

EXPANDING AWARENESS

Secrets of the
Super-Aware
(An Inside Look)



An Unfiltered Collection By Bill Harris

Expanding Awareness: Secrets of the Super-Aware *(An Inside Look)*

By Bill Harris, Founder
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The New Science of Super Awareness

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Introduction

by Centerpointe's Director of Client Services,

Marc Gilson

You've found yourself in the possession of a free 5-chapter selection from Bill Harris's book, ***Expanding Awareness: Secrets of the Super-Aware***. This collection features stories and essays from the late and great founder of Centerpointe himself, complete with an audible version that was recorded in Bill's own voice before he passed away in 2018.

As you listen or read along, please keep in mind that this is just a minor taste of the full 41-chapter book that's available for purchase on the Centerpointe website. The full book is also included as a free bonus when you sign up for the first level of the *Holosync Solution Program*, **Awakening Prologue**.

But even though this is just a small sample of the valuable wisdom that Bill Harris shared with the world, we believe that these five chapters contain some of the most powerful key ingredients and concepts that you can use to create a life of happiness, success, and abundance. So if you enjoy this "mini-book," you'll really love the full collection!

And if Bill's words spark inspiration, questions, or anything else, feel free to drop us a line. You can email us at support@centerpointe.com anytime. We'd love to hear what you thought of these chapters, and we'll be happy to help you take the first step on your own Holosync journey.

Now I'll let Bill take it from here.

Best Wishes,

Marc Gilson

Chapter 15

What Is Enlightenment?

Since we've been talking about enlightenment in this blog, and because several of you have specifically asked about this, let's talk about Holosync and enlightenment. So, are you going to become enlightened if you use Holosync?

First, perhaps we'd better decide what we mean by enlightenment.

I realize that in posing this question I'm opening Pandora's Box. Defining enlightenment isn't easy, partly because the whole subject is ineffable, which means it resists description. We're trying to describe something *non-dualistic* with language, the whole premise of which *is* dualistic (i.e., that certain separate things do something to other things).

Another potential problem is that every reader will interpret what I say from his or her own individual perspective (his or her current developmental level) which by definition (excuse me for saying this, but it's true) is incomplete, making what I say only partially understandable. Nearly everyone's perspective on enlightenment is a collection of IDEAS, not something they know from experience.

Whatever. Let's give it a try, and see what happens.

Defining Enlightenment

You could say that enlightenment is waking up to the truth about reality, or the truth about who you really are. So, then, what is the truth about reality? And who are you, really? Again, we have a problem, because you can't really say what reality is. Being ineffable, it's beyond description. We are part of a multidimensional reality that cannot be described with linear and dualistic language.

For this reason reality is generally described by saying what it ISN'T. (In theology this is called the *apophatic* approach. Another approach is to describe what reality is *like*, which is called the *cataphatic* approach—the approach of poetry or metaphor, as when we say, for instance, that God is love, or God is like a father and we are his children.)

So what I'm about to say will be partly what reality is like, partly what it is not, and partly what it is—even though anything you can say about it really isn't it.

So, on one hand, we have the common sense notion that reality is composed of separate things and events—and that you are one of those separate things. The awakened person would see that this chopping of reality into separate bits is an illusion created by the mind, and that in actuality everything goes together and exists in relation to everything else. It's all one continuous thing and one continuous event. For the awakened person this isn't a way of thinking about the world, a theory, but rather an experience of the way things are.

As I've said in previous posts, this also includes the realization that all pairs of seeming opposites are really one, that they arise together and depend upon each other, and that the supposed conflict between opposites is also an illusion created by the mind. This is what I've referred to as the Game of Black and White—the idea that life, for

instance, must (or could) win over death, that good must win over evil, that having must win over not having, or in general that what you want must (or could) win over what you don't want.

Further, the very nature of who you are—and the nature of every other “thing-event” in the relative world—is emptiness. In Buddhism they say, “Emptiness is form, form is emptiness.” This “emptiness” is called *Śūnyatā* in Buddhism, and signifies that everything one encounters in life is empty of any absolute identity, permanence, or any sort of in-dwelling ‘self’.

This is because everything is interrelated and mutually dependent, as I said above, which means that nothing has any *independent existence* (when they use the term emptiness Buddhists don't mean that everything is NOTHING—emptiness is their way of describing this lack of independent nature). All things are in a state of constant flux where energy and information are continuously and forever flowing throughout the natural world giving rise to, and themselves undergoing, major transformations with the passage of time.

In other words, everything is impermanent. What seem to be substantial and discrete things come into being and pass away, endlessly. This misperception that there are solid and separate things with some sort of independent existence (including the idea that there is a separate you with an independent existence) is caused by the psychological tendency to grasp at all objects of perception as if they really existed as independent entities.

Some think that this is a result of our resistance to impermanence, particularly death. This resistance causes ordinary (unawakened) beings to believe that separate and stable objects exist “out there” as they *appear* to perception.

(Ironically, when you stop resisting impermanence, and embrace it, you are free.)

This delusion that there are stable things out there is like seeing a whirlpool in a river and thinking that it is a solid, permanent thing, when in reality it is a constantly changing flow that just looks like a stable and constant "thing."

Here is what the Dalai Lama said about the Buddhist idea of emptiness in his book, *The Universe in a Single Atom* (and yes, I will get back to Holosync):

"One of the most important philosophical insights in Buddhism comes from what is known as the theory of emptiness. At its heart is the deep recognition that there is a fundamental disparity between the way we perceive the world, including our own experience in it, and the way things actually are.

"In our day-to-day experience, we tend to relate to the world and to ourselves as if these entities possessed self-enclosed, definable, discrete and enduring reality. For instance, if we examine our own conception of selfhood, we will find that we tend to believe in the presence of an essential core to our being, which characterises our individuality and identity as a discrete ego, independent of the physical and mental elements that constitute our existence.

"The philosophy of emptiness reveals that this is not only a fundamental error but also the basis for attachment, clinging and the development of our numerous prejudices. According to the theory of emptiness, any belief in an objective reality grounded in the assumption of intrinsic, independent existence is simply untenable. All things and

events, whether 'material', mental or even abstract concepts like time, are devoid of objective, independent existence. To intrinsically possess such independent existence would imply that all things and events are somehow complete unto themselves and are therefore entirely self-contained. This would mean that nothing has the capacity to interact with or exert influence on any other phenomena.



"But we know that there is cause and effect – turn a key in a car, the starter motor turns the engine over, spark plugs ignite and fuel begins to burn... Yet in a universe of self-contained, inherently existing things, these events could never occur!

"So effectively, the notion of intrinsic existence is incompatible with causation; this is because causation implies contingency and dependence, while anything that inherently existed would be immutable and self-enclosed. In the theory of emptiness, everything is argued as merely being

composed of dependently related events; of continuously interacting phenomena with no fixed, immutable essence, which are themselves in dynamic and constantly changing relations. Thus, things and events are 'empty' in that they can never possess any immutable essence, intrinsic reality or absolute 'being' that affords independence."

Suffering happens when we cling to these phantom "things" and "events"—and in particular, to the most significant phantom of all, "me."

When a person awakens, they see through all of this—or, you might say, "there is a seeing-through of all of this," since part of the waking up is the realization that there is no separate person there to actually see anything. (This is why it's so hard to describe this with language, which implies the very separate things and events we're saying aren't real.)

This realization isn't a theoretical understanding, or a belief. It's an experience, and at first a quite stunning experience. And along with that experience is a complete freedom from clinging to the idea of "me," or to the world being any certain way. All the conflicts that seem so real in the Game of Black and White are seen through, and in seeing through all of this, there is complete freedom.

How Holosync Enlightens You

Geez, I just wanted to talk about Holosync, and here I've been sucked into explaining one of the deepest philosophical questions ever raised. So let's just say that the above describes the awakened experience, even though such an experience can't be described. And, if this doesn't make sense to you, let that be okay. Before you start to actually

see/feel/experience the truth of the above, it can just seem to be theoretical mumbo-jumbo. Once you have the experience, though, the above just seems like a description (though incomplete) of what is obvious.

So how does Holosync tune you into this experience and awaken you to the illusion of separate things and events and the futility of resisting the universe the way it is?

It actually makes more sense to look at this question the other way around—to ask how in the world a human being can come under the illusion that there are separate things and events, and that there is a separate doer who can move them around through some sort of power that is separate from the whole.



Here's the typical explanation. The mind, by its very nature, chops the universe into separate things and events, something I've discussed at length in other posts. This chopping is called *maya* in Hindu and Buddhist thought. Maya comes from the same root word as measurement, and it's the idea that we take an essentially wiggly world and try to "straighten it out," to explain it (ex-plain it, flatten it out), to "square things away," to "iron things out," and so on.

If humans were in charge of clouds, for instance, they would all probably have regular geometrical shapes. The natural

wiggly world is too complex for our simple minds, so we try to simplify it by dividing it into this and that, separate things and events, and create simple representations of the exceedingly complex (actually, infinitely complex) multi-dimensional goings-on of the natural world.

