turns out you gently use your positive will. The advice given to me was to state a daily intention to fully feel my feelings, and to pray and ask for help. So in fully intrepid fashion, I did.

I started creating what would become both a daily prayer and a tool for setting positive intention for change. I began praying daily to feel my feelings, and like many things, it took some time and persistent positive will. After a few weeks, the dam opened, and I began spontaneously crying a few times a day. It took a while to release the immediate backlog. Eventually the initial gush slowed, but that river had been backed up a long time, and feelings kept bleeding out in a slow steady stream for a year.

Later, I focused on feeling my *real* feelings. I learned that there are many ways we interrupt, and thus numb, our feelings. Blocking them altogether is the most extreme, but we can also do quite a job manipulating them. I found places where I dampen my feelings. For example, if someone cancels plans on short notice, I might not feel the full depth of disappointment.

I have also found places where I over-amplify feelings. If someone cuts me off in traffic, I might feel outrage instead of what was really just mild annoyance. And I have found places where I substitute one feeling because I didn't want to feel another. If lust isn't ok, then I covered it with shame, and then didn't like that feeling, so I hid it with guilt, and then buried that under anger, finally squishing the anger into the background. It's much better to simply feel the lust; I have learned that it won't kill me and it doesn't mean I have to act on it.

It turned out feeling my real feelings was quite a long journey. It was part of my daily prayers for eight years until I felt like I really got it. That doesn't

mean I was done learning—I am still learning—but by then I had thoroughly established the intention and practice in my life.

Learning to feel my real feelings without manipulating them was the gateway to profound states of feeling alive.

5

Would I Rather be Right or Happy? | Duality

The Guide teaches us that every disharmony in life stems from a misunderstanding of truth. The good news is: this means that every negativity can be unwound to find its original positive essence, *once we uncover the truth of the matter*. The bad news is: we're going to have to come to terms with the fact that in some way, we've been wrong. We haven't been living in truth.

We can think of truth as being a spectrum that stretches from one end of anything to the other, and therefore truth is able to hold opposites. When this unifying level of truth is known to us, we are at peace. Conversely, when we feel any disharmony within ourselves, we are caught in duality. When that happens, something appears to be true and at the same time in opposition to something or someone else. We have gotten lost in the illusion of duality. In that moment, what we must come to realize is that we are not yet seeing the whole truth. What we are snagged on is our own inner limitation to being in truth.

The Earth plane, then, is a sphere of duality; that's our current reality. At the same time, all duality is illusion. Both of these are true. (If this tips us over, then we're likely steeped in duality and don't even know it.)

When we are able to get our arms so big that we can hold—actually embrace—the opposite positions of any issue, we step out of the plane of duality and enter the plane of unity. Ah, the infamous Oneness. When this hap-

pens, our world stops tilting. We enter a different kind of reality where nothing and no one is ever really in opposition to anything or anyone else. All becomes one, just at it already is beyond the veils of the dualistic illusion. Until then, we have to battle our way through the apparent warring factions that seem to exist in a world of duality, where actually, so little is as it appears.



So back to observing our storytelling. We need to become aware of what's happening when we are trapped in duality, when the world we see in front of us appears to offer only black-and-white options. Or worse, when we've gotten ourselves so mired in the muck of duality that the only two options we face are bad and worse.

When we can start to identify that *this is duality*—that we are now trapped in illusion—we are making progress. Even before we have any inkling of a solution or way out, we are still better off. Because now the speck of our being that is observing our life drama is not caught in the drama. It may only be a speck at this point, but that's more than we had access to before now.

Again, all duality is illusion. Regardless how convincing the illusion is, it's still illusion. Our work is to find our way off the struggle bus, and we do that by cracking open the exit door using the tool of awareness. We need to shift away from dualistic thinking and learn to hang out more often in unitive consciousness where real truth resides. (See more about duality in *Spilling the Script* and in *Gems: A Multifaceted Collection of 16 Clear Spiritual Teachings*, the chapter called *Surrendering to the Double-Sided Nature of Duality*.)

Inherent in the restrictive, life-defying strategies we adopt early in life—in an effort to save ourselves—is the narrowing of our vision. Our view of things is sliced and diced into a fragment of reality that no longer has perspective. From such a limited viewpoint, we can weave a tale of how we've been wronged that seems utterly airtight. But in the end, we're always leaving out one important detail: we're still not in truth.

For once we have the greater truth of any situation in our purview, the

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disharmony resolves. Every time. So if we're not walking straight regarding any issue in life, we don't yet have our arms open wide enough to capture all the truth. What is there to be done about this? Just one thing: we need to pray.



In Jill's Experience

No two ways about it, duality is a beast. We're caught in it from the get-go, and the more we veer off course, the more we find our noses pushed up against lose-lose choices. Such is the state I was in when my 10-year marriage to a kind and caring man, who was as lost in the illusion as I was, came to an end. Snagged on our defenses as we were—mine to run as far and fast on an inner level as I possibly could—it's no surprise we were destined for divorce. There just wasn't enough of either one of us present to create much of a connection.

I was far enough along my spiritual path to know that whatever our issues were, if I didn't work through them then and there, I would only end up facing them again, in front of someone else. But sometimes we just don't have what we need to get there from here, and that's where I was. I was lost and getting nowhere, and none of our years in therapy were moving the meter.

I had reached that sinking realization that no matter what, this is going to hurt: if I stay it's going to hurt and if we split it's going to hurt. Having arrived at this heart-sickening juncture, I did the only thing I knew to do: I did what I needed to do to save my own bacon.

This is the rough thing about duality. Having made a series of wrong turns, we find ourselves with our backs up against a wall and seemingly no good way out. Had I had the good fortune to have previously found and followed God's will at every bend in the road, I wouldn't have ended up where I did. But then a whole lot in my life would have been very different. Indeed, if I was so with-it that I could pick God's will out of a line-up every time, I wouldn't have had to come to this sphere to begin with.

And so it was with a certain sadness, and a very deep regret for the effect it had on my young boys, that we made the choice we did and our marriage

ended. I wish it could have gone differently; I wish I could have been better. But I'm getting there now, having dedicated many years and not a small amount of dollars to my pursuit of resolving the hidden issues in my psyche that led me to having to make such a hard choice, and that necessarily hurt people I dearly love.

In Scott's Experience

I was in my late 30s when I got my first management role, with 45 people reporting directly to me. I had left a big corporation for a small firm where I was the new engineering director, the process improvement director, and also had sales/proposal development responsibility. It was crazy too much, but a huge learning and growing opportunity, especially spiritually.

I had to stand up in front of 45 people every day, not only learning a leadership role but also doing my personal spiritual work. Previously I had been doing my spiritual work with some shelter; I didn't have too many people watching. Now it was time to take it to the next level, to the fire of a new crucible.

I encountered all manner of challenges and trials. Budgets and deadlines were made and sometimes missed. I hired fantastic people and a few miserable ones. My teams worked well and sometimes squabbled. Jobs were won and sometimes lost. There were plenty of instances of disharmony for me to look at.

Disharmony is not really about feeling unpleasant feelings, it is becoming aware of when you manipulate feelings by artificially suppressing, amplifying or distorting them. These are signposts that something is not in truth. And I want to see every place I am not in truth.

By looking at the places in my work life that were difficult and challenging, I noticed that much of the disharmony in my team was a reflection of my own issues. I was directing 45 people's work lives, and thus putting energy into the system, and the system was bringing its problems and challenges back to me. I began to notice that any place I sent negativity rippling into the organization, however slight, it would be bounced around and reflected back to me, maybe from a different direction. This team of 45 people was a mirror for me, and an effective one at that.

Early on, I hired a Pathwork Helper who was also an organizational

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change expert as my business coach. I still had my personal Helper too. Together we began to look at my leadership abilities from a combined business and spiritual perspective. After a year in the role, I asked my coach and Helper go interview people around me about my leadership qualities.

I wanted to understand what the mirror was telling me more explicitly. We spent a month and designed interview questions to give me the best idea where my work remained and how I could grow. Then I selected the most insightful people in the organization, plus family and community people, to be interviewed.

After my coach and Helper completed the interviews, I took a two-day private retreat with them to hear the results. We started the retreat by going through the interviews person by person and question by question. They would ask me how a particular person answered a particular question. I would tell them what I thought the person said, and they would read to me the person's actual response. If I got the response right, they wrote the answer on a green post-it note. If not, it went on a red post-it note. I guessed correctly more than 80% of the time. They wanted to see how well I knew myself, and I did pretty well at this first step.

Next, we took the notes and put them on the wall, grouping them by themes, and I started to get a big picture view of what my main challenges were as a leader. The red/green variation helped me visualize where I could see well, and where I was blind. Having a lot of perspectives come together made it easier to see a theme more completely, and it told me something about their strength.

Finally, near the end of the two days, I began grouping the themes in relation to each other. Previously they felt a bit random, but I wanted to explore connections between them. As we worked, a new understanding came to light. One of the themes was that sometimes I was inappropriately soft and yielding. Sometimes, if something was due, or a commitment missed, or an infraction made, I would yield on it in a way that wasn't firm.

Other times, I came down inappropriately hard or abruptly. It wasn't all the time, it was sometimes, which made it hard to see. Often the pattern came sequentially: I would be over-soft and yielding until something *had* to change, and then I would come down over-hard. It was just sometimes, not enough for me to clearly see, but just often enough to be maddening to my

team. In this way, my team didn't know what to expect from me.

There was a duality here I had not seen in myself before. I had a soul split between compassion/mercy on one side, and power/accountability on the other side. My compassion was lacking an appropriate firmness and power, and my use of power was lacking an appropriate compassion. In reality, compassion, mercy, power, firmness and accountability are all part of one whole, and I was caught in the duality of a split between them.

Knowing about a dualistic soul split like this is the first step in healing it, but it doesn't happen with a snap of the fingers. It takes a lot of intention to consciously choose to feel the feelings and examine the associated hidden beliefs, and do the work to close the gaps.

6

Praying for a Toehold | Truth

Our best efforts, using all the brilliance of our amazing ego minds, will land us every time at the doorstep of duality. This is so because the ego itself is a fragmented aspect of ourselves, and left to its own devices, has no depth or original resource. It learns and spits back out what it has already taken in. It sets a clock and gets us out of bed in the morning. It signs us up for spiritual retreats and sits us on a cushion for meditation. But that's as far as the ego goes.

We have come to this turn in our evolutionary journey as a direct result of choices we ourselves made long, long ago to check out the other side of life: the dark side. No one made us do this. We were curious and that's how we wound up participating in what the Spirit World refers to as the Fall. (See more in *Holy Moly* and in *Gems*, the chapter called *Expanding Our Awareness and Exploring Our Fascination with Creation*.)

So we all started out in the Oneness, and then we fell away from that fine state, only to land ourselves in a world of hurt where the climb back home is a real bear. The result of the Fall is that our spirit has fragmented. In this lifetime, each time we experienced another hurt we couldn't bear to endure, we fractured some more. We are all walking wounded, with inner aspects of ourselves having split off at varying ages of development. There is not one "inner child"; we are a compendium of banished inner children who all eventually need to return to the fold, bringing back with them our fractured

off life force.

So now we find ourselves here on planet Earth, where we have better opportunities for reuniting our fragmented selves than in the Spirit World. This is so because here, unlike in the Spirit World, we are surrounded by other beings who also have all different kinds of fragmentation going on, and in acting out their negativity they will bump us against us and show us where we have our own work to do. This friction is the gift we are given in coming here; it's the mirror that allows us to see our soul dents. In the Spirit World, we hang out in spheres made up of such like-minded souls that we get along better but don't grow as much. A ticket to Earth-school, then, is a hot commodity for us fallen spirits.

But since we are fractured and fragmented beings, we need a way to hold ourselves together enough to do this work of healing. Introducing the ego. The ego is also a fragment, but it's a fragment-with-a-job. First, it's in charge of getting our ducks in a row. Frankly, a person whose ego is not well enough developed to take care of their personal needs for living, is not ready to dive into a rigorous path such as the one outlined here. People still do, but it's not ideal.

Once the ego gets strong enough though, it's job description changes, and it now needs to reach out for help. It needs to knock on the door of the Higher Self, and when that door opens, step aside and let in some new light. Over time, a strong ego will master the art of letting itself go so completely that it merges once again with the Higher Self—which is the ultimate destiny of all our fragmented selves—and allow us to live from that higher state of being.

Exactly how should the ego go about knocking? By praying. Praying for what? Simply to know the truth of the matter. Full stop.



In Jill's Experience

I was attending a sales meeting, having recently moved into a sales position that involved a high-profile customer with a large opportunity for business. I had timed it well and sales were projected to see a definite up-

Truth

tick. I felt good about my work. So I couldn't believe it when the manager of the group stood there in front of everyone handing out accolades, and I wasn't mentioned. Truly, I was floored.

And in the young wounded part of me, I was also devastated. I mustered the courage to ask this manager afterwards about why I hadn't been included, and having caught him off-guard about such a significant oversight, he basically tossed me off with a breezy, *Oops, sorry about that!*

Back in my hotel room, I was reeling. While true, this was a painful thing that had happened, it had gone straight to the quick. My reaction of hurt and indignation was far more than this situation warranted; I was in tears and trying hard to numb what was bubbling up and oozing out all over the place.

The only shred of perspective I could assemble was the awareness that I must not be in truth. So that was where I sat, for several long minutes, just breathing and praying to know the truth. And then it happened. Something shifted and started to open, and in dropped a perspective I hadn't considered: he had made a mistake. This manager, standing in front of a room full of people, had overlooked something important, and when asked about it didn't have the wherewithal in that moment to say he was sorry. And that's on him. What had happened there was actually not about me.

The more I cried and breathed into this new take on reality, the more I opened to seeing this wasn't really as painful as it had seemed. Sure it stung, but more truthfully, it had scratched open my old, old wound about not being seen, and that was what really hurt. Through the verities of life, sometimes we get overlooked, and while that doesn't feel good, it's really not the end of the world. I let go of my case and went to sleep.

