

The Healing Potential in Aligning with your True Self

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There is a kind of healing that requires no experts, no counseling fees, no years of struggle, no journey to the far reaches of the planet. It is the kind of healing that comes from self-compassion and self-embrace. It requires only the allowance of our heart's desires.

In our heart's desires are the seeds of our true self, our higher self, our natural self, our wise self, our non-resisting, flowing self. You can pick the term that fits best for you. But the idea is the same. Our heart's longing grants great insight into who we really are. But most of us live in a state of resistance to this information and to our true self.

Let's play pretend. Pretend that when you wake up tomorrow, you have all the time, money, energy, health, emotional support, and general resources in the world. Got it? You're completely free of obligation, hardship, pain, or any form of distraction. And here's the million-dollar question: Would you spend tomorrow the same way you're spending today?

For many people, the answer is no. And also for many people, they can describe in detail exactly what they would do tomorrow. In other words, they know who they are in their heart of hearts and they know exactly what they would love to be doing to express that true self. So this is what I mean by resisting our true selves: we wake up in the morning and spend our life's time in pursuit of someone else's dreams. Or worse yet, we may be spending our life's time in pursuit of nobody in particular's dreams.

Babies are born in alignment with their true selves. When they have a desire, they ask for it to be filled. It is a simple and beautiful thing to see. They may be dependent on their caretakers for sustenance, shelter, and their very survival, but they are not weak. They are powerful. They are powerful in their ability to create their world, to fulfill their needs, to express themselves clearly, and to revel in the joy they find in all of it.

Puppies are equally powerful in their alignment to their true self. So much so, that there isn't much point in calling it alignment. If they are never out of alignment, they simply are. They are always their true, higher selves. In this sense, puppies are a lovely manifestation of the life force. We say they have strong instincts, but this is another way to say they are connected to their source, their inner knowing, their true self. They have no resistance to their natural desires, eating when they are hungry, sleeping when they are tired, and asking for love as they feel the need. Furthermore, they are for the most part one of our planet's best models of unconditional love, which is perhaps no small coincidence.

So in these times, perhaps we've all heard a story like Mary's. Perhaps more than one. Mary came to see me because she wasn't feeling well. The fatigue she bore each day was almost overwhelming; almost. Somehow she still managed to function. Somehow she managed to get up at 5:30 each morning to organize her day, feed the kids, deliver them to school, arrive at work by 8:00, work all day, pick up the kids again at day care at 5:00, go home and cook supper, help with homework, run errands, pick up the house, throw a couple loads of clothes in the washer, and then maybe manage a few minutes with her husband to catch up on the day and have a goodnight kiss before passing out in bed. Her husband was just as busy as she was. He helped out with the kids as much as possible and mostly took care of their extra curricular activities, but his job required long hours of overtime, so he just wasn't around very much of the time.

Mary woke up tired but she couldn't see any option other than to hop out of bed and start in on the day. The kids were usually up and making noise before she was anyway. And though she dreaded going to work, they had to have her income to pay the bills. She longed for a day to lounge in bed with her husband who she missed terribly. Mary knew she wasn't taking very good care of herself, but she couldn't imagine what to do about it. She was just too tired to think clearly.

Mary's is a very common American story. And it's not all bad. Raising children can be extremely fulfilling. Working to provide the income necessary to support one's self and one's family can also be very fulfilling. Marriage can, of course, also be very fulfilling. In fact, we might say that in America today, some of us have too much of a good thing. So much so, that we eliminated a few too many of the basics from our daily schedules. Things like rest, relaxation, exercise, the joy of planning and preparing and eating healthy food, time for friends, or time for spiritual practice often get what my mother used to call the short end of the stick.

But here's the thing I see everyday in my work: alignment with one's true desires heals, restores, and replenishes one's body, heart and soul. Disconnection from one's heart slowly, slowly takes away those treasures.

So who is your true self and what does her heart of hearts desire? The joys of self-discovery are manifold and don't have to cost more than the time it takes to spend with yourself. When I asked Mary to play the pretend game, she knew right away she wanted to spend her time with horses. Of course, she couldn't begin to imagine how she could fit that in her schedule or her budget or her energy. But that's exactly what we decided was the first course of action: imagination.

Mary discovered that even time spent day-dreaming about horses made her feel better. And the reason that even pretending can make you feel better, in my opinion, is that what you're really doing in those moments is aligning with your true self. And there is great power there. Even the most harried among us has access to this power, maybe in the shower first thing in the morning or waiting in line at the checkout.

It took some time, but it worked for Mary. Eventually she found a woman who had a horse and who needed help with riding, grooming, etc. So Mary got to have some hands-on time with horses again. Sometimes she took her kids with her to share her passion for horses with them. Sometimes she went alone and had the chance to commune with another species. She started to get more exercise in her life from the horseback riding. She started to feel better. To make a long story short, today (which is some years later), Mary has a kind of baby-sitting business for horses. She takes care of animals whose owners are out of town either for short or extended stays. And she's learned to do a kind of healing touch for horses, which is also part of her business. And it seems to me that her business will continue to expand as new ideas keep coming to her everyday.

What kinds of healing can happen from aligning with your true self? For Mary, it has been profound. She has regained her energy and more than that. Mary is literally healthier now than she was when she first came to see me. Now, when I look at her blood, urine, hair, hormone or other test results, I can literally see the physiological changes brought on by her lifestyle changes. Of course, she knows she's healthier because she can feel it every morning when she wakes up. She's eager for the day to begin. She's energetic, excited, and each day is full.

It's not hard to know when you've found alignment with your true self. It's not a subtle thing. There is an immediate energy influx. We can get out of alignment quite easily and come to accept that quality of life as normal, but when alignment comes back into our lives, we know it. Time often is suspended ("I can't believe 6 hours have passed"), smiles are rampant and large ("what are

you grinning about”), and you feel better than when you started (“I feel like dancing, want to go out tonight”). In fact, I just wrote this article in about 90 minutes and that’s exactly how I feel right now.

What would you like to do tomorrow?