For instance, if you tried to describe what happened to you during the last five minutes whatever you said would be a tiny fraction of what really happened, because what happened actually included all your sensory impressions, attended to or not, all your relationships with everything else (ultimately) in the universe, all the cells that divided in your body, all the heartbeats that happened, all the muscle movements, and a whole lot more—and that just can't be described. It would take an infinite amount of time to explain all of this, since it's all happening all at once. We live in a multi-dimensional universe that just cannot be grabbed hold of, physically or mentally! (It's been said about Reality, the Tao, that "You can't grab hold of it, and you can't get rid of it.")

So the way out of this fragmented way of living and seeing the world (a way of seeing that is the root cause of the suffering in the world) is to stop mistaking this chopped-up way of looking at the universe, through the filter of the mind, for the real thing. And, to do this, you first have to get out of the mind entirely (though once you "get it" you can go back to using the mind, but this time without being fooled that what it creates is more than just a *representation* of reality).

Holosync (as well as traditional meditation, for that matter) creates connections in the brain that gradually allows you to see more and more how everything really does go together, to see how everything is really one big "thing-event", and how separate things and events (especially the separate "me") are illusory.

This, of course, is the end-of-the-line ultimate realization. As you know if you're using Holosync, this isn't what happens

during the first week. As you use Holosync, though, you gradually see how things go together and, as this happens, you relax. Things that bothered you before (aspects of life around which you were playing the Game of Black and White) don't seem to bug you as much. Seeing the world as a conglomeration of separate things and events (that aren't you, and are potentially dangerous) creates anxiety, because it makes it SEEM as if you are separate from the rest of the universe—and, as a separate self, that you are in danger, or at least potentially in danger.

As you increasingly see how things go together your anxiety diminishes, along with depression, anger, fear, and other “negative” emotions (the emotions of separation). At the same time, your various coping methods for dealing with what seems like the danger of existence also calm down—addictions, eating problems, withdrawal, projection, behavioral acting out, and so on.

Most people don't, at first, see these changes as being a result of seeing how everything goes together, because that isn't apparent in the beginning—at least to most people. But just a little bit, even if you aren't yet consciously aware of it, is enough to change your experience of life. The ah-ha, where you see that, yes, everything is connected, and you are not separate, comes later.

Another way to approach this is to realize that the mind, in chopping the universe up into separate bits, creates an illusion. As the mind calms down, this illusion loses power. Holosync quiets the mind, at least over time, and as this happens you become calmer, you feel more connected to everything, and the emotions and behaviors characteristic of separation diminish.

On the other hand, as many of you know, you can experience upheaval as you use Holosync. With any kind of meditation, the mind, the ego, will fight back. All those areas of life where

you're playing the Game of Black and White (trying to resist or get rid of something) will eventually surface, and the upheaval you experience is really just *your own resistance to what is*.

In other words, all the areas of life where you think things should be THIS way and not THAT way, will come up, and you might have strong resistance around each of them. Of course, you don't have to resist. You could surrender to what is and let the world be the way that it is, but most people fight for their IDEAS about how *this* should win over *that*. This fighting, of course, creates upheaval and suffering. This is what I'm referring to when I tell people as they use Holosync to *let whatever happens be okay*. Most people, at first, have a hard time taking this advice. Still, I give it.

(By the way, I am not saying that you can't do something to create change in your life. As long as you do so without resistance, create all the change you want.)

The more you've been traumatized in your life, the more likely you'll fight for your version of the Game of Black and White. This happens because the trauma you've suffered gives you a strong belief that the world is a dangerous place, and that you MUST protect yourself from that danger. What you think of as danger is Black in the Game of Black and White, and you can't let it win, so you play a HARD version of the game in an attempt to defeat it. The Game of Black and White, though, *is an unwinnable game*.

This is because in reality Black and White go together and are really one thing. Having one side "win" and eliminating the other would be like having up win over down. What's more, ultimately, Black and White are just ideas, not realities. Desirable and undesirable are not qualities that are intrinsic to anything. They are ADDED by the mind, from the outside.

So, if your experience is intense from time to time as you

use Holosync, you have to realize that you are doing it, by (unconsciously) playing the Game of Black and White—which means clinging to your idea of how things should be, in other words, resisting what is. Again, this is why I suggest that you let whatever happens be okay, at least emotionally, and just watch with curiosity. And, I'll admit that at first this isn't easy to do, so you might have to go through a bit of upheaval from time to time. I sure did.

An Upheaval of Enlightenment

So, will you become enlightened? This, of course, is a trick question. The truth is that there is no "you" that could become enlightened. The "you" you're hoping will become enlightened is the ego, and since enlightenment is an ending of unconscious identification with the ego, your IDEA of who you are, "you" can't become enlightened. Trying to become enlightened ultimately bumps up against the fact that the trying is just a strengthening of the very thing that stands in the way of it happening.

Well, shit, you say. Bummer. Maybe I'll go to someone who'll be more encouraging. But what I've just said isn't bad news. The reason you can't become enlightened is that you don't exist, and that realization IS enlightenment (or at least one stage of it). The truth is that enlightenment can HAPPEN, but "you" can't do anything to make it happen because you don't exist!

As Ken Wilber says, enlightenment is an accident, but meditation makes you more accident prone. Enlightenment happens, but there is no separate self that it happens to. I will say that since meditation makes you more accident prone, and Holosync meditation is undeniably faster and more potent than traditional meditation, using Holosync makes you REALLY accident prone. And, even if

enlightenment doesn't "happen," "you" will, over time, at the very least drop a lot of your emotional bullshit, gain a tremendous clarity of mind, and dramatically reduce the amount of suffering you experience.

Again, if you've suffered a lot of trauma in your past, you're almost sure to be playing a seriously hard Game of Black and White, in which case your path will probably be much more intense (the more trauma, the harder we play the Game of Black and White). When this happens, the mind, the ego, fights back even harder.

This was the way it was for me. I had HUGE upheaval, tons of cathartic stuff. I made the whole process very difficult for myself. But if *I* can come out the other side, anyone can. It's because of the potential for upheaval that I created the support letters and the support hotline. Some people need more support. I didn't have any support, which meant that I unknowingly made things more difficult than they needed to be. Now the only way you can do that is if you don't ask for support, or reject it when it's offered (as many people do—we tell them exactly what they need to do to stop suffering and they get pissed off at us).

To make all of this even more paradoxical, once you've realize that you are IT (or, rather, that the center you thought was you is just an idea, and that the real you is the entire going on of it all), once you get that there is no separate you, you have to somehow *integrate that realization back into the relative world*.

The truth is that humans DO create a world of separate things and events, and you can't get away from the relative world. Trying to do so is just as much a delusion as failing to see that separate things and events aren't real. So once you realize that the relative world, the world of separate things and events, is a mentally created illusion—what is

commonly referred to as awakening (the Third Rank of Tozan I described in a previous post) you go back into the relative world and learn how to function in it WHILE AT THE SAME TIME knowing who you really are.

This is necessary because of one of the basic laws of reality: *everything is in time and eventually passes away*. There's no getting away from this, and it's for this reason that to be here, as a human, there is going to be SOME suffering. To be here you have to become attached, at least a little bit. You have to play a LIGHT version of the Game of Black and White. There's no reason to be here unless you do. Genpo Roshi, for instance, is attached to some things, but it's by choice. He's attached to his children, his wife, his friends, to Zen, to helping others wake up, and so on. In the same way, I'm attached to certain things. And, because all things come into being and pass away, there is suffering built into all attachment.

The difference between Genpo Roshi (or anyone who has awakened and then goes back into the relative world) and the average person is that the awakened person chooses what to become attached to. Genpo Roshi calls such a person "the one who chooses to be a human being." Once you "get" the truth that everything is one thing, you could just sit in that place, in Big Mind, but in that place there's nothing to do, nowhere to go, nothing to get. In that case, why be here? This relative world is a place where we at least play as if there IS something to get, somewhere to go, something to do. It's just that the awakened person is *choosing* those things, while the unawakened person—busy playing an unconscious Game of Black and White—unconsciously stumbles from one type of suffering to the next, without choice.

So the answer to the question of whether or not you will become enlightened if you use Holosync is yes. And, it's

also no. And maybe. I'll tell you this, though. Enlightenment is about two things: awareness (of what is real and what is illusion, and who you really are), and surrender to what is (in particular, to impermanence). You must see things the way they really are, and awareness is needed if you are to do that. Then, you must accept things the way they are, which means that you stop playing the Game of Black and White, except as a conscious choice. You see the way things are, and also that ultimately there is no escape from the way things are.

Once you do that (again, accepting the fact that, in reality, there's no "you" to do this, but that's the limitation of explaining this using language), you are FREE. People think that freedom is winning the Game of Black and White. It isn't. Freedom is stepping out of the game, then stepping back in, but this time doing so consciously, intentionally, knowing and accepting the consequences.

Whew! This was a long one. I hope this is helpful. See you next time.

Ready to start your Holosync Journey?