The next morning at breakfast, this manager approached me and told me he was sorry; it had been an oversight he heartily regretted. A short while later, when the meeting got underway, he stood in front of the group and made it right. I was both seen and acknowledged in front of the group for my contribution. Deep breath.

In Scott's Experience

It is two o'clock in the morning and I am sitting in the front of the departures terminal at the airport in Jakarta, Indonesia. Cooling my jets, so to

speak. I've been awake since 5:00am the previous morning, attending business meetings all day in service of helping a worried client. At 5:00pm my taxi crawled through the impressive Jakarta traffic to the airport, and then I made my way through security and immigration to the gate for my midnight flight back to the States. Now here I am, back outside the airport, having just been denied boarding due to some obscure ticket mishap. It sucked watching that plane push back without me, and being escorted out of the airport to the curb.

Plan B and then C fell through. The airport hotel is full, and I just got kicked out of the Barcalounger I'd appropriated in the vacant medical assistance kiosk. Ok, let's find plan D. So I am waiting near the curb until my 4:30am re-check-in for the next flight out. It's going to be a long couple days getting home.

As I waited, I began to pray to know the truth of this situation. I say this prayer a lot. And in fact, there are a lot of truths here, some of them easier to feel than others. One that I've been working to face is a feeling of being special, or wanting to be seen as special, because I get to travel frequently. There has been a subtle "Gee, look at me" kind of air about how I talk about where I get to go. Plus, I have "status" with my airline and wait in shorter lines than most travelers. It is really subtle, but it's also been pointed out to me that it feels off. It's important to keep looking at the subtle things. And I've wanted to know what is underneath this.

The feelings and thoughts that arose when I was denied boarding were a cascading event. First, indignation ("But I have *status!*"). Then anxious pleading ("God, please step in and fix this. You got this, right?"). Followed by fretting ("I've been abandoned, again."). And irritation ("Inept airline people!"). Finally, gratitude ("A lot of people worked hard to help me."). Also wanting to feel special ("Yay, I have another travel story to tell."). And at last, curiosity ("What does this experience have to teach me?")

Fortunately I did not impose my feelings too much on my fellow human beings. My deeper self was there the whole time, chill. *Nothing* can rock its world. This is what doing the work looks like at this stage: part of me is centered, knows everything is fine, and is simply observing what is happening inside. Still, some parts of me aren't so connected and experience emotions upwelling. And so my *outer* response to the gate agents wasn't *completely*

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chill, but was respectful and didn't make it painful for those around me.

As I pray for truth, I see the proximity of the child consciousness feelings of pleading and abandonment next to the feelings of indignity and being special. What feels truthful is that a seven-year-old boy inside me wanted to feel seen and loved, and when that didn't happen the way he wanted, he childishly latched onto wanting to be being seen as special. And when feeling special didn't happen, the old stories came up. And then the stories got covered up by feelings like irritation and disheartenment.

The child inside me couldn't have things the way he wanted, and my work now is to help him grow up. When he is activated, I literally pause, connect with that part of me, and hold him. That's my job as an adult, because no one else can do this for me.

This holding exercise shows me that I'm fine, and all is well. I still have to wait at the airport, of course, but in this moment I feel alive in the flow of life. I feel deeply connected inside, even as I hold the experience of part of me that felt disconnected a moment ago. I think this is what doing the work is about. Moving through the mundane of life while witnessing what is going on inside, coming into more truthful awareness of it, and then holding "what is" from the inner place of a grounded self.

7

So You're the Rubber and I'm the Glue? | Our Work

We need to start recognizing the presence of any disharmony in ourselves as being code for Not In Truth. If we're paying attention, what we'll notice isn't just that we are experiencing a particular disharmony, but in some way, it has the same look and feel of something we've experienced before. Many times before.

This is caused by the fact that our mistaken beliefs about the world, which the Guide calls “images”, have a knack for drawing to us experiences that will seem to validate them—to make them appear correct. Their magnetic nature, while irritating on the surface of things, is part of the grand plan for us to bring our soul dents front and center for healing. Once we grasp this fact, we will change our perspective and go out in search of these patterns, for they reveal a lot.

The Guide's suggestion for how to go about this excavation work is to do something called a Daily Review. At the end of each day, we only need to jot down a few notes about what we experienced that day: the feelings and associated thoughts. This isn't the same thing as journaling. In this case, we want to be brief and to the point so that over time, we can look back through our collection of days and start to pick out the patterns. For we can't fix what we can't find.

Our Work

Once we start to get the gist of what upsets our apple cart, we can start noodling around to find the phrase that resonates with us as being “the truth.” ‘I’m not enough and I’ll never be enough,’ or ‘Everyone I love leaves me.’ Our images won’t contain big, fancy words because they got created when we were very young. And they may be elusive to capture since we believe them—hook, line and sinker. This is why it is often not just helpful, but necessary, to be working with someone who is trained to spot images as they go flying by.



There is a particular kind of image, or belief, we need to go in search of, because it’s the one most responsible for our being handed a return ticket to this dualistic plane. We can call it our split. Keep in mind, we are each, at this point, a stitched together Frankenstein made up of many splintered-off aspects that are being loosely hung together to allow us to appear as a single form. Underneath all this fracturing and fragmenting, though, there is a *core split* in which we are literally torn in two by two opposing beliefs.

Generally speaking, we adopt one half of our split from our mother and the other half from our father. So for example, if a man has a father who was very demanding and yet always in competition with him, giving him the silent treatment if he ever seemed to outshine the father, he might conclude: ‘if I do well, I will be rejected.’ Meanwhile, the mother was also demanding and highly critical anytime the man didn’t do something well, like getting good grades. So then the other half of the split would be: ‘if I don’t do well, I will be rejected.’

At the level of our split, we can’t win. We spend our lives in anxiety and turmoil, ping-ponging between two opposing beliefs that both lead to pain. This is an example of a dualistic trap we must bring all the way to the surface of our awareness so we can begin to catch it in action. Now, it might seem the work is simply the unearthing of the heart-rending misunderstanding contained in our split, bringing it into our conscious awareness. In fact, it is only at this point that our real work begins. For just because we are aware of a mistaken belief, that doesn’t stop it from operating.

First, be aware there is a very real tendency for us to bring an image or

split into our awareness, only to lose a grip on it and have it slip back into the black sea of our unconscious. So word to the wise, if something comes up, write it down in black and white. Get to know it. Start to look for where it shows up, and be prepared to start seeing it everywhere. Because our hidden beliefs have a pervasive effect throughout our lives; they are ubiquitous and insidious.

Second, realize this: our images aren't the real cause of all our ills, our Lower Self is. And our Lower Self is just using our images for it's wicked games of hide-and-go-away. The work lies in our willingness to die into our mistaken beliefs and wrap our arms around the reality that we have been wrong. Knowing the truth—both of who we are, and of any situation in our lives—takes away the wedge the Lower Self was leveraging to keep us separate.

So in the example given, what we need to also uncover is the truth: neither of these things is true. We are lovable and we are loved, not only by God but also by our own Higher Self and other people in our lives—albeit imperfectly—and no matter what we do or don't do, we can't ever be rejected from the Kingdom of Heaven, for that is our true home. We've just forgotten this.

We have spent our lives resisting and avoiding, behaving in ways we hope will prevent ever again experiencing the feeling of humiliation. We must come to see that humility, in fact, is the pathway to the divine. We must become willing to give up our wrong position that says, 'But this is how it is. And based on this, I need to continually defend myself so I stay safe.'

If our hidden beliefs were true, this would make sense. But they are not true and our lives are less satisfying for them. For they cause us to spend our days in a perpetual crouch, tilting at windmills and behaving in ways that make people respond from their own negativity, which only makes it seem true we needed to keep our weapons half-cocked.



In Jill's Experience

Over the course of doing my work, I have surfaced a number of images, or mistaken beliefs, which act like truths that become self-evident. Our lives

Our Work

become these ongoing dramas in which we recreate the offending “truth”, only to inwardly writhe in anguish over how painful it is to keep doing so. In a nutshell, that’s how this whole humanity thing works.

A few of my images are:

- I’m not enough and I’ll never be enough.
- People intend to be mean to me.
- I didn’t make the cut.

So when I don’t get recognized at work for my contribution, that will butt up against my belief this was intentional, because people, I believe, intend to hurt me. Further, it underscores my belief ‘I’m not enough.’ At that point, believing ‘and I’ll never be enough’ is just piling on. It’s like basically saying this pain will go on forever, and indeed, that’s how it has felt.

It has also been uber-helpful for me to uncover my split. This happened while I was essentially journaling, although at the time, I had the intention of venting my spleen to my Helper about something that was eating me up. Regardless, while writing, I managed to catch a thread from my Higher Self, and found myself writing out my split.

First was the part about the pain I experienced when I was seen. I was raised in a Midwest farming community, and while I personally had never lived on a farm, I had relatives who farmed and both of my parents had been raised on farms. If I had to summarize my take on things it would be this: if I was seen, I was put to work.

Now, for a lot of farming families, that’s how things are. Yet that doesn’t mean everyone who grows up on a farm has a bad reaction to this. Our take on things may or may not be a match for the reality of what happened, and that’s OK. What matters is our take. This is the environment that brought my soul dent up to the surface.

I hated feeling I was only appreciated for my contribution to housework. So for me, if I was seen, it hurt. As a result, I developed a way of cloaking myself so I could show up in life and actually not be seen. One can imagine how that might create a conflict regarding the other side of my split—the thing I got from my other parent—which was the feeling of not being seen. And of course that hurt.

The truth about our split is it’s a needle we can never thread. The only way out is to just die into the pain of it. When something rubs me the wrong

way, I need to pause and ask myself: is the problem here that I don't like the way I'm being seen? Or do they simply not see me?

As I have discovered, by doing my work of healing, I can release the residual pain tied up in my inner contradictions. One could argue this won't change much, but in fact it changes everything. It changes how I feel about the world, letting go of my case that 'the sons-a-bitches are out to get me.' And perhaps most importantly, it makes me curious about what's up with the other—what's making them act as they do?

Ten out of ten times, the other person is a human being who has images of their own. When our images are charged with tension, we magnetically attract people to us who have matching images that will strike a chord with ours. This is God at work, helping us see what we must in order to heal what we came here to work on.

In Scott's Experience

The thing about images I can't say strongly enough is that they are *unconscious* beliefs. The thing about *unconscious* is that most often you have *no idea* of it. In fact, images are often buried so deeply you can often only first find them indirectly, from the outer evidence of life. Even in writing about my images I wonder if anyone would seriously believe this coming from a fairly normal, competent human being. Yet talking with many peers on the path, they too have found crazy beliefs in there. That said, shocking as they may seem at first to the conscious mind, once an image surfaces, we also realize it's what we have long believed to be true, albeit unconsciously.

In the first chapter, I wrote about an image I found: "If I am strong, I will be loved." I think this one became set around age 13, during a difficult time in my life following the death of my mother. Well, it gets even more interesting...

Growing up I had one nagging, won't-ever-go-away health challenge related to my sinuses. Starting at a really young age, like before age two, I had terrible sinusitis. I was put on prescription decongestants almost year round in order to keep my nose clear. A couple times every a year I would develop full bronchitis and have a few weeks of misery.

None of my doctors could find anything wrong. I was allergy tested a few times, always coming back negative to everything. I even had my sinuses

scoped once, hoping they would find something up there, like maybe a pencil eraser from the late 60s or a Hot Wheels car tire. It continued into adulthood, and I thought it was just my lot in life.

Then in my early 30s I started getting some clues that sinus congestion wasn't just a random thing, nor was it purely a medical condition. After all, I had some periods of a few months with completely clear sinuses. I began to get curious about what could actually be driving this. I began stacking up all the clues in my life, of when I was breathing clear and when it changed back, of when it stayed a low level of clogged and when it developed into sinusitis. And I began praying to know the truth.

Then one day I had a powerful knowing that I held a hidden belief: "If I am sick, I will be loved." I was shocked. I was also confused, due to my opposing image: "If I am strong, I will be loved."

So part of me was driven to be strong, to keep with my Ironman training. And just when I would get strong, the other part would kick in and I would become sick. This would set back my training. My belief I must be strong to be loved would foil the part of me that intended to be sick. And the belief I must be sick to be loved would foil the part of me that intended to be strong. Around and around I would go. I shake my head thinking about it.

And yet it's only through a process of deep listening—and not judging—that the clues to the next stage of healing arise. I came to realize that as a toddler, I would stop breathing or pant with shallow breaths. When I still did that as an adult, I simply wasn't moving air, or chi, up high into my lungs, and they would clog up. When I changed those things, my lung function improved dramatically.

About six months into my relationship with Jill, we had a fairly major issue surface and in the middle of our struggles, my lungs went into spasm. I was in pain for days with a deep ragged cough, even after we had resolved our difficulty. To my body, I was re-experiencing an old trauma and my habitual way of coping and reacting kicked in. Healing can be a long and painstaking process.

8

My Favorite F-Word | Freezing, Fighting or Fleeing

Our seemingly hardwired responses to the ills of the world that cause us angst are referred to as Emotional Reactions by the Guide. Emotional Reactions can be identified by their tendency to carry a greater charge than the offending situation would logically illicit. Often, in fact, it can help just to maintain the perspective that ‘It could be possible for someone else—certainly not me, but somebody else—to be exposed to the same treatment and not be so bothered by it.’ So maybe then, our feelings aren’t ironclad facts.

With a long history of intentional—albeit unconscious—numbing behind us, many of us find ourselves opening up into emotions that confuse and disorient us. As we thaw, we start to have feelings we don’t like and are at a loss to control. For immature feeling don’t come tumbling out in tidy little packages. No, the work of feeling our feelings starts out as messy, noisy business, and only much later becomes a bit more buttoned up, while nonetheless always tending to lean in the direction of untidy.

Consider that humanity gives a lot of rope and margin to the processes of growing up mentally and physically. No one expects college-level work from a fifth grader, and most varsity athletes in high school have been developing muscles and skills since they were in middle school, if not earlier.