**Learn More About Awakening
Prologue Here**

Chapter 16

The Top 7 Reasons Why Your Life Sucks

Okay, I admit it. The word “sucks” is pretty strong. Perhaps your life doesn’t suck. And, yes, I know that it’s not a good idea to “focus on the negative.” But so many people tell me that their life *does* suck that I just had to address this topic and share my solutions to this problem. And, if you’re already happy and successful, what I’m going to share here will allow you to have a lot more of what you want from life—I promise.

So bear with me. I think you’ll find this letter to be very helpful, no matter what your life is like. At the very least this chapter will answer...

- Why you aren’t making enough money...
- Why your relationships don’t work...
- Why you aren’t doing what you really want with your life...
- Why you feel disconnected from the world and other people...
- Why you don’t do what you know you should do...
- Why life is such a struggle...
- Why you aren’t happy...

So if you're struggling, if you can't make enough money, or create the relationship you want, if you can't get yourself to do what you know you should do, or, in general, if you're having trouble creating a happy and fulfilling life, I'm going to show you how to turn things around. And, if your life is already great, what I'm going to share will make it even better.

Believe me, I've certainly struggled in my life. I was on the Olympic Struggling Team for decades. For most of my adult life, no matter how many seminars I attended, how many books I read, how long I meditated, or how many home study courses I bought, I just couldn't get it together.

One caution: Just hearing about these reasons why your life may suck isn't going to solve the problem. I wish it was that easy. Yes, knowing how you're sabotaging yourself is a great first step. Creating real and lasting change, however, is going to require...

...a whole new way of thinking and acting.

You'll need a plan, a method, a structured way to make what I'll share...yours. Let me share a huge secret with you: *For any outcome you want—whether internal or external—there's **a certain way of thinking and acting** that will get it for you.* You just have to find it—and be willing to adopt it.

This is a very profound and important statement, so let's take a closer look at it. If each result you want, inside or out, is associated with and generated by a certain way of thinking and acting (which it is), then to get a new result, you're going to have to adopt and use...

...a new way of thinking and acting.

If your life isn't working, it's *because of your current way of thinking and acting.* To get different results, you'll have

to *give up that way of thinking and acting* and be willing to adopt a new one. Hoping for a different result *without changing the way you think and act* is insane...hopeless...and futile. I'll get back to how you might do this a little later.

Okay, let's get into the real reasons why your life sucks.

The #1 Reason Your Life Sucks:

You're Pretending You Don't Have Control

Over the twenty-plus years that I've been helping people, there are always a few who say, "No matter what I do, nothing works." I've puzzled over this for years, wondering why this happens for *some* people.

Finally, the answer came to me. These people have not bought into the most fundamental principle underlying all personal change. What is it? It's the realization that **somehow—even if you can't see how—you are creating what's happening in your life.**

I don't mean you're to *blame* for your life. No one consciously or intentionally creates a life that sucks. However, what happens does come from something inside of you. Your own unconscious internal processes generate how you feel, how you behave, what things mean, what you attract, and what you become attracted to.

If you're unaware of these processes (as 99% of people are), you live on autopilot. Life seems to *just happen*. You feel like Wile E. Coyote (by the way, if he has all that money for Acme products, why can't he just buy dinner?)—no matter what you do, the safe always falls on your head, or your life explodes in your face.

It seems as if you have no control—at all.

If, however, you say to yourself, “I have no idea *how* I’m creating my life, but somehow I am creating it”—and then become incredibly curious to find out exactly *HOW* you’re doing it...

...you WILL figure it out, and you WILL gain control of your life.

Please. Acknowledge that somehow, *something you are doing* is creating your life. Then watch your internal processes until you find *how you’re doing it*. Here’s a big hint: pay attention to what you believe, what is important to you, what you focus your attention on, and what meanings you place on things.

And, if you aren’t willing to do this, then *please*, be content the way you are. Don’t drive yourself crazy wishing for change unless you’re willing to pay the price to have it.

The #2 Reason Your Life Sucks:

You Chronically (Unconsciously) Focus on What You Don’t Want

This is the second characteristic of those for whom nothing seems to work: they chronically and unconsciously focus on what they don’t want, what they’re afraid of, what they’re worried about, or what they want to avoid.

If you do this, you have a good reason. You’ve suffered some sort of trauma, and as a result, you believe that *the world is a dangerous place*, or at least a potentially dangerous place. To avoid that danger (whatever it is) you have to watch out for it, right? However, when you focus on what you *don’t* want...

...two unpleasant things happen.

First, you attract or create more of it. Why? Because all beliefs, including the belief that the world is a dangerous place, are *self-fulfilling prophecies*. *You will unconsciously find a way to make what you believe come true, or at least seem to be true*. If you believe it's a dangerous world, you'll attract danger—or interpret what happens as dangerous...

...even if it really isn't.

You don't do this intentionally. Of course not. But, still, focusing on what you don't want causes a VERY powerful part of your mind to figure out how to get more of whatever you're focusing on. In fact, the only reason you can attract something you don't want is because you're doing it unconsciously, outside your awareness.

And, as time goes by, you'll accumulate a huge pile of evidence that you are right. The more evidence you accumulate, the more strongly you'll believe it. And, the more you believe it...

...the more evidence you'll create.

So what's the way out? In a way, it's very simple:

You can create anything, no matter how dismal—and keep creating it, over and over and over—as long as you do it *unconsciously*. But do the same thing with full awareness—watching the entire creative process, as it happens, inside your mind, and out—and if it doesn't serve you...

...it automatically falls away!

Unconsciously focus on what you don't want, and you'll create more and more of it, possibly for your entire life. But watch yourself do it, with awareness, and (I promise this is true) you can't keep doing it. You just can't do something that isn't resourceful, and do it with awareness.

So, *watch your mind*. Find out HOW your focusing creates or attracts what happens.

Some people think they aren't "good at manifesting." Not so. Every human being *infallibly* manifests whatever they predominantly hold in their mind. Always. But here's the problem. Few people (perhaps 1%) are *aware* of what they're focusing on. Learn to be *intentionally aware*, and you will gain a power that will blow away all obstacles, and get you...

...everything you want.

The #3 Reason Your Life Sucks:

You Believe What Your Parents Taught You About Who You Have to Be in Order to Be "Okay"

All parents have an idea of who and what their children should be, and how they should behave. To be "okay" in the eyes of your parents, you had to at least try to be that child. In some families, these expectations are benevolent. In others, they are unreasonable, or even impossible, and...

...the price of non-compliance is severe.

There are two kinds of expectations. The first are *injunctions*—what your parents told you not to do or be: don't think, don't feel, don't be sexy, don't outdo me, don't be happy, don't be strong, don't cry, don't succeed, don't want anything, don't protect yourself, don't make money, don't be curious, don't complain, don't let anyone know what you're feeling, and many, many more. Usually these are unstated and generally taught by positive and negative reinforcement.

The second are *attributions*—what your parents said you were: clumsy, smart, bad, good, ugly, beautiful, lazy, stupid, careless, driving me crazy, unlucky, sexy, too proud, sneaky, shy, cute, boring, a bum, in the way, fat, skinny, a pansy, too tall, too short, an airhead, and so forth.

Here's the main point, though. We take all of this in, as if all of it was true—for two reasons. First, we're small and powerless, and our parents are big and powerful and seem to know what they're talking about. We have no choice but to go along. We also have no way of knowing that *all of this is just their opinion*, based on *their* stuff—what their parents taught them about...

...what a person should or shouldn't be.

Injunctions and attributions say more about our parents than they do about us! If your life isn't working, a great deal of what you believe about yourself, what you focus on, what you're willing to do or not do, what you beat yourself up about, is simply someone else's prejudiced opinion.

I would encourage you to sit down and figure out the "don'ts" and attributions your parents gave you, and...

...question them!

Now that you're grown, *you* can decide who you are and what you want to be or do. If your parents somehow communicated to you that you can't be or have what you want, you don't have to keep believing it!

Again, this involves awareness. As long as these expectations are unconscious, they control you. Become aware of them. Watch how they create your life. If you do, they will dissolve.

The #4 Reason Your Life Sucks:

You Aren't Willing to Examine Your Beliefs and Premises—About the World, Life, Other People, or Yourself

If your current way of thinking and acting isn't working, you have to change it. Be willing to question what you currently believe. Question the rules or principles you use to navigate your life.

Question your assumptions about everything.

Be willing to let in new information—in fact, constantly seek it out. Upset the apple-cart. Every happy and successful person I know is constantly questioning, well...everything.

You should do the same.

When things aren't working, or if you've been traumatized, you probably don't feel safe. You want to shut down and protect yourself—another way of focusing on what you don't want.

If this worked, I'd be all for it, but it doesn't. Instead, open up—even if it feels uncomfortable. Invite the world in. Invite information in. Question everything.

The #5 Reason Your Life Sucks:

Fearing Failure, You Don't Act

If things aren't working, if relationships fail, if you can't make enough money, if you tried over and over and it hasn't worked, it's easy to shut down and protect yourself from disappointment.

Boy do I understand this one, from a lot of personal experience. But fearing failure—or anything—means

focusing on it, and that just creates...

...more of what you fear.

Let's go a little deeper. Fear seems like it *happens* to you, but it's actually something you DO. How? By focusing your attention on something you don't want. The great Napoleon Hill once said, "The one and only thing over which you have complete and total control is how you focus your own mind. [Then, the zinger.] Luckily, this determines everything else."

Decide to focus on what you want, and then decide to act to get it. When you act, there are only two possibilities: you get what you want, or you don't. If you get what you want, great. If you don't get what you want, though, something else happens—and it's...

...just as valuable as getting what you want!

So what's just as valuable as getting what you want? Wisdom. There's valuable—in fact, priceless—information in not getting what you want. Successful people, when they don't get what they want, learn as much as they can from it.

Did you know that successful people fail more often than unsuccessful people? Why? Because they act more. And, because they fail more, they learn more—and eventually, they become...

...VERY WISE!

The poet Robert Blake said, "The fool who persists in his folly becomes wise." In other words, *there's no such thing as failure*. There's only success...or valuable information. So be willing to act. Welcome setbacks. When they happen, say: "Thank you for the valuable lesson."

The #6 Reason Your Life Sucks:

You're Focused on Yourself and Are Mostly (or Entirely) Unaware of the Needs—or the Perspective—of Other People

This one will absolutely kill your chances to make money—or create true friendships or successful romantic relationships. It's easy to become self-absorbed when things haven't gone well. But those who focus on the needs of others ultimately prosper.

Let's look at money. You give money to various people, right? You give money to the gas station, the electric company, the water company, a car dealer—or to Centerpointe. Why? In each case, you give your money in exchange for something you believe...

...is more valuable than the money.

So here is a huge secret: Money flows to those who create value. Those who have little money haven't yet figured out how to create more value for others (or, they haven't figured out how to let others know that they have something of value).

If this is you, forget about "putting it out to the universe" and other such magical solutions. Yes, do focus your attention on what you want. Everything begins with a thought, and what you focus on tends to happen in reality. But you can focus until you're blue in the face, and unless you have something that someone else wants because they find it to be valuable...

...nothing will happen.

Your first thought should be, "How can I be of value?" What sorts of things are valuable? Ideas...products...services... your labor...your skills...your solutions to people's problems.

If you have a low-paying job, find a way to create more value. Get more skills. Or, offer a service, a product, or a solution to a problem. Focus on the needs of others and how you can fill them.

The same principle applies in relationships. If you want love, or friendship, instead of thinking so much about what you want, think about how you can offer *what you want* to someone else. People crave kindness, courtesy, a listening ear, someone who cares, someone who truly has their interests in mind. If you can genuinely be such a person...

...love and friendship will come back to you.

Notice others. Take their perspective. Pay attention to their needs. Notice their point of view. Think about *us* instead of *me*. If you do, amazing things will happen.

The #7 Reason Your Life Sucks:

You're Waiting for Everything to Be Okay Before You Can Be Happy

I hate to be the one to tell you, but everything is *never* going to be okay. If that's what you're waiting for, you are in the wrong universe.

I know some of the most spiritually aware, successful, happy people in the world—people like Zen master Genpo Roshi, Jack Canfield, Ken Wilber, bestselling author Stewart Emery, and many others. Believe me, every one of them has their own version of the same problems you have. So do I. Both Stewart and Genpo have had cancer. Jack went through a hugely expensive divorce. Ken's wife died of cancer.

Believe me, I could go on.

Here's the way the world works: *all* humans—the Dalai Lama, billionaires, movie stars, Zen masters—and average people—have problems. They get the flu—or worse. People they love die or go away. They wreck their car. The bottom of the garbage bag breaks. They have aches and pains. Their roof leaks. They buy something, and it breaks. They encounter idiots and jerks.

To be human is to have problems.

Many people assume that someone like Genpo Roshi—or me, or James Ray, or Jack Canfield, or billionaire Warren Buffet—have “solved the Problem of Life.” They haven't. If they are happy, it isn't because they have no more problems.

It's because they've stopped looking at life as if it were a series of problems. “Problems” is a *way of looking at things*, and you can decide to stop looking at things in that way. “If only I were rich, or I had a different partner, a better job, a bigger house, better meditations, more sex, a Ph.D., smaller thighs, a child (or no child), more free time, less wrinkles...”

Yes! Get these things. Go for it!

But along the way, stop seeing what happens in life as a problem. THIS IS IT—no matter who you are! Life is up AND down, black AND white, winning AND losing.

Instead of wishing it weren't so (or imagining that it's different for other people), LET IT BE OKAY that life is what it is. Most of your discomfort (about 99%) comes not from the way things *are*, but rather from *your resistance to the way they are!* Decide to be happy, right now...

...regardless of what is or isn't happening.

How to Stop Your Life from Sucking

So there you have it—my 7 Reasons Why Your Life Sucks. In describing them, I've asked you to make several changes. So, how do you make these changes?

First, DECIDE to make them. Second, be systematic. List the changes you want to make. Then, for a week, focus on the first change, then focus on the second change during week two. Keep going like this until you've spent a week on each change. Then, start over and do it again, until you've actually made the changes you want to make.

The key to all of this is AWARENESS. Anything that does not serve you, if done with complete and full awareness, falls away. *You can only do something that doesn't serve you if you do it unconsciously.*

Which brings me to Holosync audio technology. For those of you who don't know what Holosync is, it is an audio technology, delivered through stereo headphones that creates the electrical brain wave patterns of deep meditation. It is a way of greatly accelerating the meditation process, allowing you to meditate, as we like to say, as deeply as a Zen monk at the push of a button. Holosync meditators get the benefits of meditation in a fraction of the time. And, it makes the whole process easy. You experience extremely deep meditation the first time, and every time.

In addition, Holosync causes all kinds of mental and emotional problems to fall away, and it creates tremendous mental clarity.

By far the most potent thing I did to turn my life around was Holosync. Why do I say that? Because Holosync, more than anything I've ever experienced, *expands your awareness.* Everything I've asked you to do

in this letter becomes many times easier as you become more aware.

I hope this has been helpful to you. Until next time, be well.



Ready to start your Holosync Journey?

**Learn More About Awakening
Prologue Here**

Chapter 20

It's All About Awareness

What would it be like to have significantly more choice about how you feel in each moment? What if you had more control over your behavior, or more choice about the people and situations you seem to attract into your life, or become attracted to? Wouldn't more choice and control in these areas significantly change your experience of life?

I've been helping people with their personal and spiritual growth for over 30 years now, and I've noticed that these three areas—how you feel, how you behave, what people and situations you attract or become attracted to, and what meanings you assign to the people, things, and events in your life—make up most of our experience of life.

Most people assume that their feelings “just happen,” that feelings come and go without much if any choice on our part. For that reason, most people assume that there's little that can be done about their moment by moment feelings. Have you ever lost your temper, despite the negative consequences, or found yourself feeling sad or depressed without being able to get yourself out of it?

As I'll explain in a moment, you actually can exercise a great deal of choice over how you feel. There's no reason why you need to feel bad for more than a few moments,

but exercising this choice involves becoming *more aware of exactly how you're creating the way you feel in each moment*. Meditation has proven to be one of the most effective ways of increasing awareness and Holosync meditation increases awareness at least four times faster than traditional mediation. Either way, it's through increasing your awareness that you can take charge of your internal experience of life—and your external results.

I also frequently hear from people who say that they know what they need to do in order to get the results they want, but they often can't get themselves to actually take the actions they know they need to take. They attend a seminar on how to make money, where they learn a step by step formula. They go home motivated and excited, but despite their best intentions fail to put it into practice. Or, they learn about relationship communication skills, but when the chips are down and they really need to use those skills, for some reason they don't use them.

Why does this happen? Why are we sometimes unable to be in charge of how we behave? I want to explore this question, too. And, as you'll see, once again the key to success is increasing your conscious awareness.

Let me ask you something else. Are there areas of life where you seem to get the same negative result over and over, no matter how hard you try? I used to get involved with the same woman, but each time in a different body, over and over. Then I'd experience the same relationship issues and have the same fights and the same bad feelings that I'd had with the previous partner.

Somehow, out of all the available women in the world, I managed to choose—and be chosen by—women with the same issues, which meant that each new relationship had the same problems as the old one (of course, I had my own

issues). This doesn't just happen in relationships, though. Some people make one bad investment after another, or get involved in one bad job after another, or make the same bad decision over and over.

If you have a recurring problem in *any* area of life—making money, attracting friends, getting people to respect you, creating fulfilling relationships, finding work you enjoy, staying healthy, or if anything else you don't like seems to happen over and over—there's a reason why this happens. Most people, without knowing how and why, repeatedly attract certain situations and people, which cause them to experience similar results, again and again. As with feelings and behaviors, awareness is, once again, the key to discovering why this happens and being able to exercise the choices that create new and better outcomes.