Freezing, Fighting or Fleeing

We have patience for the work that must be done, realizing expertise can only develop with time, effort and perseverance.

But when it comes to our feelings, we want our tears to be timely and our expressions of pain to make perfect sense and make us look good. But we are kidding ourselves. Emotions will need some time and attention before they are anything but unwieldy, if not downright ugly. Even expressions of joy and happiness may take some getting used to, for emotions are not a pick-and-choose buffet. We can't suppress those we hope to avoid but have an open spigot to those that delight.

If we have frozen our feelings—as all of us have to some extent due to the script we are each handed when we elect to become human—we're going to need to slowly warm ourselves back up to room temperature. Like submerging freezing-cold fingers into a pan of lukewarm water, there will be an ache that naturally accompanies this process.

To wit, our first attempts to express our feelings, if done directly to others who have wronged us, are apt to exacerbate the situation instead of improve it. This happens for several reasons. First, we tend to co-mingle our feelings with the distorted beliefs wrapped up in them, making us spew angry and violent words at those who apparently validate our conclusions about an unfair, unkind world. Second, since we don't yet know how to take responsibility for our own feelings, we often proceed by blaming others for making us feel this way. Third, the cruel tendencies of our Lower Self will attempt to hurt the other in retaliation for the pain they have inflicted on us. And so the wheel goes round and round.

This is a principle reason for doing our healing work under the tutelage of a trained healer—a Pathwork Helper, therapist, spiritual counselor, or the like—who can help us access and express what is currently inside us. In this way, we make space for something new—new wisdom, new perspective, new compassion, new courage—to be born in us. Once we shift our relationship to our own inner wounds, we will be able to circle back to the people we feel 'have done us wrong,' bringing new awareness for how to go about shifting our relationship with them. We'll be able to move toward connection, instead of further separation. As it stands, our frozen inner blocks also obstruct our inner light that is always ready to guide us in navigating the unavoidable thorny patches of life.



If we're attuned to the voice of spiritual seekers everywhere, we've likely heard the mantra that there is only one force in the universe, and that is love. While true that at the core of our beings we are indeed deep wells of never-ending love, the temporary truth of what lies on the surface of our beings—crusting over our Higher Self—is anything-but-love. We all have pockets of hate and spite, stashes of greed and envy, hidden corners of anger and rage. If we don't know this to be true about ourselves, we haven't yet scratched the surface in doing our inner work. And since non-loving feelings are what is present now, that's what we must attend to. To look the other way is to continue blundering our way down an unlit path wearing a mask of defendedness.

When we're in an Emotional Reaction, the reason we are bothered by what happens around us is never the offending thing itself—the problem is that the strings of old, still-raw wounds have been plucked and are now singing out tunes of their own. In such a situation, one of those split-off aspects of our beings has come to life and started to relive the pain and anxiety connected to a previous life experience the young child was not equipped to handle. Subsequently, in the blink of an eye, we go into a self-selected reaction: we freeze, we fight or we flee.

When this happens, our work starts by bringing reason to our emotions, recognizing there must be a mistaken belief we are not yet aware of buried deep inside us. *Ah ha! I must not be in truth.* But this same split-off aspect is now in no position to find its way out of the darkness it has gotten lost in. And so it is the ego that needs to wake up and recognize what's going on. The ego must pause, take a breath, and begin to the open that doorway to the Higher Self where a vast, loving wisdom is just waiting to be tapped. The ego must remember to pray.



The soul of every human being is comprised of three fundamental layers: the Higher Self, Lower Self and Mask Self. (See more details in *Spilling*

the Script.) We'd all like to think we are beaming beacons of Higher Self light, and indeed, sometimes this is true; we all have areas in our lives where our finest qualities shine through into the world. And if that were the end of it, we wouldn't need to come here. Alas, we've each also got Lower Self energies in need of transformation, and these are notorious light-blockers.

The Lower Self is a highly charged aspect of our beings made up entirely of twisted Higher-Self currents. There is not a foible or fault that can't be unwound to reveal its original glorious face. But in its low-frequency Lower-Self state, it's not a thing of beauty. Just below the surface of our conscious mind, we are keenly aware of this, knowing that if our negative tendencies are eye-spied, we will certainly not be well liked, much less loved. So here's what we do: we attempt to cover up the Lower Self with a mask.

One might think there are an infinite variety of masks to choose from; in fact there are only three: Power Mask, Love Mask and Serenity Mask. It's worthwhile getting to know which has become our favorite go-to mask, realizing we may use one mask in one area of our life and another in a different area, all depending on which we think is apt to be most successful. (See more detailed explanations of our masks in *Spilling the Script*.)

There are two important things to note about the mask. First off, the mask is not real. What do we mean by this? This duck-and-cover aspect of ourselves is simply a strategy for keeping ourselves safe and deflecting others from seeing the untoward machinations of our Lower Self. But that's all it is: a strategy. The mask is flimsily constructed and completely ineffective at doing its job. Because others can readily detect the unreal nature of our mask, and time-and-time again our mask will trigger them into their own defensive maneuvers. In short, it creates the problems it is designed to avoid—namely, that others will try to hurt us—and doesn't actually do flip in keeping others from spotting our negativity. No one buys the mask.

So the second thing to realize is if we want to do any serious transformational work, we're going to have to get at our Lower Self; we're going to have to risk taking down our shields by taking off our mask. As long as we believe that our mask actually works, we won't have the necessary impetus to make such a move. But once we understand how and why we constructed our mask, it will be easy as pie to set it aside. It may be a habit, but it's truly not helpful.

Note of caution: this doesn't mean we can go around ripping off other people's mask in an attempt to "help them out" by making them get more real. The psyche can experience quite a shattering if this work is not done intentionally and somewhat methodically. We need to bring reason to the young inner parts of ourselves who cling to the idea that staying defended is a good strategy for staying safe. We must come to see how we are the ones provoking others' Lower Self, or at least encouraging them to also stay in their mask, when we present them with our Mask Self. Truth is, people are often more likely to connect with us when we let them see our Lower Self than when we shellac ourselves over with a mask. For although the Lower Self is ugly, at least it is real.



In Jill's Experience

We each have a different personal favorite way of responding when we get our feelings hurt. Some will rise up in rage and try to control their world through manipulation. Some will suck up to others and attempt to slime the world with their "niceness." Some will check out, finding a favorite way to be in the world and not here at the same time. **Me, I run.**

My tendency to run surfaces in my relationship with Scott when something happens that I see through the lens of 'he doesn't care about me,' or 'I didn't make the cut.' Note, there doesn't need to be any truth to this at all for some young split-off aspect of me to strap on her shoes and take off. By the time I realize my nose is out of joint, parts of me can already be in another county. In those immature parts of me, I'm not yet able to tolerate the intensity of some old pain.

This is when I literally need to sit and hold these hurting parts of myself, actively asking my Higher Self to be present in the moment. I need to release the pain she is carrying, hear what untruth she is holding, and re-educate her with the wisdom that flows from my inner connection with the divine.

We might think, 'Our Higher Self is always there, so why must we invite it in?' Because our work is to open the doorway, to actively want to connect

with God within. That's what makes doing this work of getting to know the self spiritual. Even though God has been with us this whole time—our Higher Self contains an essence of God—I must remember to knock and ask God to come in.

In Scott's Experience

In our lives, both as a couple and as individuals, I am noticing that Jill and I are more and more able to stay fully present with each other and life. The years of doing the work really do pay off in the end. Life and relationship just plain feel better being present, because another way to describe being present is being vibrantly alive. But we also trip up now and again, having to recognize where we've "gone", work with that, and move back to presence.

My tendency has been to simply check out. I'm still here in a way, but also not here. I've closed off access, raised the bridge from the moat, so to speak. It was a way to deal with the frightening situations in life as a little kid, and later as a teen. I had aggressive hostility thrown my way, and rather than stand up and fight it, I simply checked out and went another direction wherever possible. As with Jill, I literally have to pause sometimes and hold this young kid in me. It was useful growing up, I guess, but like all pseudo-solutions it has been problematic as an adult.

Jill's running and my checking out are just ways the little kid inside tried to stay safe from what it perceived as dangerous situations growing up. These patterns are especially difficult to deal with when we become adults in relationship though, because they form almost an autonomic emotional nervous system. Until we recognized it, Jill and I would ping back and forth to the point where, without knowing it, we ended up in different emotional zip codes.

Doing the work has allowed me to address my tendency to isolate, and to put a minute gap of space between trigger and reaction so I can shift out of it before I'm too far in it. I'm also more able to recognize the general patterns happening between people in teams I lead in my corporate life. These public spaces become much easier to navigate when we can see through the patterns.

9

Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are | Hiding

If we were to summarize the human condition in one word, it might be “hiding.” For it’s the unknown parts of ourselves that have brought us here to this dualistic sphere, for doing this work of healing and returning to God. We were once in union with God and all that is, we turned away from God and from the truth of who we are when we fell from grace, and now it’s a long uphill battle to get all the way back, to fully see and know ourselves once again. We won’t get there in one lifetime, and certainly not in one weeklong spiritual retreat.

In order for this transformative work to happen, we have to be motivated to trudge our way back out of the darkness. This is not an easy task, nor a pleasant one. But how many of us are inspired to tackle a tough job if the alternative—continuing to avoid it—isn’t worse? If we’re not deeply affected by our difficulties, we’ll continue to sweep them under the rug and go back to watching TV.

So when we arrive on planet Earth, we have papers in one hand that delineate the task we’ve opted to take on in this lifetime, and an inability to remember that this isn’t all of who we are, in the other. Not all of our Higher Self incarnates in its full intensity. For if it did, it would continue to outshine the Lower-Self aspects that, until now, we have routinely avoided addressing.

Hiding

As we've already discussed, our parents and life situation have teed up our challenges for us, and we have conveniently packed away all our troubles into our unconscious. Now is the time for the unpacking. We must slowly and meticulously drag out of hiding all the parts of ourselves we deliberately avoid seeing and which have lost their luster.

When we do this, the first thing we are bound to bump into will be the outermost layer of our mask: shame. Shame is that crushing and convincing feeling that if the worst of us were to be revealed—and often we mistakenly believe the worst of us is the essence of us—we would just die. Of shame. It's like a cloaking device that hopes to keep others' prying eyes from peering behind our mask, and it keeps us equally mired in our strategies of avoiding what's inside ourselves.

According to the Guide, beings in the Spirit World have a name for planet Earth that roughly translates into Land of Lack of Awareness. It is our resistance to bringing out what lives within our shadow that causes us to suffer, not the darkness itself. The beautiful thing about shame, though, is that once we push our way through it, using discernment to take appropriate risk to reveal ourselves in an appropriate way to others—perhaps people who are also participating in doing this transformative work—we will find the lid of shame lifts off.

Right here, hidden within this first baby step, is a gift. For if we take such a risk, we will get a glimpse of what it means that “all is one.” By opening up and sharing our pain and struggles with others also consciously walking a spiritual path, we will discover we are not alone. In this way, we can step out of our illusion of separation and get a taste of the amazing Oneness woven throughout this planet.

With the Law of Brotherhood at our back, we can begin to realize that not only are we not all alone in our hurting, but we don't need to remain alone in our healing. In fact, no one can do this healing work alone. If we open in prayer to inviting in the help our Higher Self can call forth, we will be met. If we ask, we will receive. When we knock, the door opens.



In Jill's Experience

When I was having my book *Spilling the Script* translated into Portuguese, and then later into Spanish, I was struck by the word used in those languages for “mask”: *máscara*. Flashback to a day in college when I was walking to school and had the frightening realization I had forgotten to put on my mascara. Instantly I had the thought: *People won't be able to see me!* All these years later, I am struck by this perfect out-picturing of my inner dilemma: *I hide myself behind a mask—my mascara—so I will be seen.*

Later in life, after the birth of my first son, I faced the usual challenge of needing to take off the baby-weight I had gained. Working in a new job where I was having a hard time fitting in, I found myself standing in the break room eating a piece of cake. Across my mind flew: *If I lose this weight, they won't be able to see me.* And yet I was deeply bothered by being seen with added padding.

For much of my life, I have wanted so much to be seen for my accomplishments. And at the same time, I hide. It was helpful to hear my first Helper say that it's natural and normal to want recognition for our accomplishments at work. The problem is, we mistakenly believe that's a place to get love.

In Scott's Experience

If someone had asked me about “hiding” during college and grad school, or my early work life, or my triathlon years, I would have looked at them a bit askance. *Of course I'm not hiding!* I covered up my hiding pretty well, including from myself.

I even drew a picture of this many years ago as part of a homework assignment for a Pathwork transformation program weekend: there was a bed with a body-shaped bulge in the blankets and two eyes peering out from the shadow of the covers. The thing is, at the time, I hadn't gone far enough to describe who was hiding and what that part of me was hiding from. It was just eyes, with the fearful thing not shown in the drawing. That was a hard stage, because fear of the unknown has a way of being unbounded.

In my experience, the hiding peels off in layers, in stages, until eventually you're free. In one of the latter stages I realized part of me was hiding in plain sight. A young part of me could just freeze, like an animal in the yard,

Hiding

thinking “if I stay still nobody will see me.”

As I worked with this with my Helper, I remembered myself sitting in a particular chair in the lower-level family room of a house I grew up in. My mom was ill with leukemia for many years, but I wasn't told about her illness. I knew but I didn't know. Something terrible was hiding in plain sight.

On the surface level everything was suburbia, yet I was keenly aware something unspoken was very wrong in the house. I had the thought, all those years ago, that “if I just stay still, everything will be ok.” I'd unconsciously carried that thought for years, and of course, it doesn't work very well.

In the end, it was never about what my parents did or didn't do. My parents were doing the best they could with a very difficult situation. They didn't cause this original wound in me, but rather they brought it to the surface. It is only through hindsight that I can see how my inner work was out-pictured in what I experienced as a child.

The real gift of this work is completing the process of growing up and finding freedom, in the truest sense. As a result, I can now hold my parents with more compassion too.