The Holosync Shortcut

As you know if you're using it, meditating with Holosync creates a number of positive changes. The first thing most

people notice is that it feels good when you use it, and you feel pleasantly high when you're finished. This is because when you are in deep, meditative states your brain produces a number of pleasurable neurochemicals that make you feel good. Many people also notice over the first several months that people and situations that bothered them before, that created anger or anxiety or some other emotional reaction, don't seem to trigger them in the same way. You could say that the threshold at which they become triggered by people and situations increases.

At the same time, general feelings of well-being increase, and anger, depression, anxiety, and other dysfunctional feelings begin to diminish. Emotional health, what some psychologists call E.Q., increases. What's more, mental clarity, creativity, problem solving ability, and other mental abilities increase because Holosync use causes the creation of new neural pathways between the left and right brain hemispheres, leading to more effective *whole brain thinking* (a component of awareness, by the way)

I want to add, however, that sometimes using Holosync might not feel good. Holosync pushes you to grow, and sometimes your unconscious mind may push back. In other words, you might resist on an unconscious level and, in doing so, create some uncomfortable feelings. So if your experience isn't all "positive," don't worry. When it feels uncomfortable, something big is being worked through, and the benefits of doing that are huge. If you feel uncomfortable, call our support line and have a chat with one of the support coaches.

What drives the accelerated change process Holosync users experience is the increase in awareness created by Holosync. So what do I mean by "awareness"? Interestingly, this isn't something that's woo-woo or metaphysical, though some people like to see it that way. Let me give a few examples.

Increasing Awareness

In many ways life can be seen as a step-by-step process of becoming more aware. Some people continue to become more aware throughout their entire life, while others gain a certain amount of awareness and then do something to stop the process. Those who continue to become more aware throughout life can in some cases become so aware that they're capable of quite startling mental abilities, they gain incredible inner peace, and their perspective on life is significantly broader than that of other people. This process culminates in what some people would call spiritual enlightenment, which isn't the sort of woo-woo thing you might think it is, and doesn't involve any particular belief system.

This process of becoming more aware actually begins when you're a baby, and we've all experienced it. Developmental psychologists tell us that a baby is having what is often described as an experience of oceanic oneness. What this really means is that the baby can't tell the difference between me and not-me. To the baby it's all one thing. The baby isn't yet aware enough to notice that there is something called "me," and then there is everything else. But at some point the baby bites its toes and it hurts, and then he bites his blanket and notices that it doesn't hurt. In this way, the baby makes the distinction between me and not-me.

At this point the baby is a bundle of sensory experiences and motor activities, but without any awareness that it can direct these things or have control over them. But at a certain point the baby gains enough awareness of its motor responses and sensory experiences that it can intentionally look at a certain thing, or listen to a certain sound. It

also learns that instead of moving randomly it can move intentionally. It can roll over, or reach out for a toy, or kick its legs, and do these things intentionally.

This demonstrates one of the key points I want you to understand, which is that *awareness creates more choice and more control*. You have no choice or control over that which you are unaware of. Once you become aware of something, however, you have choice over it. You can exercise some amount of control. Once the baby realizes that it can move intentionally, or intentionally direct its senses, it begins to have control over these things.

At this point the child becomes a bundle of feelings, of internal sensations. At some point, though, the child gains awareness of these feelings, and begins to name them. "I'm happy." "I'm sad," and so forth. This again, gives a measure of control. The same thing happens with thoughts a bit later in development. As the ability to think develops, the child is at first unaware of its thoughts. They happen, but there isn't enough awareness for the child to say, "I'm having certain thoughts." Once this awareness happens, however, the child is able to think intentionally, to decide to think about a certain subject. Often this happens about the time the child is ready to go to school.

We could continue to go through the various developmental signposts all the way into adulthood, but I think I've made my point, which is that we progressively become aware of aspects of ourselves, and of the outside world, as we grow up. As this happens, and to the degree it happens, we gain more choice and control over what we've become aware of. I've written extensively about this subject on this blog, and if you'd like to go into it more deeply, go to the beginning of the blog and read my series on human development.

The Power of Choice

I started by asking you how your life would change if you had more choice about how you feel, how you behave, and the kinds of people and situations you attract or become attracted to. Now, I've added the key point that *we have choice and control over those things we are aware of*. I've also made the second point that Holosync increases your ability to become aware.

Before I describe in more detail exactly what I mean by awareness, there's one other thing you need to know about this process. Sometimes when a person is making a developmental shift in which they're becoming aware of something of which they were previously unaware, something goes wrong. Author Ken Wilber has called these junctures developmental fulcrums. We don't have time to delve into this deeply right now, but if something goes wrong during these developmental shifts, if they aren't made cleanly and fully, certain mental and emotional problems can happen, including neurosis, personality disorders, and even psychosis. We have trouble making these developmental shifts when some sort of trauma happens during the shift.

Perhaps we'll explore this in a future post, but here's the key point I want to make right now: Wherever you are in this developmental process—and I didn't by any means describe the entire sequence of stages (again, see the series of posts on this blog about human development for the full story)—you are unaware of *something*. And, being unaware of it, you don't have choice about it or control over it. If you do become aware of it, whatever it is, you begin to be able to exercise choice over it. Those aspects of your life that you don't seem to be able to exercise choice over represent some part of yourself that you are unaware of.

As you become aware of how your feelings are created, then, you gain control and choice over those feelings. As you become aware of how your behaviors are generated, you gain choice and control over your behaviors. As you become aware of how you attract or become attracted to certain people and situations, you gain choice and control over that process.

Let me give an example to help you better understand what I mean.

Confronting Negative Feelings

You may from time to time experience feelings you don't like—sadness, anger, anxiety, depression, confusion, overwhelm, and so forth. These feelings seem to be caused by external events—or they sometimes seem to just happen, out of the blue. The truth is that while outside events often provide the trigger for the emotions we experience, what actually happens is more complicated. When a certain event happens (when we have an experience), we respond by doing certain things inside, in our mind, and it's these internal cognitive processes that actually create our emotional responses.

If you're like 99% of people, these processes happen almost entirely outside of your awareness. As you become aware of these processes, and begin to see how they create your moment by moment feelings, you will achieve an increased amount of choice over how you feel.

These internal cognitive events include the internal pictures we make, most of which happen outside our awareness. They also include our internal dialog, what most people would call "thinking," much of which also takes place outside our awareness. These processes also include what

we believe, what we've decided is important, as well as ways we have of deciding what to pay attention to and what to delete from our awareness.

The pictures you make in your head and what you say to yourself are part of a category of internal processes called internal representations. As we experience life, in order to understand and make sense of it, we represent what we see, hear, touch, taste, and smell to ourselves, inside our mind. What's more, these internal representations directly create how you feel, so I hope you can see that if you become more aware of them, you'll have more choice about them, which leads to more choice about how you feel.

This provides a clue to what I mean when I use the word awareness. Awareness, in this case, is your ability to *observe your internal representations as they happen and to see how they directly lead to how you feel in each moment*. As you use Holosync, in addition to all the other benefits of increased mental clarity and a greater sense of well-being, you'll also gain more awareness of your internal representations.

Becoming Aware of Internal Representations

Internal representations can be divided into two main categories: those of what you want and those of what you don't want. In other words, when you think about (i.e., create internal representations of) some area of life, you could either picture *what you want* in that area, or *what you want to avoid*. If you're thinking about money, you could picture having a lot of it, or how to become rich. Or, you could picture not having any, or how to avoid being poor.

This is where it begins to get interesting. When you make

internal representations of what you want, several things happen. First, you generally feel good. What's more, you tend to get ideas about how to get what you want. You also tend to notice resources that might enable you to get what you want. You're also more likely to feel motivated to take action to get what you want. And, you're more likely to develop the personal qualities you might need to get what you want—such things as persistence, creativity, enthusiasm, imagination, courage, and so forth.

On the other hand, when you make internal representations of what you don't want (i.e., what you want to avoid, what you're worried about, or what you're afraid might happen) you feel bad. In fact, any time you have a bad feeling of any kind, you can be sure that you are making internal representations of something you don't want. And, even though you don't want it, your mind takes the internal representation as something to attract or create more of, and just as with internal representations of what you want, it figures out a way to make it happen.

So, here's the way it works. You see something, hear something, touch something, and so forth. You have an experience. This experience triggers you to make certain internal representations. In fact, you make internal representations continuously, all day long. It's your way of making sense of what happens around you. Then, as a direct result of the internal representations you make, you experience a certain internal state—you feel something. This includes emotions, such as happiness, sadness, anxiety, and so forth, and it also includes states such as motivation, courage, enthusiasm, and so on, that aren't exactly emotions.

The way most people think it works:

External event —> Your experience of life

The way it actually works:

External event → your internal pictures and internal dialog → Your experience of life

So though it seems as if the external events in your life create how you feel, the truth is that there's a hidden step between the external event and your experience of it—and this step is the internal representations you make in response to the external event. As long as you're unaware of this step—the internal representations you make—you won't be able to exercise choice over them and you won't have any choice over the feelings and other internal states they generate. But once you become aware of this intervening step, and you directly see how the internal representations you make create your feelings, you will have choice, and you will gain increased control over your internal state.