10

I Spy with My Little Eye | Little-L Lower Self

So how did we become wired for always wanting to be right? Why do we run and hide? And why is this behavior so blessed hard to give up? Sorting out answers to these important questions requires we first get to know the Little-L portion of the Lower Self. This is that inner child whose motto in life is “I can’t”; this is the immature, split-off parts of ourselves we need to call back. So childhood is where we must go in search of understanding.

The problem is not that our parents weren’t perfect. More to the point, their imperfections are what made our parents the perfect choice to surface our own imperfections. For what’s the point in coming to this sphere if we’re not going to be shown our work? We could just as well have stayed put.

Enter: Mom and Dad, the perfect people to help us surface our split and unearth our faults. Note, if our life experience didn’t involve the traditional mom-and-dad family, we somehow still got the setup our soul most needed. Building on this premise that our set of parents, or life situation, have been carefully hand-selected for their ability to zoom in on our pre-existing wounds, we are going to experience pain. No two ways about it, every child will come face-to-face with a life situation that causes their particular soul to feel some kind of acute pain.

If the pain we experienced during childhood was generally not so intense, hats off to us for work we previously attended to. We may get to

Little-L Lower Self

enjoy a less rocky relationship with our parents and siblings than some others. But if it was, to our way of seeing things, more heavily intense, we didn't stick to our task in previous incarnations and now the piper must be paid. Whatever we got, it was an exact match for what our soul needed at this point in our journey and we agreed it's what would serve us and our home-ward-bound plans the best. (See more in *Gems*, the chapter called *The Pain of Injustice and the Truth About Fairness*.)

It may help to consider the way in which siblings often have markedly different responses to their childhood atmosphere. One child in a family may have found a particular aspect very disturbing while another felt that aspect left a relatively minor mark. It's all related to the size and depth of our pre-existing soul dent, which is what has precipitated the selection of the environment for this incarnation. Plus, over time, souls develop karma with each other, so we often travel through lifetime after lifetime sharing work with another soul until we resolve the piece that has us hooked on our unresolved issues.



One of the universal plights we face as human beings is coming to grips with our hidden belief that we don't matter. During the Fall, when everything that was at one time positive got twisted into its inverse, we lost our awareness that we are each special and loved aspects of the Oneness, an important aspect of the essence of God. Instead, we began to see ourselves as unlovable and not enough, and ended up in childhood circumstances that supported our untrue convictions.

To feel unlovable and unloved creates such a deep pain and sense of humiliation for a child that we will spend the rest of our lives running to avoid feeling it. It is our fear of this pain that fuels so much of our defend- edness. Our fears will compound and morph until we are unable to walk around in the world without a sense something painful lurks in every shadow. Fear, then, is one of the three primary faults we collectively must grapple with, and which is based on the illusory notion that pain is something to fear—that it has the power to annihilate us—and that there must be something wrong with us.

This mistaken belief that we are broken, we're not enough or we don't matter is part of the I-am-less-than conclusion we draw as children, and it leads us into the second main fault, which is pride. Pride and the associated behavior that attempts to project an aura of I-am-better-than, is nothing more than a compensating reaction to the underlying belief I-am-less-than.

From this wrong conclusion, we launch into a life of comparing and competing, perpetually trying to one-up others and prove to the world we do matter, after all, and we're enough. This striving to be better is not the same as our desire to do our best or be our best. No, this version of striving is propelled by a false conclusion that we need to right a wrong. Stuck as we are in immature, childish thinking, we're mired in the dualistic trap of a black-and-white reality where everything boils down to essentially a fight between life and death. So we are fighting here as if our lives depend on it.

But what we're really fighting against is this illusion that somehow we don't measure up. Our work then is to die into this dark misconception and come out the other side into the light of truth: the value of our true self has never been in question; we were the ones who didn't believe in our own worth. This is the illusion we must die into, and one in which we remain hopelessly entangled until we change our tack and start to fight our way out.

The third of the Big-Three Faults is self-will. This is our propensity for forcing and controlling, manipulating and maneuvering, or conversely digging in and denying, avoiding and refusing to budge. With self-will, we misguidedly use our will to do whatever we must do to get our way—the immature inner child wants what it wants, when it wants it—and avoid mature behaviors like patience, acceptance and letting go so God's will can prevail.

All our other faults cascade from these three basic faults of fear, pride and self-will. (See more about faults in *Spilling the Script* and *Bones: A Building-Block Collection of 19 Fundamental Spiritual Teachings*.) What's more, these Three Musketeers always travel in a pack. Meaning, if we find one, we would be wise to search for the other two so we can surface the entire constellation of illusion. We must come to see our Lower Self in action and understand the conclusions on which it is operating before we can unwind our twisted behaviors and decide to make a different choice.

Our goal, then, from the Little-L Lower Self's perspective, is to escape

feeling pain and facing our fears. We will freeze, fight or flee in our efforts to avoid feeling worthless, which is what we secretly fear is the truth about who we are. If we didn't believe in our unconscious mind that this were true, none of these ineffective defenses and reactions would be necessary. We would be able to see there must be a better way and we would give up the ghost and change. Right? There's just one problem: the Big-L Lower Self.



In Jill's Experience

I've been doing this work for a couple decades, as has Scott, so it's humbling to admit that in our first six months together, my young inner self did a runner no fewer than half a dozen times. It was a bit exhausting for both of us. One minute we're fine, the next, where's Jill? And seldom was it over anything all that big.

But that's the thing about our primary relationships, they drop into the slot of our original wounding and rub raw anything that hasn't already been healed. The progress I can claim is that rather than blaming Scott for making me hurt, or dropping into a hole of victimhood where I believe he is responsible for my pain, I take self-responsibility for doing my own work.

That said, there is something incredibly healing about letting Scott hold me while I sob it out, even when he's the one who did the thing that triggered my Emotional Reaction. But at this point, both of us know the way this goes. Both of us realize that something happened and we'll want to sort that out at some point, but in the moment, what matters is that this young hurting part gets some attention. We can welcome her and make space for her to let go of the age-old pain she's holding, knowing, 1) this isn't all of me, 2) I'm currently caught in illusion, and 3) we can come out the other side of this together.

As the Guide tells us, over and over, any time we're in disharmony, we're not in truth. And the truth is, we're all one. Scott and I really are on the same team, each working equally hard to clear out old debris so we can be in harmony together. For that to happen, though, we both must be willing to do our own work.

In Scott's Experience

The biggest challenge I've experienced working with the Little-L Lower Self is its tendency to go into a trance. Take the tendency to hide in plain sight, and go back to the story of skiing at Lake Tahoe. If I could have remained aware of this habituation, and noticed immediately that part of me was hiding, the interaction between Jill and me would likely have been very different. We could have both stayed present with each other. But that is the nature of these things.

When I first learned about this process a decade ago, it explained so much. I had a teacher at the time who was focused on this stage of the work. The Little-L Lower Self lives in the past, she said, where it got stuck. The split-off consciousness there has its own beliefs, will, feelings and sense of time. It just spins in an endless pattern, perhaps something like "it's not safe, therefore I will hide," and stays just below our conscious awareness.

When it is activated, it isn't aware enough to know we've gotten stuck in an endless loop. My teacher showed me the first step is always to break the trance. For if I'm stuck in the trance, I will continue to act from that place. That's what happened in Tahoe. I simply wasn't aware that part of me had begun hiding behind a mask.

It's really helpful to have a partner who can say "I notice something is off. What's going on here?" Just that can sometimes break the trance, which enables me to bring a higher functioning to the situation.

It can be disheartening to keep repeating this interaction again and again. But each time I bring consciousness to it, each time I listen to that little boy in me that felt lost all those years ago, I heal just a little more. The power of the trance drops just a little bit. I'm able to exit more easily, and to stay just a little bit more present to Jill. Eventually those little bits add up to a lot.

11

What are we Fighting For? | Big-L Lower Self

Unlike the Little-L Lower Self who covers behind a feeling of “I can’t,” the Big-L Lower Self digs in its heels and says: “I won’t.” Its signature move is to be destructive, and it doesn’t care if our behavior works against our own best interest. It feels most alive when latched onto an energy current that supports its negative intention. Perhaps the harshest reality about this part of ourselves is its penchant for out-and-out cruelty, both to ourselves and to others. Harsher yet: we like it.

Yes, believe it or not, we enjoy our negativity. For those who haven’t yet worked their way into the deeper end of the pool, this may seem hard to believe. But in truth, the reality that we get so much pleasure from our cruelty is the reason we are loath to give it up. With our present-day backwards wiring, we find our connection to our life force through our wicked and life-destroying ways, and until we are ready to face the fact that this is the temporary but current truth of who we are—in the Lower-Self layer of our being—we won’t be willing or ready to give it up.

Our work, then, requires we learn to reorient our will so that we start identifying and challenging our own Lower Self as it operates today. We must learn to recognize the ways in which we access our life force by getting pleasure from being destructive or cruel. We must learn to pray for help from our own Higher Self so we will have the courage needed to fight the good fight, and take on this formidable foe.

For the Big-L Lower Self is no slouch. As good and creative and smart and clever as we are in the best parts of ourselves—in our Higher Self—that’s how crafty and conniving and slippery we are in the worst—in our Lower Self. We need to catch on to the Lower-Self script running in the background of our beings so we can follow the best approach for cleaning ourselves up.



When we start to do this work, we will begin to understand there is a sizable gap between what we think with our conscious mind and what’s really going on under the surface of our awareness. Remember, the unconscious is the repository of all the faulty conclusions we’ve drawn about life that don’t hold up to adult scrutiny. So they’ve sunk down out of sight where they fester and foul up the works.

In our conscious minds, we may be perfectly clear that what we want in life is some variety of happiness and peace. And whatever we think will bring us this could be ours, if it weren’t for one small problem: we have an opposite viewpoint operating behind the scenes. If that weren’t so, we would already have our heart’s desire.

Often, we want something so badly we think this is proof of our true desire. In fact, what this usually points up is the presence of an underground countermotion going in exactly the opposite direction. For example, if we feel we want to find a loving partner in life, and especially if we feel a sense of urgency about wanting this, there is likely a hidden inner part of us fleeing in the other direction, holding some kind of belief like ‘I don’t matter enough for the people I love to stay.’

If we don’t surface these hidden aspects with their frantic energy and anxious behavior, we’ll continue to manifest partners in life who, what do you know, don’t stay. Beyond this, we’ll show up in ways that will assure that this is so, all the while scratching our heads because we don’t understand what makes us behave the way we do, acting in a manner that drives people away.

If we follow the thread of our child logic, we may be able to see that in this hidden-away part of ourselves, we believe we are avoiding pain by not

letting someone get close—especially since we secretly believe they will eventually leave and hurt us anyways. But what, in fact, is a likely reason someone might leave? They feel they can never get close to us. Now we start to get a sense of the real problem.

From here, it will take some work for us to start letting go, taking a risk to let our guard down and let someone in. But we'll need someone to help guide our way so we don't do this from the warped perspective of an immature inner child who believes it's death to ever get its feelings hurt. Let's face it, we won't go from zero to 60 overnight, instantly attracting someone who doesn't have their own issues yet to resolve and with whom we are sure to at least occasionally stub our toes.

We have to learn that this is life and it's not perfect. Sometimes we're going to get hurt. People are going to be attracted to us exactly because they are a great mirror for us. When they show us where our work is, that will be an opportunity for us to face some aspect of ourselves we haven't yet wanted to see. This is the gift of relationship and it's not always fun. This is also why the Guide refers to relationships as a "path within a path." They will bring up our stuff, and God bless them for this.



In Jill's Experience

I've come to realize that the fuel in my running shoes is hate. This feels like Big-L energy that wants to make someone pay for what they've done to me. When I was little, hate felt like the only tool I had at my disposal. *If you don't care about me, I hate you.* This isn't something I was consciously aware of until one day I saw hatred leaking sideways out of me, and I realized it was connected to the feeling someone didn't care about me.

The not-caring issue had to do with my work regarding these very teachings from the Guide. It's been a long row to hoe, rewriting 100 lectures and compiling them into books that make this material more accessible. But my efforts to have my work recognized by the existing organization have largely fallen on deaf ears. And this has plucked the strings of my images like crazy.

What this has given rise to was a feeling of hatred toward the people and

governing body that have a hold on the spiritual teachings I deeply cherish. Now that doesn't sound very spiritual, does it? At some point in our work though, there is going to be a dying process. In this case, I had to die into the reality that for whatever reason, I wasn't going to get seen, much less embraced, by the Pathwork Foundation.

Getting over hate looks a lot like the process of forgiveness: we don't do it for the other guy. No, when we buy into the dark energies of Lower Self, we are colluding with evil. We're choosing separation instead of connection, and in the end, we're the ones who feel the pinch.

I don't hate the Pathwork organization—*Hey, I love these teachings!*—but that doesn't mean I'm not affected by their behavior towards me. That's the tricky thing about doing this work. We need to be honest in sorting out our Emotional Reactions from the reality we do affect each other, even when we don't mean to.

In Scott's Experience

When I started really doing my work, it began with a daily review. It was really quite simple: take 10 minutes before bed and review the day. Notice the situations that brought disharmony, and jot them down. I did this for three months, and soon it became time to comb through them to create a composite picture of my challenges, to get everything on one page where I could see it.

I found this to be challenging to do. I simply balked at taking the time to read through three months of my daily review to get a better picture of things. Something in me utterly refused. I prayed for help, because the inner stubbornness wasn't abating on its own.

About this time I had to travel to Wilmington, NC on very short notice to support an urgent manufacturing problem on a jet engine part. I traveled on an early spring Thursday and walked into the manufacturing plant on Friday morning at 6 am, only to find it completely empty of people. They shut the plant down for annual maintenance during the first round of the NCAA basketball tournament, and nobody gave me a head's up. I had to come back Monday morning.

Because it was still off-season, I got a room in a resort hotel on Wrightsville Beach for the weekend. I was given a glorious three-day week-

Big-L Lower Self

end with hot sun, sand and waves, and all I had to accomplish was this daily review composite. I thought it would be easy to do here on the beach.

Actually, it was *really* difficult.

I got settled under a beach umbrella. That didn't work. Then I went to the pool. That wasn't right. Then I walked the beach to get myself focused, and tried again. Day One: Nothing accomplished. More of the same Saturday, and it was exhausting.

Finally, on Sunday, I made a supreme effort and methodically, somehow, got through it. The list was remarkable in many ways, and one of the things on it was a tendency, sometimes, in certain situations, to stubbornly refuse to get something done. I occasionally had to use a supreme effort of will to get them done. This was puzzling, but undeniable. It was certainly there in my effort to see what was in my daily review notes.

I worked with a Helper to explore these inner places in earnest. A couple years later I was in a group, and I wanted to work with this place in me. The Helper coached me to first feel into the experience on the beach, trying to write. As I did so, he asked me where I felt these experiences in my body. They were in my belly. He asked me to bring my attention there, and to breathe into that space in my belly. I suddenly dropped into an altered consciousness that had a belligerent attitude: "I won't do this. I. WILL. NOT."

The Helper talked with this part of me, but I was having none of it. He tried asking how it felt, what it wanted, and so on. I kept expressing this fragmented part of me, saying, "I. WILL. NOT."

This went on for some time, until the Helper suddenly asked, "What year is it?"

I replied, "1980."

He said, "Huh. Do you realize it is 2003?"

No, I did not. I refused to budge off "I. WILL. NOT."

Finally he said, "Ok, you don't have to. You can stay there. It's time for me to go."

This part of me was caught in a bind. It utterly refused to move, but didn't want to be left behind. Finally, it said, "Wait, don't go." And it asked for help to come back to the light.

Afterward, I was a bit shocked at the negative intention of this part of

me. Yet it was undeniable. No matter what was asked of it, the answer was a willful “NO!” even if it brought unwanted consequences. That’s what the Big-L Lower Self does. It says No to life. It says, “I won’t.”

The good news is this can skillfully be brought into consciousness and transformed. When that happens, all the energy applied there becomes available again to say Yes to life.

12

Taking the Long Way Home | Doing the Work

Since the Lower Self is all about being negative, it stands to reason its fundamental position is to say a big, fat No to life. Every day, in many ways, this is essentially what we are doing when we follow the path of least resistance and allow our Lower Self to run amok. We are aligning with our negative intention to stay stuck. And we will not turn this around until we exhume our hidden inner No from the depths of our unconscious and get to know it.

This is true about any difficult truth we must come to know about ourselves. We cannot get to where we want to be unless and until we are willing to really get to know ourselves as we are right now. Where do I say No? Why do I say No? How do I believe this is serving me? For if we didn't believe our negativity and destructiveness was somehow serving us, we would default to our natural state of aliveness and live from our Higher Self. Instead, we invest our life force into the service of our No, but don't have the foggiest idea why we would do something like that.

We tend to have our wires crossed regarding our active and receptive poles. We are forever pushing when we should relax, and straining when we should let sleeping dogs lie. Or we flip over to being lethargic when some effort is required, and turn away from what most needs our attention. Our own masculine or feminine nature comes into play here, and we wind up hopelessly confused about who should do what and why we

behave as we do. (See more in *The Pull: The Spiritual Significance of Relationship*.)

There's also a tendency among people doing spiritual work to want to skip ahead to the good stuff. We want to be where we are going but haven't actually gotten to yet. This is called Spiritual Bypassing and in the long run, it will greatly slow down our progress. When we do this, we want to pretend we are living in our Yes, when deep in our psyche there remains a serious but unidentified No. We want to sit on a meditation cushion and learn to recite positive mantras we can quickly Band-Aid over any critical thought before someone sees it and realizes, *Doh, we still have work to do!*

But “doing the work” does not mean “being all better.” It means being able to be with what's actually here right now, not acting out our negativity on other people but rather working to understand what drives us, and then slowly and gently turning our ship around. To do this, we are going to need to start feeling what we feel. We will need to start watching ourselves in action, and this may be uncomfortable. That's one reason we often become so disconnected from ourselves—there's stuff going on in us we don't want to know about.

Or maybe we've taken the alternate approach of making something fun out of our foibles. We can polish up our wicked ways enough that others cannot help but laugh along with how we court the Lower Self using our devil-may-care attitude so we can go on abusing ourselves and getting far less out of life than we could.

This is what makes this particular path such a tough one. We must start to feel and see what we have not been willing or able to feel or see until now. For nothing can be avoided if we want to transform our Lower Self and learn to live from our divine essence.

We must come to know how it is we are blocking our own light, realizing that no one else is doing anything to us—we are doing it ourselves. We must also come to realize we are the only ones who can free ourselves from our self-made prisons. Believe it or not, no one else's negativity can put the hurt on us if we don't have a matching set of negativity in our drawers. Our work is to use every crappy thing that raises an Emotional Reaction up from our depths as fertilizer for great growth and healing. Every crappy thing.



One of the most common pitfalls of this path, or any spiritual path for that matter, is the tendency to see something ugly and in need of transformation, and then use this awareness as a club to beat ourselves up. It's inherent in the process that we are going to discover aspects of ourselves that will not, how shall we say, look pretty. Expect this. We've hidden these parts away from ourselves for a very good reason.

Now that we are ready to go in search of what blocks our light, we are going to come across some bitter pills to swallow. To start with, the very things we having been railing against in the world are the things that live inside us, unattended. There's no sense in trying to doll these things up to appear more appealing. Lower Self is not a lovely thing to behold.

At the same time, the reality of having a Lower Self is part and parcel of what it means to be a human. This isn't something we accidentally acquired along the way, like dog poop on our shoes. No, the reality of our Lower Self is the very reason we have come to this sphere. That and nothing else. We're here to bring the darkened aspects of ourselves back to the light, and this will never happen if we don't first see what it is we're dealing with.

An example of this can be found in our work of uncovering our version of negative pleasure. This is a phenomenon that happens due to our basic nature of being alive and having a fundamental need for pleasure. Simply put, people cannot live without pleasure. When a child, however, is subjected to experiences it perceives to be painful—and remember, this is the universal setup, so we are talking about all of us here—it attaches its pleasure principle to the negative event.

So going forward, the child-turned-adult will need to recreate that same unpleasant condition—realizing this may involve some similar mix of intertwined negative and positive aspects—in order to get its life force activated, to feel truly alive. We can think of this as the way we have become wired to feel our juice.

This explains why we have such a hard time letting go of the dramas in our lives, recirculating them in our minds, telling and retelling our stories, and tossing and turning in our sleep. We're electrified by our troubles,

even though admittedly this doesn't feel good. Yet strangely, we can't let them go. Like a hand that accidentally grabs an electrified wire, we curl our fingers and latch on instead of jumping back. But it doesn't have to be this way; we can unwind any distortion and find the beauty inside the beast.

An effective place to hunt for this reverse-connection is in our sexuality, and in particular, in our sexual fantasies. What does it take for us to fully feel ourselves coming alive? There is a very good reason for our sexuality to work this way.

When we are born, everything that happens to us gets laid down in the physical track of our being; the development of our mental and emotional faculties will occur as we grow older. This means everything that happens to us gets laid down into the same place where our sexuality resides.

Later, when arousal activates our life force, it lights up the most loving parts of us along with our embedded wounds from childhood. As such, using our minds to create fantasies, we are able to envision a situation that reflects the twists and turns of our challenging childhood. This is what we *must* do, in fact, in order for all the lights to come on. It's not really that we are just made this way, but rather our wiring has gotten hooked up this way.

And so it could be possible for us to have all the same positive pleasurable turns, without the associated negative twists we find in our fantasies, if we are willing to do the painstaking work of unpacking our painful experiences and examining our sexual life in depth.

This may sound like taking the long way, but any attempts at cutting the corner and skipping over these delicate pieces does a disservice to the part of us that really, really, really wants to make it all the way home. And in the end, that's the long and short of why we came here. We've all got some place better to be, and whether we're aware of it or not, we're longing like crazy to get back to God. Sooner or later, this is the way we all must go.



In Jill's Experience

If the idea of exploring our spiritual work through the gateway of sexual fantasies seems off, then perhaps we buy the churchy notion that sex and

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God are on opposite teams. By now, this should be a blinking light—the notion that anything, especially God, is really in opposition to anything else—telling us we might have some distorted thinking going on.

This country I have lived this lifetime in, the United States, is particularly split when it comes to sex. Even in this moment, there may be a feeling of tension: *Oh dear, what is she going to say?* Relax but also get ready, because I do want to share a few things to consider, and they may shift your paradigm a bit.

My first visit to a spiritual retreat center located in Virginia—one that has historically delved deeply into these teachings by the Guide via a five-year Transformation Program—was to attend a four-day training about helping people do this work by excavating their sexual fantasies. Since much of the way I was taught was experiential—meaning we did our own work and then were taught how the teacher guided the work—this meant we needed to roll up our own sleeves.

And so, of course, my mask of shame came up, as did everyone else's. Hiding is a “natural” condition of being human. It's not really true we need to hide, but we all think we do. The teachers were marvelous about wading us slowly into these deep waters; no one jumped off the high-dive until they were good and ready. But still, it was a leap of faith for me to believe I could do this delicate work—in the presence of other classmates, no less—and that this would be worth it. Well, I did it and it was.

I learned we all hold much so close to the vest, fearing if we are seen we will be rejected, laughed at, or not loved. But no one was laughing. No, every time someone in the group took the plunge into their deepest, darkest territory, it kindled a fire of compassion in me for that person and what they were holding. It showed me that what we see on the outside is often miles from where a soul lives on the inside. So often, we have no idea just how much another is carrying.

There was work involving a desire to be urinated upon, where the stopping of it was really the turn on. This person struggled in life with the way he routinely started things, but then never finished them; he blocked his own flow. This connected with the way his father had so often cut off his attempts to follow his passions. There was work about anal sex involving the way a person's body had stored all their reaction to the withholding they had

been subjected to and in turn dished out. So much was being stored and held in that part of the body.

We all have misunderstandings in our souls and our psyches are remarkably creative in revealing them to us. So are our bodies. By putting words to any malady displayed by our bodies, we can often uncover great mysteries. For instance, a mysterious lump on my right eyelid hadn't budged for several weeks, but it resolved in a few days once I hunted around for where I wasn't holding the right vision about something. (I know, I roll my eyes too. But the bump went away and an important issue got surfaced. I'll take *Things that Make You Go Hmmm* for \$500, Alex.)

In the end, I came to realize two important things about doing this work with sexual fantasies: 1) it is sacred work, expressing the pains and longings of our most precious and divine self, and 2) it is incredibly efficient, leading us directly to a person's core issues.

Working this way is not voyeuristic, but rather a good way to expose the experiences that got laid down in the physical track of our bodies and that now reveal their secrets by showing us the way we activate our life force—our experience of pleasure—during orgasm.

One of the ways I was taught to explore issues with Workers is by turning things around and looking at them from their opposite position. Because, no surprise, here in the land of duality, our psyche readily flops poles. For example, if we can't put our finger on why we always feel so fearful—as in, we can't see what others are doing that creates such fear in us—we may get more mileage from investigating how we try to make others afraid of us.

Here's an example of how we can use this reverse view in working with sexual fantasy. It's like looking at the negative of a picture, turning the black into white, and vice versa. In this scenario, a man has had a difficult relationship with his father, which is revealed the moment we turn things around.

First, let's look at the fantasy:

“She comes up to me, unasked, out of the blue, and as I'm standing there she falls to her knees, opens my pants, and devours me. She sucks me, licks me, fondles my balls, and hungrily sucks me until I cum in her

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mouth. She keeps sucking and eagerly swallows. She keeps gently licking and sucking until I get soft.”

Now let’s look at each phrase when we turn things around:

She comes up to me | unasked,

He turns away from me | when I ask him something, when I am talking to him

out of the blue, and

daily, frequently, all the time

as I’m standing there | she falls to her knees,

as I am on the floor, sitting | he stands (towers) over me

she opens my pants, | and devours me.

he won’t take ‘me’ in | and ignores me, he covers over my person, he rejects my ‘self’, he closes himself

She sucks me, licks me, fondles my balls, and | hungrily (eagerly) sucks me

he ignores me, stares blankly, doesn’t feel me, | coldly ignores me, doesn’t touch me, talk to me, hear me

until I cum in her mouth.

until I withhold from him all that I am

She keeps sucking and eagerly swallows.

He keeps ignoring me and coldly accepts my withholding

She keeps gently licking and sucking until I get soft.

He keeps coldly staring blankly, ignoring, not talking or touching until I am hard inside.

Here is the exposed view of this man’s relationship with his father:

He frequently turns away from me when I ask him something, or am talking to him. As I am on the floor, sitting, he towers over me. He closes himself, rejects me, won't take me in, covers over my person. He ignores me, stares blankly, doesn't feel me, touch me, talk to me, hear me, and coldly ignores me until I withhold from him all that I am. Even then, he keeps ignoring me and coldly accepts my withholding. He keeps staring blankly, ignoring, not talking or touching until I am hard inside.

Our work is to unwind the kinks in our wiring so that we are able to enjoy the full intensity of our life force, without an associated shame or feeling that somehow we are bad. The point here is not to give up what pleases us, but to bring awareness to what's gotten twisted in the psyche so that what we find pleasurable can be sexually satisfying, without involving a negative spin.

Note, too, this work with sexual fantasies can be efficient in showing us where our work is, but seeing it isn't the same as doing it. In this example, this man uses his fantasy to see the scope of his wounding with his father, and this sets him up for a decade's worth of methodical, step-by-step work to walk through his pain and unwind his full pleasure. Considering the alternative, it's the walk worth taking.

In Scott's Experience

I would like to point out two things here. First, sexuality isn't somehow separate from a spiritual path, it's a powerful and beautiful part of it. In fact, sexual energy *is* life-force energy; it is a chord woven into the rope that is our life force. So the more we untangle all our inner knots, the more vibrantly alive and healthy sexuality becomes too.