You can demonstrate to yourself how making internal representations of what you want creates good feelings, and how making internal representations of what you don't want creates bad feelings. Right now, stop and think of a situation when you were extremely happy or when something went extremely well for you. Perhaps it was a time when you got something you really wanted, or a time when you successfully did something you really wanted to do. Once you've thought of such a situation, go back to that time, in your memory, and step right into your body, in your imagination, and see what you saw, hear what you heard, and feel what you felt. really get into it (you'll have to stop reading for a moment in order to do this, so read the rest of the instructions first).

As you re-experience that situation, notice what you are feeling. That feeling is created by the internal representations (pictures and internal dialog) you are making. Because they are of something you want, something you consider

to be positive, it's very likely that the feeling will be a good feeling. (Go ahead and do this little internal experiment now.)

Now, let's do this same exercise with a negative event. Think of a situation where something did not go well, an unpleasant or negative event. As before, go back to that time in your memory and, in your imagination, see what you saw, hear what you heard, and feel what you felt. Again, notice what you are feeling, and notice that that feeling is connected to the internal representations you made of what you don't want.

Now, rather than leaving you in that negative state, let's do something to get you out of it. Ask yourself, "If this is what I did not want, then what did I want?" Picture what you wanted in that situation. This will cause you to make internal representations of what you want, and this will quite likely create a better feeling. (Go ahead and do this little thought experiment now.)

If you really did this little mental exercise you should be able to see that when you focus on what you want, you create positive feelings, and when you focus on what you don't want, you create negative feelings. It's not what happens "out there" that creates how you feel so much as it's what you do inside in response to what happens out there. The problem is that nearly all people focus (in other words, create internal representations) in response to what happens unconsciously.

The Business of Creating Awareness

I often summarize what we do at Centerpointe in a very simple way. We have a tool that increases awareness—Holosync. Then, we show those who use Holosync how to apply this additional awareness to that part of themselves

that generates their experience of life (their internal processes). This creates a dramatic shift in your ability to create what you want in life—and how you experience what you get.

I hope you can see by now that if the way you generate your internal representations runs on autopilot, which it does for nearly all people, it will *seem* as if a lot of your life just happens to you. The solution to this is to *become aware of and take charge of those internal processes*, which gives you choice and control.

But why do some people seem to make a lot of internal representations of what they don't want? In other words, why do some people focus a lot on what they are afraid of, what they are worried about, what they want to avoid? Such people, unfortunately, feel bad a lot and tend to attract or create more of what they are focusing on—what they don't want. In fact, I'll make a blanket statement here: if there is an area of your life that isn't working very well, you can be sure that in that area of life you are, more often than not, focusing on—in other words, making internal representations of—what you don't want.

If you have trouble making money, you'll find that you are making a lot of internal representations of what you don't want regarding money. If you have trouble making friends, you'll find that in that area of life you're focusing on what you don't want—not having friends, being alone, etc. Any area of life that's chronically problematic for you, if you look inside, you'll find that when you think about that area of life you're focusing on what you don't want. Those who focus on what they want in a given area of life tend to be successful in that area of life, all other things being equal. Those who focus on what they don't want in a certain area of life have trouble.

Again, the big problem is that almost all people focus

unconsciously, outside their awareness.

So why would someone chronically focus on what he or she doesn't want? If, during your childhood, you were traumatized in some way, you will develop an underlying belief that the world is a dangerous place, or at least a potentially dangerous place. To avoid that danger, then, it makes sense that you would want to watch out for it. But to watch out for danger (whatever the anticipated danger is, whether it's mental, emotional, or physical) you have to focus on it. In other words, you have to make internal representations of what you don't want. This causes two outcomes. It creates bad feelings, and it also tells your mind to figure out a way to create or attract MORE of it.

Unconscious Negativity

Let me introduce another basic principle. *You can create negative feelings and negative outcomes ONLY if you do so unconsciously.* If you focus on what you don't want with awareness, however, and clearly see exactly how you're creating bad feelings and negative outcomes, you won't be able to keep doing it.

To create negative outcomes, then, whether internal or external, the internal representations that create them have to happen outside your awareness. In other words, you have to fail to notice that additional internal second step. Once you become aware of what you're doing—once you actually see the internal representations you've been (unconsciously) making, and see the direct connection between these internal representations and what happens in your life—you'll stop making them. As I said earlier, awareness gives you choice, and no one with a choice would choose to create bad feelings or negative outcomes (there is one exception to this, which I will address in a future post).

Thresholds of the Mind

For many years I've written about the fact that each person has an emotional threshold for what they can handle. When you're under your threshold you feel pretty good. It feels as if your life is under control. But if events push you over your threshold, you begin to feel bad, overwhelmed, anxious. It starts to feel as if life is out of control.

Here is a key point for you to consider. Your experiences, and certainly your response to your experiences, don't "just happen" to you. Your experiences—how you feel in each moment, how you behave, and the people and situations you attract or become attracted to—are something you DO. Right now that "doing," if you're like 99% of people, happens unconsciously. What you do inside, in that second step—generates your internal and your external response to everything that happens.

So, knowing this, if I feel overwhelmed, if I feel like I'm over my threshold, I start thinking, "Okay, how am I DOING feeling overwhelmed?" The feeling of overwhelm doesn't "just happen"—there's something I DO that creates it. I DO feel overwhelmed by focusing, in some way, on what I don't want. Once I see how I'm doing it, I just can't keep doing it to myself, and the internal representations of what I don't want fall away and are replaced with internal representations of what I want.

So when you are under your threshold, you're feeling pretty good, *because you're focusing on what you want* for the most part. When you reach your threshold for what you can handle, you begin to focus on what you don't want, what you're worried about, what you're afraid of, what you want to avoid. So your threshold is the point where you begin to focus on what you don't want.

You may have noticed that some people have high thresholds, while others have lower thresholds. If you have a low threshold, the events of life are much more likely to push you over it, and you will feel bad more often. You will be more reactive to life. You will more easily lose your equanimity, your emotional balance. You also can't think effectively and clearly when over your threshold, so you're more likely to make bad decisions or have trouble dealing with challenging situations. On the other hand, if your threshold is high, it will take more to push you over it. You will remain content and centered in situations where others with lower thresholds may become upset. And your ability to think clearly and deal with challenging situations will be better.

So why would a person have a low threshold? If a person is traumatized, usually during childhood, his or her threshold will not mature properly. Such a person is often left with a lower threshold, and is much more likely to be triggered into bad feelings by the events of everyday life. They might more easily become sad, angry, anxious, confused, overwhelmed, or depressed, for instance. The greater the trauma, the lower the threshold.

If your threshold is low, however, all is not lost. Holosync use pushes your threshold higher. In other words, it increases how much you can deal with before you start focusing on what you don't want. And, Holosync raises your threshold by creating more conscious awareness. On a neurophysiological level, it does this by creating new neural pathways between the left and right hemispheres of your brain, which increases your perspective and your ability to see more, and also by opening the spigots of several key neurochemicals that also increase your awareness. My threshold was quite low when I started using Holosync. I was extremely reactive emotionally. Now, my threshold

is very high. And, I've seen the same change happen to every person who has used Holosync on an ongoing basis.

This increase in threshold when you use Holosync is very similar to what happens when you exercise, which pushes your physical threshold higher. Notice that whether the threshold we're pushing against is emotional, as with Holosync, or physical, as with exercise, this pushing is stressful. It's a positive stress, one that makes you emotionally or physically stronger, but still it's a stress.

You'll notice also that when Holosync pushes against your threshold in the process of pushing it higher, it can feel uncomfortable—though it doesn't have to. When Holosync pushes you to your threshold, your tendency will be to focus on what you don't want, because that's what people tend to do when they're at or over their threshold. This is the real reason why it can feel uncomfortable—focusing on what you don't want always creates some sort of uncomfortable state, some sort of bad feeling.

However, if you're watching, and you notice that you're feeling bad in some way, that you're experiencing some sort of discomfort, you can choose to *switch your focus to what you want*. Or, you can just stand aside and observe, with no agenda for what does or does not happen. This latter response we call *witnessing*, and it means to watch with no agenda, as if you were just curiously observing someone else. "Hmm. There I am, feeling a bit distressed. Interesting."

In Summary

So let's review. I introduced the idea that how you feel, how you behave, and what people and situations you attract or become attracted to are actually generated by

something you do inside, the internal representations you make. I also told you that when you're aware of something (as opposed to doing it unconsciously), you have a choice about it, you have control over it. When you're unaware, when what you're doing happens outside your awareness, you don't have choice or control. *So in terms of creating what you want in life, the name of the game is awareness.* If you can become aware of the internal processes that generate your experience of life, you'll have choice.

Holosync creates this awareness—in fact, quite dramatically—and most of what I write about (and my three online courses in particular) is designed to teach you how to focus that increased awareness on what you're doing to create your experience of life.