That said, exploring our wounds by excavating our sexuality is swimming in the deep end of the pool. It may be better to start with simpler exercises, like a daily review, and make sure to work with a competent Helper, counselor or therapist.

Second, I recommend holding whatever comes up lightly, and just be present with it for a while. Remember, it is the most painful childhood experiences—the ones we couldn't bear at the time—that get most stuck in our energy system and thus in our sexuality.

It may take time and patience to work down to and through them, be-

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cause these pieces may not be on the surface to work with directly. The good news is that this is an available doorway to understanding why we incarnated and what we came here to heal.

13

It's Time for a Break | Crisis

If there's one thing that's hard about living in this dualistic world, it's swinging from one wrong side of something to the other wrong side. So often, we slingshot from one side of a pendulum, where we are inadvertently living in distortion, over to the opposite extreme where all we've found, unfortunately, is the other side of our distortion.

But such is the motion that's typically followed—and in many cases, even necessary—to eventually bring ourselves to center, where reality happens. That's where we learn to let go of the edges and negotiate the middle way.

An example of this lies in our reaction to living according to what others think. On one pole, we can fly in the face of society and embrace our rebellious spirit: whatever they want, we want the opposite. We expect that our behavior will create a flap and most likely it does. Oddly, this makes us happy.

Flip this over and we turn into conformists, aligning ourselves with what's expected and therefore expecting to be approved of. When the waters remain unruffled, we feel content. Pay no mind to what we want: if they're happy, we're happy.

In both cases, we're beholden to “the other.” As such, we have lost our way. Neither strategy is free and no one adopting either method is truly content. Even if our attitudes and actions are actually in agreement with our own inner selves, when we're coming from a place of either rebelling or

conforming, we aren't living from our true self, with true autonomy.

As the Guide points out in the lecture about the importance of forming independent opinions, we are better served holding a wrong opinion we have come to honestly through our own searching and exploring, than to hold an opinion that aligns more with truth but which we have borrowed from somewhere else. In short, we have to listen for the beat of our own drummer until we recognized its cadence as being our own. (See more about forming independent opinions in *Finding Gold*.)



Eventually, our inability to navigate our way out of our illusions is going to bring us to a breaking point. Something's got to give, which is the illusion of duality and the notion we can go on this way forever—veering away from one wrong solution and landing in another—and finally get it right. Staying lost in duality, without a lifeline to the greater truth, is after all a lose-lose proposition. And that brings us to the beauty of a crisis. Because a crisis will take us to our knees and make us turn in a different direction.

So far, we have mentioned several of God's laws that are in place to help keep us running true. When we diverge from them—and we are perfectly welcome to do so—we will experience painful situations and crisis. We then have the opportunity to correct our course (or not) to get back to where we want to be.

For God's laws have been carefully crafted to assure the further we deviate from them, the greater the pain we experience and thus the greater the incentive we have to course-correct. By design, this ensures we will eventually choose to make our way back to where we could have been all along had we remained in alignment with God's will. For God's will and our best-case scenario are the same thing.

This is an entirely impersonal process. There isn't an old white guy in the sky angrily metering out punishment for our moral transgressions. We humans have been endowed with free will, meaning we are free to follow God's laws or not. If we feel the squeeze caused by the consequences of running off course, that's on us. (See more about free will in *Holy Moly*.)



In Jill's Experience

I learned how to sew at a young age and by high school, I was making most of my own clothes. I enjoyed the creativity but not the fact that things often didn't fit well. Turns out, learning to sew and being a seamstress aren't the same thing. Plus, the quality of fabrics I bought wasn't great. I was using my meager earnings from my job as a carhop, so I was cheap. The cheaper I could make something, it seemed, the better.

Arguably, the preferred word to use here would be frugal, but I hadn't evolved to that level yet. By the time I left college, I was in the habit of buying what was cheap, and it's not a coincidence that I also had so little sense of myself.

Early in sobriety, I heard reference to having low self-esteem and I thought, "Are you kidding? I have *no* self-esteem." Truly, I had no sense of who I was. The road of recovery, together with my unfolding spiritual path following the Guide's teachings, have helped me fill in the blanks of knowing what I like and that I'm worthy of having nice things.

As one can imagine, it's easy to ride such a budding awareness over to the other side of the pendulum where one lavishes themselves with gifts, to show, you know, just how much we value ourselves. Which of course is not an iota better than being cheap.

As these things go, my journey to finding my own value—while also learning to assess the value of the material things I buy—has not been a straight line. I have spent too much on some things and cut too deeply on other things. As they say, life's a process, not a product.

One area that I have learned to be cautious is around the word "Sale!" I came to realize how I would accept far less than what I wanted if the price was right. As a result, I was left with clothes, furniture or other home goods that I didn't particularly like, long after I forgot how much I had paid for them.

Which doesn't mean I need to pay top-dollar across the board for everything to be happy. I am frugal by nature, and I often find items I value at a discounted price. But I also sometimes pay full retail for something that

really appeals to me.

Self-responsibility is a piece of this puzzle. I have had plenty of periods in this life with tight finances, and I have also felt fairly comfortable at times. I have kept a careful budget for over fifteen years now and know where every dollar goes. I pay all of my bills. At the same time, I don't let that rule my ability to appreciate the grace notes in life that come from spending my money doing something I enjoy.

Money is a challenge for many, many people on this dualistic plane. It's a perpetual crisis for some and a bounty for others. No matter where we land on the spectrum, it's worthy of our consideration. What we should also consider is how we link it to our inner sense of self-worth.

In my most well-adjusted periods, I am responsible on one hand, while letting it flow as need-be on the other. This is an ongoing dance, and not one I'm perfect at. But I discovered something important along the way: the more I trust that I will have enough, the more true this turns out to be. The more I am willing to tend to my financial garden, the more fruit it bears. The more loosely I hold the reins, the better I enjoy the ride.

In Scott's Experience

The thing about crisis is that it has almost always built up over a long period of time. Things that you don't address, or maybe aren't even consciously aware of, build up until—*wham!*—your world shifts. An earthquake may cause great distress in an instant, but the strain that gets released all at once has actually built up over a long period of time..

I had that kind of earthquake crisis in a relationship with a family member I'll call Chris. Here was the pattern:

I would behave in a way that felt right to me. Chris would do likewise, following Chris's own values. Chris thought my behavior was inappropriate and tried to get me to change. I did not like this. So I deflected and basically ignored Chris.

Chris did not like my response. Chris felt I should comply, and pushed harder; I did not like this from Chris. I felt violated. I continued to behave according to how I saw the world, plus I would deflect Chris's aggression and pull away a tiny bit more than before.

This went on and on, around and around.

We never talked about what was really going on. We were not on the same page about anything. There was a thin veneer of civility over it all, so on the surface it looked like things were OK, but underneath this drama churned.

Eventually the amplitude of responses started rising and it abruptly broke fully through the veneer to the light of day.

Ultimatums were issued to me. I stood my ground. The ground started to shake. Then a great tear in the fabric of my life happened. It was shocking to me that a few back-and-forths could cause such a crisis in our relationship. I didn't see it coming. But in hindsight it had been building up for decades.

I prayed hard to understand what happened. I eventually saw a vision of two vortices interacting. One vortex would spin and bump the other, spinning the second ever so slightly harder. Then the second vortex would come back around and bump the first, spinning the first slightly harder. The one thing I had utter clarity on is that we were both equally responsible.

I tried to share this with Chris, but according to Chris, I was *entirely* responsible for the earthquake. I was therefore responsible for making things right. But to do that, we needed to heal the pattern. We never got past this point; it has never healed.

The way out for me was in wanting to see the truth more than wanting to be right. Honestly, once I saw the pattern, it made things a little easier, but it didn't shift things all that much. In the rare times of a new interaction, I would still get my buttons pushed by Chris, and I would react from an unconscious wounded place in me.

It has taken years and years of "doing the work" for me to get down to the level of seeing and releasing these knots in my psyche. And I'm not done yet. The experience has been acutely painful for me, but also a great teacher. Now, whenever I experience difficult interactions, I immediately start praying to see the patterns behind them. They are always there, and I know I have a part to play and something to heal.

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There's a Hole in my Bucket | Trust

The ability to recognize God's handwriting in a life crisis may be the PhD level of doing this work. Part of the reason for this is we all have to do some deep spiritual work to uncork our pent up anger at God. The mere fact we had struggles as a child is enough to set our teeth on edge. And for many, no amount of Hail Mary's will mollify this feeling of having been dropped or duped by God.

Of course, when we are children, we feel all kinds of angry feelings towards the human authorities in life who say No when we demand to have our every whim fulfilled. Our parents have the thankless job of providing discipline for our unleashed little souls, and make no mistake, we benefit from having a firm but gentle hand to guide us as we grow up. But that doesn't mean we like it. Then we hear talk of God as being the ultimate authority in life and we simply transfer all our resentment for our parents onto God. This is what the Guide refers to as our God Image.

We can talk all we want about how we trust this is a loving universe—love, being the one true force, right?—but if we're secretly blaming God for every adversity we had to endure, our trust bucket is going to leak like a sieve. Again, the best way to go is not over, around or under this; we have to go through it. Our work is to notice the times and places when we don't trust, when we feel we've been abandoned, forgotten, or worse, by God. And in that moment, we need to pray to know the truth.

No one, no matter how much we pay them, is going to be able to give us this one. We can't buy faith and we can't get it through wishful thinking. If what we experience right now, in this moment, is lack of faith, we need to get to know all about it. We need to see it and feel it and take it under our wing. Some split-off part of ourselves is lost in confusion and misunderstanding, and is in immediate need of our attention.



When we find ourselves feeling adrift, that is when it helps to take in the wisdom in these and other spiritual teachings. It also helps to talk with others about their spiritual path. Our Higher Self can often speak to us through others when we aren't yet open enough to hear its soft-spoken voice within. We need to tune in to our own intuition about where to go and what to follow, and we also need to sharpen our discernment. Not everything written in print is the gospel truth; not everything we hear will be bulletproof either. But if we're eager to know the way, we will find the right thread to follow.

Also know this: the Lower Self is not going to sit still forever once we get serious about waking up. Oh, at first we get to dabble here and there. We'll attend a workshop or two, maybe take in a meditation class or do some yoga. But as soon as we get a little deeper into serious teachings such as these from the Guide—ones that genuinely have the power to open us all the way up—look out. There is nothing off limits that our own Lower Self won't try in an effort to derail us.

Getting sleepy—like, I-can't-keep-my-freaking-eyes-open sleepy—may come up while reading these teachings. Suddenly there's a TV program we just can't possibly miss. A minor fault of a spiritual teacher will seem so annoying we won't be able to stay in the room with them, much less listen to them. We'll make ourselves sick, distract ourselves with games and over-scheduled days, or sink into some sorry fugue state. Don't underestimate the wily ways of the Lower Self.

Let's also not kid ourselves that our crises have nothing to do with us, that our problems will go away if we just ignore them, or that there's no use trying because bad things just happen and we have no say over our own

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lives. When a crisis arises, we must begin to ascertain what's really going on behind the curtain. The hand of God can be difficult to recognize, but that's only because we have repeatedly ducked our duty in doing our work. This time, we can choose to face life and begin to sort some things out.



In Jill's Experience

I had worked for a large corporation for 15 years when I became very, very ready to leave and do something completely different with the rest of my life. Truth is, I just couldn't do *that* any more. So I listened to my guidance and I resigned without knowing what I would do next. Six months later, I put my house up for sale, not knowing where I would move. A month later I met someone with a house for rent in Virginia and I set my sails. Six months later, my first book, *Spilling the Script*, would come spilling out. But really, I still didn't know where all this was headed.

On it went like that, with my inner compass moving me to Washington DC where I wrote the seven books in the *Real. Clear.* series. I was following a clear voice deep within, but I still couldn't see the greater plan. All I could do was trust and follow.

I won't say this was easy. And it's not that there weren't days filled with fear. There were even moments of terror. *What in the world am I doing?* Here is what I've come to realize: if we want to learn to trust God, God is going to ask us to trust him. My God Image, which is that God withholds himself from me, needed to be challenged.

As I write this, my ego doesn't yet know if God is trustworthy. Yet here I am and I am fine, writing away, inspired by an unseen force that lights me up from within. As the Guide teaches, in our journey toward developing trust, we're going to have to hang out in a space where it won't be obvious we have reason to trust. But in the middle of that not-knowing space is where we find our faith. That's when the rubber of all these teachings meets the road, and we can either cling to our illusions or let go.

After pulling the trigger and quitting my job with no safety net under me, I was "in for a penny, in for a pound." Even when my ego would panic and

I felt I had to do something—*anything!*—to try to save myself, the deal has been that I'm in God's hands. As they told me in AA, I just need to move my feet and leave the results up to God.

In Scott's Experience

There was a point some years ago when my life completely unraveled, and I had to sit in my leaky bucket of faith and trust. I had been doing this work with diligent focus for about a decade, and had made some good progress unraveling knots in my inner life. I'd stepped out of a 20-year career in gas turbines and a role as an engineering executive to co-lead a sustainability consulting business. I believed what we were doing was critical for the health of both the planet and humanity, and had faith we could make a go of it.

Unfortunately, interest in our offerings dried up after the 2010 US mid-term elections when it became clear that there would be no penalty for a business having a large carbon footprint. Much of my savings was invested in the business, and little income came in. The US was still in a deep recession, and job prospects were bleak. Then my marriage unraveled.

All this exposed where I could (and could not) stand in relationship, while getting every single one of my buttons pushed and working to respond constructively. It was like the tide went way, way out and exposed the sea-floor of my childhood wounds all at once, while the same time they were being hammered on.

I processed through the emotional pain of all these stuck places in me, day after day, for about nine months. The inner storm seemed so fierce at times that it was all I could do to just stand in it, bent over into the wind, and feel all that needed to be felt.

My God Image is that God will be there for me at times, solid for a while, and then unexpectedly yank the rug out from under me. In other words, sometimes, for no reason, God drops me. And here it was, my God Image. I'm doing my personal work as hard as I can, serving the highest good with a business as well as I can, and then the rug is completely yanked out from under me. I saw the fabric of my life come apart before my eyes.