The next distinction I made is that in the broadest sense the internal representations you make are either of what you want or what you don't want. Bad feelings are created by internal pictures and internal dialog of what you don't want, what you're worried about, what you're afraid of, or what you want to avoid. When you feel good, it's because you're focusing on what you want (in other words, making internal pictures of and internal dialog about what you want).

One key, then, to mastering your life is to become aware of your internal representations, and particularly whether they are of what you want or what you don't want. That awareness creates choice, and that choice will allow you to feel good most, or even all, the time.

I want to make one more key distinction before we close. There is a big difference between merely knowing something and being aware of it. Most people who've been involved in personal growth for any time know quite a bit about their issues, their "stuff." Knowing about it, however, though a

good first step, won't make your issues go away.

Let's say that you often feel uneasy in social situations. You've known this for years, in fact. You may have discovered that certain events from your childhood affected your self esteem and that this lack of self esteem is connected to your uneasy feelings in social situations. Despite all that knowledge, though, you still feel uncomfortable in social situations.

If, however, you're able to look inside and notice that in social situations you make internal representations of what you don't want—not looking foolish, not being rejected, not feeling left out, or whatever—and you also see how these internal representations directly create your feeling of uneasiness, it will become very difficult to keep making those internal representations. You just can't do something that isn't resourceful *and* do it with awareness.

Awareness and the Past

This also brings up one more key point. *It isn't what happened in the past that matters, as long as you're aware.* What matters is what you do *now*—in this case, what internal representations you make *in the present*. If you're unaware, if your internal representations are happening automatically, your past *will* matter. Why? Because you'll automatically make internal representations of avoiding more of the dangers you experienced in childhood—in this example, rejection. But if you are aware, and you see what you're doing that creates your experience—not *knowing* what you're doing, but actually seeing it happen—you won't be able to keep doing it, because it isn't resourceful.

There's a lot of talk in personal growth circles about being in the now moment. As with everything else, being in the now moment is something you *DO*, not something that just

happens. And the way you do being in the now moment is by being aware. And a big part of that is being aware of the internal representations you're making and what they create. This ability, which, with practice, can be developed, is the modern equivalent to the yogic powers masters of the Far East are said to demonstrate. What has been referred to as "mind control" is really "mind awareness."

Up to now I've focused mostly on how you create your feelings and haven't talked a lot about how you create your behavior, or how you create the people and situations you attract or become attracted to. We'll get into this in another post. I'll just say here that your internal state, in a kind of chain reaction, generates these other aspects of your life. But one step at a time.

So here's what I would like you to do. First, continue to use Holosync, as per the instructions, each day, so you can work on expanding your awareness. If you aren't yet using Holosync, I would strongly suggest that you begin. It's certainly possible to become more aware by observing your mind and noticing how it creates your experience of life. But when you do this while using Holosync, it becomes dramatically easier.

Ready to start your Holosync Journey?

**Learn More About Awakening
Prologue Here**

Chapter 21

What's Hiding in Your Shadows?

During my 30+ years as a teacher, I've had the opportunity and good fortune to get to know and in some cases spend significant time with many of the top personal and spiritual growth teachers in the world.

If there's one quality these top teachers share it's that they've developed their *awareness*.

As difficult as it might be to believe this, you might even say that awareness holds the answer to nearly all personal challenges. Awareness is closely connected with both intuition and creativity. The more aware you are, the more obvious the solution is to any problem, and the more the daily problems and challenges of life automatically sort themselves out.

The less aware you are, the more it can seem as if there is no solution to the challenges in your life—and, the more likely it will be that you'll unconsciously attract people and situations into your life that you don't want. Zen master Genpo Roshi once said to me that what you're unaware of will inevitably be the place in your life where you're stuck. Becoming more aware, then, is an extremely valuable undertaking.

As I said in my last post, there are two main ways to increase your awareness. One is meditation, and of course I'm partial to Holosync meditation because it's faster, easier, and actually allows you to meditate more deeply than traditional methods. I meditated in a traditional way for 16 years before I stumbled upon what eventually became Holosync, and though I received a lot of benefit from my years of traditional meditation, I have to say that I experienced more positive change in the first year of Holosync than I did from my entire 16 years of traditional meditation.

Holosync speeds up your growth, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In addition to being a huge benefit, this is also the main drawback to Holosync (or any kind of deep meditation). When you meditate, or do anything that causes you to open up to aspects of yourself you may have been unaware of—if you see a therapist, or attend a personal growth seminar, for instance—you discover things about yourself that you may not like. We then resist these aspects of ourselves that we don't like.

Resistance, though, is something you DO, not something that just happens to you. You "do" resistance by making internal representations (internal pictures and internal dialog, for instance) of what you don't want. When you do this, you feel bad, because *internal representations directly create your feeling state*. And, to make matters worse, your mind figures out a way to unconsciously attract more of whatever you focus on—in this case, what you're resisting.

The second way to become more aware of how you're creating your experience of life is to watch your mind and observe how it works, which was the subject of my previous post. Since the internal representations we make lead directly to our feelings, our behaviors, and which people or situations we attract or become attracted to, *becoming*

aware of how we do that gives us choice. It allows us to stop creating our experience of life automatically, based on the past and, instead, to create our life by choice, in the moment.

Observing your internal representations takes some practice, but it is well-worth learning how to do. So, again, awareness is a major key to living a happier, emotionally peaceful, and successful life.

What Lurks Outside Your Awareness?

One of the things that makes awareness more difficult is our tendency to push out of our awareness certain things we think are wrong or inappropriate. Though we sometimes feel better in the short run when we do this, over the long run it creates all kinds of problems. What we repress or push into the basement of our awareness is eventually expressed anyway. Even worse, what we repress or disown is expressed in covert and dysfunctional ways, creating serious problems.

An extreme example might be a straight-laced fundamentalist preacher who is caught having sex with underage church members. In repressing what he thought was his sinful sexuality, he ends up expressing it anyway, but in a covert and dysfunctional manner. This is also an example of how focusing on what we don't want causes us to create more of it. By focusing on "I don't want to be a sinner," the preacher ends up creating or attracting more of what he thinks of as sinful. His sexuality ends up hurting himself and others.

We all repress or disown normal human qualities that we think are wrong or inappropriate. Many of the difficulties we have in life are the result of these disowned parts,

which many psychologists refer to as shadows. When repressed, these shadow parts come out in immature and dysfunctional ways. By repressing them, we actually end up creating, attracting, or expressing more of them.

In working with hundreds of thousands of people over several decades, I've found that nearly all human unhappiness is connected to disowned or repressed human qualities. If a certain area of your life isn't working, you can be sure that there is a shadow part involved.

What Is a Shadow?

Shadows are areas where we are unaware, and re-owning shadow parts creates more awareness, which gives us more choice. Increased awareness turns out to be the key to making your life better.

In this post I want to share an interesting way to look at this phenomenon, a game we teach all new members of the human race, called The Game of Black and White. As you'll see, when you become aware of how you play this game, you'll be able to choose how to play it, and in doing so you'll eliminate a great deal of the suffering in your life.

In every society there is social agreement about which aspects of us are "wrong" or "bad". There is, of course, variation from family to family. What one family sees as "wrong" might be okay in another family. Excellence might be a positive quality in one family, while in another the child who excels might be told, "Who do you think you are? Do you think you're better than other people?"

Whatever our family's values, we received negative reinforcement when we exhibited certain qualities and positive reinforcement when we exhibited others. We learn that it isn't safe to express what our family or our culture

consider to be negative qualities. To keep ourselves from expressing them, we disowned them, which means that we pushed them into the basement of our consciousness, out of our awareness.

As I said earlier, we don't ever really get rid of these repressed shadow parts. They leak out anyway, appearing in our life in covert and dysfunctional ways. In fact, I'll go so far as to say that pretty much everything that bothers you in life is the result of your disowning some aspect of life.

Let's say that for you anger is a bad thing. Because it's bad, you resist it in others, and you resist it in yourself. However, like a balloon, which when squeezed in one place pops out in another, the anger expresses itself, in one way or another.

Perhaps you've made anger wrong or bad because your father's anger was painful for you when you were small. It also wasn't safe to show your own anger toward him. He was bigger and stronger and he didn't like it when you disagreed with him. So, you repressed your anger. You also decided to avoid angry people. After all, you don't like them. And, they scare you.

Ironically, when you disown anger in this way it becomes a central feature of your life. You see angry people everywhere. And, when you encounter an angry person, you're strongly (and negatively) affected by him or her. Angry people really bother you, even if you're not the one they're angry with. You're afraid of them and you're angry about them.

A person with no anger-related trauma, however, and who therefore has not disowned his or her anger, sees the same angry people—after all, they aren't invisible—but isn't triggered by them in the same way you are.

For you, though, life seems to be a constant stream of angry people. How do all these angry people find you? By disowning your own anger, your attention is drawn to the angry people, and you're less likely to notice or be attracted to people who aren't angry. Because your father's anger traumatized you, you're on the lookout for it, so you can avoid it.