Then one month it eased. It was a lovely May, and I sat in the deepest emptiness I had ever experienced. There was no income and no job prospects, and everyone was angry with me. I had little support except one

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good friend and a few Helpers holding space for me. And the deepest, quietest, softest voice in me said, “Sit.” *What? I have urgent things to address to take care of this family!* “Just sit.”

Other parts of me wanted to jump out of my skin and go find a job. All the angry voices around me were insisting I find a job. “Just sit,” is what I heard. So I sat, and I breathed, and I listened. It was among the hardest things I’ve done.

A month later the voice of my inner self said, “Now send a few letters.” The first and only letter I sent was to an executive in a slightly different field whom I had worked with before. I asked only for a conversation about what he was paying attention to in the world, and if he knew someone I should be talking to.

I sent the email on a Friday at 6:00pm, the absolute worst time in the business world. His reply was at 6:00am Saturday morning. “Of course I will have a conversation with you. But meanwhile, please see the attached job description for an opening I have.” It was a critical role requiring an almost impossibly improbable list of skill sets that he had been trying to fill for a year without success.

He had just that week finished getting executive approval to raise the stature and compensation of the role. And I was *perfect* for it. In a month I was settling into a new town and a new life.

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Emptying Out the Well | Tears

While prayer is quintessential for seeing new truth and gaining a new perspective, we also need to develop the ability to become quiet within so we can hear the anxious ones when they become activated. For most of us, our inner clamoring and rationalizations have become so loud, and yet so familiar, we don't notice the blinking lights telling us something is coming up for healing.

One of those blinking lights is anger. There is indeed healthy, justified anger that fuels us to stand up for what's good and right in the world. But more typically, our anger is the old and moldy variety that seethes with self-righteousness and is a handy cover for our pain. When we begin to truly express this kind of anger, as we do in healing sessions with a spiritual Helper, and not just recycle our case against someone else, then our feelings can start to shift. The anger morphs as it moves and other buried emotions find space for expression.

Our feelings, shoved down deep into our psyches, have had no breathing room for quite some time. Eons, probably. When anger arises, then, that's our opportunity to get to know ourselves, including all our contradictory Emotional Reactions that are slowly tearing our insides apart.

When we tap into our inner reservoir of pain, it may feel like we have found a bottomless pit. It may indeed be vast, but there is in fact an end, and we won't ever get to it unless we become willing to initiate the process of

Tears

emptying the well. It's not enough to dip a toe and call it a day. Each time inconvenient feelings well up, our work is to meet them as full-face-on as we can, going all the way through them and coming out the other side.

Note, our beings come fully equipped with a self-limiting regulator, so we don't need to worry that our pain will swallow us whole. It only feels that way when we are in resistance to feeling our pain. The pressure gradually lets off once we've gone some distance and made a little progress. But that's a good reason to go on a healing adventure following the guidance of a trained spiritual counselor who can hold the flashlight as we bravely venture into the dark, difficult crannies of our inner world.



When we were little, we had needs that were not met, and our unwillingness to feel the resulting pain has caused a backlog of pain to build up in our system. The only way to release this residual pain held by our split-off inner aspects is by doing the hard inner work of letting it go. Yes, we're going to have to cry it out.

There is a spiritual law that says we cannot cheat life. If we weren't willing or able to feel these difficult feelings then, we must go the distance in feeling them now. To further avoid our work is to create higher mountains we'll someday have to climb. We won't get it all in one go, but now is the time to breathe and go on in.

Also, there's no need to climb the tallest emotional cliff we can find and leap from there. More to point, we shouldn't do that. We need to develop some spiritual muscle—as well as some spiritual stamina—to be able to tolerate difficult feelings as we grow into our ability to move through them. This may not be as easy as it sounds. It's also really not that hard. We just need to cultivate an inner ability to be with what is, even when that challenges us. We must discover, for ourselves, that our feelings aren't facts—they will change and mature the more we experience them—and getting to know them won't kill us.

Our goal is to clear away all our blocks—our residual pain—so we can once again live in harmony with all that is. Recall that every inner disharmony is rooted in untruth, meaning no one who hangs out in untruth can ever

be truly happy. We must make the choice to unclench our grip on being right, and instead choose the way that leads to freedom. There is nothing standing in our way except us.



In Jill's Experience

I spent my early years of doing this work by resisting crying. It's funny how we talk about something being so bad, it actually made someone cry. Today I think "Yay!" when someone is able to access their feelings and express their tears. Because what I have come to realize is that nothing melts a frozen heart like a bath of tears.

Typically, to stay strong, we clamp down—in fact, often while doing this work, we often need to release the tension in our jaw resulting from this—and hold ourselves back. It's that child part of ourselves that doesn't want to let them win. But the truth is, we are so much stronger when we have access to all of ourselves. And if our heart's a frozen block of ice, we're not fully alive.

Sitting in that workshop about delving into sexual fantasy, I was a rock, but not in a good way. My body was tense, my shoulders were stiff, and my energy was out the door and down the street. To say I was beside myself with trepidation would be generous, for much of me was nowhere in sight.

Then someone started sharing about a recent touching experience involving the poor treatment of children. The pain of it touched my heart, and as my tears came, I felt my heart begin to soften and melt. The more I allowed my feelings to surface, the more alive I felt. I felt myself arrive, with much more of me finally present in the room. Tears, I learned, are my gateway to finding myself.

That palpable and visceral experience was pivotal for me in my work. No longer did I think of crying as the problem; I saw that it was the solution. It's what has needed to happen for me to come back and re-join myself. And it's this connection I feel to my own heart that gives me a resource from which I can give to others. For we can't give to anyone else what we don't have for ourselves.

In Scott's Experience

I think socially it's harder for men to enter the realm of feelings, at least in the US. There aren't many social settings where men get together and cry. This may be socially "normal" for men, but it's not natural. Feelings take some time to re-learn for us.

I still vividly remember the first time I tried to stand up in front of a group and process through a difficult emotional place in me. I knew I was stuck with a particular issue and I wanted to move through it, to feel the feelings and pain involved there. I had seen my peers take this step, and with a gulp of courage I stood up to take my turn. I froze. To an outside observer, it looked like a complete non-event.

On the inside, I experienced something completely new. One part of me stepped forward and, in front of a group, tried to access my feelings. Another part of me stepped back and tried to hide. In that moment, I felt the separation and realized there were multiple parts of me. I was a bit embarrassed at not "succeeding", but it was an epiphany.

The way forward for me was to use my positive will. I created a prayer affirmation that said, "I want to feel my real feelings, without either suppressing or embellishing them. I want to feel what I really feel." I said this prayer morning and night for perhaps a month until the dam burst. I cried multiple times a day for a long while. Turns out I had built a lot of dams over the years, and had to release them one by one. But that first one was the toughest.

One of the dams I had built was of grief and sorrow over my mother's illness and death when I was young. I had created an emotional sterility around her. When I came into that inner space again and again, I encountered an acute pain of grief that was very difficult to be with. It felt like I was being gutted like a fish, and that the hurt would never end.

I kept working with it, and one day, I felt sorrow. It was cleansed of the hard pain and was just pure sorrow. I was surprised to find that sorrow in its pure form has a vibrant aliveness to it. In an astonishing moment for me, I realized that pure sorrow is quite bearable, even in very large doses. It was the hard pain—mixed in from resisting my real feelings for so many years—that was difficult to bear.

Why go through all this effort? Why not just be with the joys of life in-

stead? While it would be nice to be able to feel vibrant joy while being able to bypass acute grief and sorrow, it doesn't work that way.

Turns out, you either feel your feelings, or you don't.

You can't select one and bypass the others. If you clamp down on grief, the lid shuts tight on it all, and you can't feel joy in the next moment. I have learned then that the way to become able to feel boundless joy—which is a growing experience for me—is to become capable of feeling intense sorrow.

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Making Space for Not Knowing | Unity

The result of doing our work is we open up new space inside ourselves. We empty ourselves of frozen detritus and free ourselves from self-restricting walls. When we do this, it's important to fill that newly minted space with something good, lest the cunning Lower Self slip inside that gap and set up shop.

First up will be re-educating our inner child. This part of ourselves took off with wild conclusions about life we have now surfaced and see don't really hold much water. That wrong thinking must be replaced with something right, which is the truth that sails in when we invite our Higher Self to join our party.

Accompanying our new understanding will be an infusion of divine energy that fills the void created by our healing work. This is the peace that surpasses all understanding; this is a glow that fills our cup from an unending spring of vitality. We would be nuts to not take a moment and drink our fill. Our work here is to imprint our soul substance with our new awareness and this experience of our true ground.



One of the hardest things for our ego mind to do is nothing. We'd rather jump to conclusions, keep working the angle, and otherwise keep

ourselves safe with our amazing ability to figure everything out. Trouble is, our ego doesn't have all the answers. Never has, never will. It's just not that deep.

The greatest service our ego can offer is to stop making up stories and start accessing that great mother lode of wisdom, courage and love: our Higher Self. Plugged into that outlet, the ego can let go and give up its anxious efforts to run the show. This means, though, the ego will need to exercise some restraint and learn to hang out in "I don't know." Doing so may momentarily cause us to panic.

The ego would rather cling vicariously to wrong conclusions than let go of its trapeze and wait in limbo for greater wisdom to unfold. It's happier grasping at straws than admitting that, 'Sorry guys, I really don't know where to go next.' This ability to remain in not knowing is another spiritual muscle we must work to develop. And this one, like so many others, may not come easy. With time though, we'll get the hang of how to go through life with an open, flowing energy system that makes room for new awareness and allows God to lead the way.

So the unitive plane takes a little getting used to. Until now, we've mostly known black-and-white thinking, where rigid rules take the place of flexible, creativity, and change has been generally considered an anathema. But that's the hardened framework of duality and not the fluid, dynamic structure we find when we're plugged into the Oneness.

When we're living in the land of unity, the effort of being organized will become self-rewarding and self-perpetuating. We'll continually avail ourselves of opportunities to know ourselves better by taking every disharmony to heart and exploring what is there for us to learn. Frankly, this is not what most folks usually do.

Over time, this better, alternate reality will grow to occupy more and more space inside us. And each time we walk through the doorway of duality and remember another way of being could be possible, we will get closer to entering all the way into God's kingdom. We'll recall our connection with all that is.

The road is long and this path is not an easy one to follow. But one way or another, doing the work of healing is the only way to arrive at our final destination: we're going home. Be blessed. Go this way.



In Jill's Experience

I studied the teachings of Kabbalah for four years, and one of my favorite meditations we did in class was called *The End of the Road*. It goes something like this: "The ego is never going to get the awakened state, so you might as well just let go. Stop trying to save yourself. This is the end of the road. There is nothing to do. Just let go."

That's not what we usually do though, is it. In my case, part of my strategy for survival was to try to figure everything out. It's like some part of me is always trying to get the puzzle pieces to fit. In fact, I now understand I have a really good puzzle-maker inside of me, and when pieces don't fit together right, she gets anxious.

I've learned to listen to her. She's like an early warning system that throws flags when something doesn't add up. And she's extremely perceptive. Trouble is, she isn't always right. More accurately, she doesn't always have all the information. Turns out, I don't know everything.

That's part of what it means to be human. Our window on the truth is never going to be foolproof. From where we sit, our ego can't and won't ever know everything, and this we must come to terms with. Otherwise the ego won't let go. From the stance of my ego, I will constantly think I can run the world, when truth be told, I've got my hands full keeping my own little ship afloat.

What I try to do is listen to her, and when things don't jibe, I try to get curious. Instead of drawing conclusions and making judgments, I try, as the Guide suggests, to give the other the benefit of the doubt. With a willingness to be open and often a little fear in my gut, I can check things out: "Here is what I see and here are the conclusions I've made; can you help me see what I might be missing?" It never fails to amaze me the shift that occurs when I open up to more truth.

In Scott's Experience

Sitting in not knowing is like the sound of one hand clapping. It's weird.

And it's been tough to know if I'm doing it right. Sometimes it feels perfectly natural, like floating on my back in a pond on a warm summer evening. Sometimes it feels like that time I ran over a rope while mowing the grass; I get it all wrapped around the axle and stall the engine.

I've been blessed with a measure of intuitive knowing, and early on, I made myself crazy when it didn't come immediately. Over time I have come to realize that for me, intuitive knowing comes when it comes. If I need to know something, it will come. If it doesn't come, I don't need to know. Or maybe I need to learn to ask better questions. Or quite possibly I need to get better at letting go.

I still struggle sometimes in discerning when and how to use my active creative powers, and when to sit more firmly in the stillness of receptivity and listen.

Back when I was leading a large engineering team at a boutique turbomachinery design company, we had brilliant and tough bosses, and I was navigating through a challenging leadership learning process. Then we were purchased by an inept and rather unethical company, and a difficult environment turned miserable. I had been miraculously guided *into* this role, and now what?

I loathed the drive into work and my time in the office, but saw no obvious path to the next step. I wasn't feeling any guidance, and that's a difficult place to be. In exasperation, I ended up starting a consulting business. I really enjoyed the work but eventually the venture folded. In hindsight, during the whole creative process to start the consulting business, I was hearing my own static. I surely got wound around my own axle.

Fast forward a few years, and I found myself repeating almost exactly the same conditions. I had a few years thriving in an executive engineering role, then my company was acquired by a much larger and less adept competitor, and we had a clash of two powerful but very different cultures. Again it became miserable driving into work. But I realized I had jumped too early last time and missed a lesson. This time I stayed, kept listening inside, and feeling the frustration.

I kept praying to find the lessons in my frustration, and eventually some clear answers came. Frustration is a thwarting of the will current, according to the Guide, and I became aware of my forcing current that said, "I will

Unity

make you love me.” It wasn’t easy to see because it was hidden under part of my mask, but there were traces of it across my life and relationships.

When I did the inner work to release this forcing current, I found myself in a more authentic, relaxed relationship with the unknown. It’s still the unknown, but I am better at letting go in the face of it.

Afterword

They told me in AA that nothing messes up a drinking career like an AA meeting. Once you open up to a different perspective, it takes serious work to put the blinders back on and stay in the dark.

If I have a hope for readers of this book, it's that it messes up your trance. If, upon finding yourself in the middle of a muddle, you lift up your head and simply acknowledge, "Hey, I must not be in truth. Please God, help me see the truth." Well, then, my work is done.

In truth, we each have everything inside us that we need to make it all the way home. But we're also remarkably good at hiding this from ourselves. On my path, it has been the way-showers who have made all the difference. They're the ones who have gone this way before me and have been willing to come hold the flashlight for me.

I also heard someone in AA say that "whenever the hand of an alcoholic reaches out for help, I hope the hand of AA is there for them." I second that. It's part of the reason many recovering alcoholics keep going to meetings. To keep giving back.

In a similar way, that's why I write these books. Whenever someone who is hurting reaches out for help, I want them to find the Guide's teachings. This wisdom has helped carry me to the other side of many painful passages. They are what will eventually lead me all the way home.

Afterword

We each have to do our own work. But the Guide is standing nearby holding the light. We only need to reach for it.

—Jill Loree

After a few decades of doing deep healing work, what my work looks like now is changing. The focus is shifting to inhabiting my Higher Self, more and more. But we all have to start by doing the hard work of self-facing.

This book, then, is about facing into the truth of our temporary state of being and working with all we find there. Truthfully, it is not an easy stage, and it might last a while. Parts of this work still goes on long into one's spiritual journey, as long as we're in the body. Most people do their utter best to skip over it, avoid it, go around it. I encourage you to lean into it.

Early on, I was in one seemingly never-ending emotional rough patch after another. I said to my Helper, "If only you had a magic wand and could make this better for me." He replied, "I don't have a magic wand. There is no magic wand. But even if I did, I would not use it. I would not rob you of the experience of growing through this." I am grateful for his wisdom.

So likewise, Jill and I can't make it easier for you to do your work. But what we can do, and tried to do here, is to give you a sliver of a view of what it looks like, and thereby take some of the unknown out of it.

I can unequivocally tell you it is worth every step.

—Scott Wisler



About the Authors



JILL LOREE

A neatnik with a ready sense of humor, Jill Loree's first job as a root-beer-stand carhop in Northern Wisconsin was an early sign that things could only get better.

She would go on to throw pizzas and bartend while in college, before discovering that the sweet spot of her 30-year sales-and-marketing career would be in business-to-business advertising. A true Gemini with a degree in Chemistry and a flair for writing, she enjoys the challenge of thinking creatively about scientific topics. Her brain fires on both the left and right sides.

That said, her real passion in life has been her spiritual path. Raised in the Lutheran faith, she became a more deeply spiritual person in the rooms of AA, a spiritual recovery program, starting in 1989. In 1997, she was intro-

About the Authors

duced to the wisdom of the Pathwork, which she describes as “having walked through the doorway of a fourth step and found the whole library.”

She completed four years of Pathwork Helpership training in 2007 followed by four years of apprenticing and discernment before stepping into her full Helpership in 2011. She has been a teacher in the Transformation Program offered at Sevenoaks Retreat Center in Madison, Virginia, operated by Mid-Atlantic Pathwork, where she also led marketing activities for over two years and served on the Board of Trustees.

In 2012, Jill completed four years of Kabbalah training in a course called the Soul’s Journey, achieving certification for hands-on healing using the energies embodied in the tree of life.

Not bad for a former pom-pom squad captain who once played Dolly in *Hello Dolly!* She is now the proud mom to two adult children, Charlie and Jackson, who were born and raised in Atlanta. Having grown weary of borrowing other people’s last names, Jill now happily uses her middle name as her last—it’s pronounced loh-REE. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, writing, running, yoga and hiking, especially in the mountains.

As she turns the corner onto the back nine in life, she has consciously decoupled from the corporate world and is now dedicating her life to writing and spiritual teaching.

Discover more from Jill Loree at www.phoenesse.com.

SCOTT WISLER

Scott Wisler is a man of many words, a hopeful romantic, and a lover of the everyday pleasures in living a good life. Raised in Ohio with Midwest manners and a healthy dose of neighborly kindness, he’s seldom shy and typically quick to find a way to connect with others. He once yelled “O-H” loudly in the Dubai airport, and was gratified to hear a distant echo of “I-O” called back to him.

Educated with masters degrees in both mechanical and aerospace engineering, he has spent his career building engines that run well. Lately, he



prefers to work on the kind that also run clean, hoping to contribute to the environmental healing of the planet.

Scott is a spiritual seeker who embraces the teachings of the Pathwork Guide along with many other spiritual luminaries, and embodies what it means to walk straight in the world. He carries light with him wherever he goes—whether to a drum circle or a high-level business meeting—and is forever searching to find new ways to help light emerge more fully into corporate environments.

More from Jill Loree



Spiritual Laws

Hard & Fast Logic for Forging Ahead

Just what are the laws that rule this precious land? Turns out, there are an infinite number of laws that govern everything that happens. And while *Spiritual Laws* does not claim to be comprehensive in covering them all, this sampling of teachings from the Pathwork Guide does a nice job of explaining how this sphere works.

Understanding this will help us grasp the truth that behind our trials, there is a method. That someone, or something, is behind life, pounding out a plan. So gather round and listen up, because there are important guidelines we could all stand to know more about, and the hammer is about to drop.



Real. Clear.

A Seven-Book Series of Spiritual Teachings

The *Real. Clear.* series offers a fresh approach to timeless spiritual teachings by way of easier-to-read language; it's the Guide's wisdom in Jill Loree's words. Each book is written with a bit of levity because, as Mary Poppins put it, "A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down."

HOLY MOLY: The Story of Duality, Darkness and Daring Rescue

There's one story, as ancient and ageless as anything one can imagine, that lays a foundation on which all other truths stand. It exposes the origin of opposites. It illuminates the reality of darkness in our midst. It speaks of herculean efforts made on our behalf. This is that story.

FINDING GOLD: The Search for Our Own Precious Self

The journey to finding the whole amazing nugget of the true self is a lot like prospecting for gold. Both combine the lure of potential and the ex-

More from Jill Loree

citement of seeing a sparkling possibility, with needing to have the patience of a saint.

It helps to have a map of our inner landscape and a headlamp for seeing into dark corners. That's what Jill Loree has created in this collection of spiritual teachings called *Finding Gold*.

BIBLE ME THIS: Releasing the Riddles of Holy Scripture

The Bible is a stumper for many of us, not unlike the Riddler teasing Batman with his "Riddle me this" taunts. But what if we could know what some of those obscure passages mean? What's the truth hidden in the myth of Adam & Eve? And what was up with that Tower of Babel?

Bible Me This is a collection of in-depth answers to a variety of questions asked of the Guide about the Bible.

THE PULL: Relationships & their Spiritual Significance

The Pull is about discovering the truth about relationships: they are the doorway through which we ultimately can come to know ourselves, God and another person; through them, we can learn to fully live. Because while life may be many things, more than anything else, it is all about relationships.

The Pull walks us through the delicate dance of intimate relationships, helping us navigate one of the most challenging aspects of life.

PEARLS: A Mind-Opening Collection of 17 Fresh Spiritual Teachings

In this classic, practical collection, Jill Loree strings together timeless spiritual teachings, each carefully polished with a light touch. Topics include: Privacy & Secrecy • The Lord's Prayer • Political Systems • The Superstition of Pessimism • Preparing to Reincarnate • Our Relationship to Time • Grace & Deficit • The Power of Words • Perfectionism • Authority • Order • Positive Thinking • Three Faces of Evil • Meditation for Three Voices • The Spiritual Meaning of Crisis • Leadership • Letting Go & Letting God

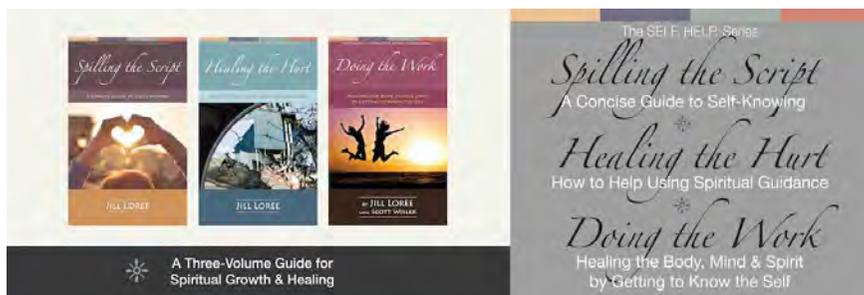
GEMS: A Multifaceted Collection of 16 Clear Spiritual Teachings

Clear and radiant, colorful and deep, each sparkling gem in this collec-

tion of spiritual teachings taken mostly from the final 50 lectures out of nearly 250, offers a ray of light to help illuminate our steps to reaching Oneness.

BONES: A Building-Block Collection of 19 Fundamental Spiritual Teachings

This collection is like the bones of a body—a framework around which the remaining body of work can arrange itself. Sure, there's a lot that needs to be filled in to make it all come to life, but with *Bones*, now we've got the basic building blocks in place. Plus the words go down like a strawberry milkshake—pleasing to the tongue yet with all the calcium we need for optimum health.



Self. Help. A Three-Book Teaching Series

The *Self. Help.* series offers a bird’s-eye view of the Guide’s teachings and how to apply them in working with ourselves and others.

SPILLING THE SCRIPT: A Concise Guide to Self-Knowing

Now, for the first time, powerful spiritual teachings from the Guide are available in one concise book. Jill Loree has written *Spilling the Script* to deliver a clear, high-level perspective about self-discovery and healing, giving us the map we need for following this life-changing path to Oneness.

The goal of this spiritual journey is to make contact with our divine core so we can transition from living in duality to discovering the joy of being in unity. For even as we believe ourselves to be victims of an unfair universe, the truth is that we are continually guarding ourselves against pain, and through our defended approach to life we unknowingly bring about our current life circumstances. But we can make new choices.

Bit by bit, as we come out of the trance we have been in, we begin to see cause and effect, and to take responsibility for the state of our lives. Gradually, our lives transform. We once again can sense our essential nature and eternal connectedness with all that is.

“You will find how you cause all your difficulties. You have already stopped regarding these words as mere theory, but the better you progress, the more will you truly understand just how and why you cause your hardships. By so doing, you gain the key to changing your life.”

- Pathwork Guide, Lecture #78

HEALING THE HURT: How to Heal Using Spiritual Guidance

The work of healing our fractured inner selves takes a little finesse, a lot of stick-to-it-iveness, and the skilled help of someone who has gone down this road before. Being a Helper then is about applying all we have learned on our own healing journey to help guide others through the process of re-unifying their fragmented hidden places.

That may sound simple, but it's surely not easy. It's also not easy to be the Worker, the one who does this work of spiritual healing. Now, with *Healing the Hurt*, everyone can understand the important skills needed by a Helper to assure Workers find what they're looking for.

DOING THE WORK: Healing our Body, Mind & Spirit by Getting to Know the Self

Many of us have an inkling there can be more to life: that more meaningful moments are possible, and more satisfying experiences are attainable. Well, we're right. And fortunately, the tools for bringing this about are not really a secret. They're just not obvious. Herein lies the crux of the problem. We must come to realize what we have not been willing or able to see before.

Truth be told, no one gets out of planet Earth alive. But we can come out ahead by learning to make the best use of our time here. And that starts the day we begin doing the work. So let's get at it.



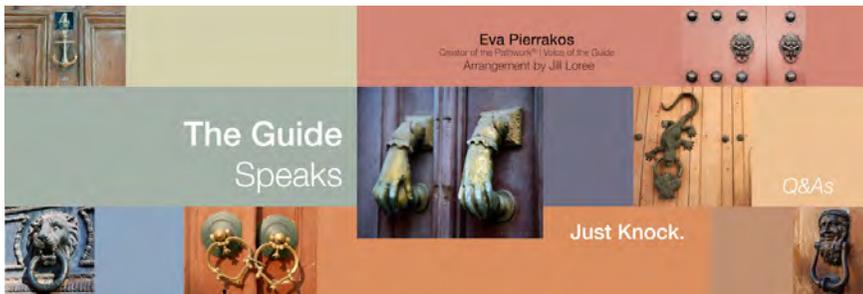
Word for Word
An Intimate Exchange Between
a Couple of Kindred Souls

By Jill Loree
with Scott Wisler

What does it really look like, not just to talk the talk, but also to walk the walk of a spiritual path? In a word, it can get complicated.

Now, in this word-for-word collection of straight-forward messages written between a couple of died-in-the-wool spiritual seekers, we get a glimpse into some of the wily ways our work surfaces in our relationships, and how we can navigate through the hiccups.

Surprisingly insightful and at times pretty funny, here is a rare inside perspective on the messy work of healing, growing and relating.



The Guide Speaks

The Complete Q&A Collection

By Eva Pierrakos
with Jill Loree

www.theguidespeaks.org

In *The Guide Speaks*, Jill Loree opens up this fascinating collection of thousands of Q&As answered by the Pathwork Guide, all arranged alphabetically by topic. This website includes hard-hitting questions asked about fears, hate, anger, health and relationships.

Jill Loree has combined her favorite questions about Religion, Jesus Christ, the Bible, Reincarnation, the Spirit World, Death, Prayer & Meditation and God into a single “Best Of” collection. You can read the Best of the Q&As Collection online, or download the free PDF of **KEYWORDS: Answers to Key Questions Asked of the Pathwork® Guide.**

“There are so many questions you need to ask, personal and general ones. In the end they become one and the same. The lectures I am called upon to deliver are also answers to unspoken questions, questions that arise out of your inner yearning, searching, and desires to know and to be in truth. They arise out of your willingness to find divine reality, whether this attitude exists on the conscious or unconscious level.

But there are other questions that need to be asked deliberately on the active, outer, conscious level in order to fulfill the law. For only when you knock can the door be opened; only when you ask can you be given. This is a law.”

- The Pathwork Guide in Q&A #250