As I've said many times, focusing on what you don't want actually causes you to create or attract more of it. So, even though it's the last thing you want, you attract angry people. And, when you encounter them, you're powerfully affected by their anger.

Everyone can plainly see that you have a lot of anger—everyone but you. You, however, don't acknowledge—or even realize—that you're angry. You've disowned it. It's a shadow. For you, it's *out there*, in others. You don't see it in yourself. You're against anger, because it's such a bad thing.

We Become the Shadow We Reject

Ironically, even though you're against anger, you often express your disowned anger to others in covert and dysfunctional ways. Perhaps you're late for things you really didn't want to do, or fail to do what you say you'll do because you really didn't want to do it. You may avoid responsibility, make excuses, or blame others. Perhaps you're "conveniently forgetful." You might complain a lot, use sarcasm, make cutting jokes about others, or be sullen or stubborn. And so on. In one way or another, your disowned anger *is* expressed.

In other words, you're passive-aggressive. You express your anger, but not directly. You can't express it directly

because you've disowned it. It's still there, though. And, in addition to being unpleasant for others, you suffer, too. Your own disowned anger eats at you.

Believe me, I know. Anger was a huge shadow for me before my years with Holosync. Not only did I attract angry people—who really pissed me off—I had so much anger that passive aggression wasn't enough for me. I lost my temper often, and defended my anger when it was pointed out to me. Those other people were being assholes when they were angry, but I had a good reason.

And, of course, anger isn't the only thing you could disown and repress. I've just been using anger as a common example. You could also disown fear, or selfishness, or thousands of other qualities. You'll likely disown anything your parents or other authority figures didn't want you to express: wanting, happiness, sexuality, joy, sadness, aggression, pride, intelligence, the urge to be noticed, neediness, being good at things, feeling like a victim, or thousands of other human feelings and urges.

A positive quality can also be a shadow. When you see a negative quality you've disowned, it triggers you in a negative way. When you see a positive quality you've disowned—for instance, charisma, kindness, leadership, talent, or intelligence—you'll put the person who exhibits it on a pedestal. You'll adore or admire that quality in others, but you won't see it in yourself. You've disowned it.

In fact, it's a general rule that *all qualities—disowned or not—exist in all people*. And all of them, no matter how positive or negative they seem, are normal human characteristics.

Becoming Aware of Your Shadows

In the last post I made an extremely important point, that *when you're unaware of something you don't have choice about it*. When you're unaware of a shadow, you don't have choice about your emotional reaction to it—you just react. And, you have no choice about how you express that reaction. And, you'll also attract—unconsciously—a constant stream of people who exhibit the shadow aspect you've disowned.

When you become aware of a shadow and re-own it, you have choice over it. You move from unconsciously *being it* to consciously *having it*. As I gained awareness of my disowned anger, angry people stopped triggering me, and I stopped attracting so many of them. I still notice them, but now, instead of being triggered, I feel compassion for them. That doesn't mean I like to be around them, or that I don't see the harm they sometimes cause—or that I might not intervene if I see an angry person abusing another person.

The difference is in my own emotional state. Angry people no longer throw me into a negative emotional state because I've re-owned my own anger. I've also stopped expressing anger in covert and dysfunctional ways. Anger, which used to be a huge problem in my life, is now just another normal aspect of being human. It happens now and then, but it doesn't run my life.

Here's another key point, and it's connected to what I said a moment ago—that all qualities capable of being disowned exist in all people. When you re-own a shadow, what seemed to be a negative quality *matures* into something positive. Immature, reactive anger, for instance, might turn into a mature and reasoned unwillingness to tolerate injustice. Narcissistic selfishness matures into mature self-

love. Every shadow has a mature form, and re-owning a shadow allows you to express that quality in a mature and positive way.

The Game of Black and White

Now that you have a basic understanding of shadows, I want to introduce you to a game we teach to every new member of society as soon as they're old enough to understand it. The game is called *The Game of Black and White*, and the main rule of the game is that *White Must Win*. This game is actually about shadows, so let's take a closer look at it.

To play the *Game of Black and White* a person first must learn to divide everything in the world into separate things and events. We learn to do this so well that once we've learned it we never question whether separate things and events actually exist other than in our mind. Your common sense probably tells you that of course the world is full of separate things and separate events. All you have to do is look around.

But let's look at this idea more closely, because it has a lot to do with the *Game of Black and White*, with shadows, and with your own happiness and inner peace.

As soon as you were old enough, your parents taught you the names of things. This gives us the idea, first of all, that there is something called a "thing," and also that a thing and its name are synonymous. Let's look at why this actually isn't an accurate way to see the world—useful, in many ways, but not accurate—and why this way of thinking leads to some basic life problems.

Think of a bee and a flower. The flower is rooted to the ground and the bee buzzes around it. Everyone knows that a bee and a flower are two separate and individual "things."

But are they?

You never see flowers unless there are bees, and you never see bees unless there are flowers. They go together. Bees and flowers need each other. They're one, interconnected, organic system, what a physicist might call a "unified field." You can't have bees in isolation, nor can you have flowers in isolation. Bees and flowers exist *in relation* to each other. In that sense they could be seen as one organism.

Then, of course, there is the soil the flower is planted in, and the bacteria and worms that live in the soil and contribute to the nutrients the flower pulls from the ground. That's part of the system, too, as is the air, with a certain mixture of gases needed by both the flower and the bee. Of course we also need a planet a certain distance from a certain kind of star, with the right temperature, and the right amount of light, the right amount of air pressure, and the right kind of cosmic rays that allow the flower, the bee, the worms, the bacteria, and so on, to exist and thrive.

And, that star is found in a certain kind of galaxy, which is part of a system of galaxies, and so on and so on. Pretty soon you begin to see that this bee and flower system actually includes everything—that the entire universe is one organic, interconnected system, flowing along like water. Mentally dividing the world into separate things and events has its uses, but those divisions are ideas about reality, not the reality itself. In truth, everything is connected to, and dependent upon, everything else.

Thinking of the world as consisting of separate things is just that—a way of *thinking* about it. In fact, as philosopher Alan Watts used to say, a "thing" is a "think"—a unit of thought, as much of reality as you decide to get your mind around in a particular moment.

Again, I'm not against dividing things up. In fact, it's

obviously very useful. It's when we forget that all the divisions are actually made-up, though, that we get ourselves into trouble. In fact, though it might not be obvious to you right now, whatever difficulty you might be having in life can ultimately be traced back to the illusion that the world consists of separate things and separate events. Stick with me here and I'll explain what I mean.

Everything Is Still Connected

The next thing I want you to understand is that where we make these divisions is *arbitrary*. Where a division is made—how things are sliced—is really just a matter of social convention and utility. The divisions we think of as being so real are *not* intrinsic to reality. They are extrinsic. We add them, from the outside.

Let's look at an example. How big is the sun? In other words, where does the sun end and something that's not the sun begin? Usually we say that the sun consists of its visible fire. Once you get past the visible fire, you get into something that isn't the sun—outer space. But you could also say that the sun consists of the extent of its heat. Doesn't that make sense, too? By that definition, the Earth is actually inside the sun, and the boundary is somewhere out in space, at the point where there's no more heat.

But we could also say that the sun consists of the extent of its visible light. Under that definition, the size of the sun extends one light year for every year it has been shining, and it's becoming larger in every direction at a rate of 186,000 miles every second.

So where the sun ends and something else begins is entirely arbitrary, something agreed upon by social convention. There's no such thing, in isolation, as "the sun." Putting a

boundary on it, just as with the bee and the flower, is *a way of thinking about it*, not an intrinsic characteristic. And, in fact, all supposed “things” could be seen in the same way. Your skin could just as well be seen as what connects you to the rest of the world as what divides you from it.



What about separate events? As an example, let's look at the question of when you began. Was it when your mother gave birth? Maybe. Or, was it at conception? Or maybe it was when you were just an evil gleam in your father's eye. Or, when your parents were born. Or when *their* parents were born. In fact, we could keep going back in this way until we get back to Adam and Eve.

So you can see that when an event begins—or ends—is also arbitrary. In reality, everything is one huge, interconnected, multi-dimensional ongoing event, flowing along like water in a river. What we think of as separate events are all connected to each other and all go together, just like the bee and the flower. It might be convenient to

chop things into separate things and events, but nothing is really separate from anything else.

The Unwinnable Game

So now let's get back to the *Game of Black and White*. Once we've fallen for the supposed reality of separate things and events, we're taught to divide those supposedly separate things and events into two basic piles. Some things and events go into the "appropriate," "good," or "White" pile, while others go into the "inappropriate" or "bad" or "Black" pile. Then, we bring in the main rule of the game, which, as I said, is that *White Must Win*.

When White—what we think of as appropriate, desirable, or good—"wins," we're happy—at least temporarily. But when what we've put in the Black pile seems to win, we feel unhappy, frustrated. If you stop and think about it, most of your life—most of everyone's life—is about trying to get White to win and trying to avoid having Black win.

Here's the problem with this game: White can never overcome Black, though we play the game as if it must.

Good *must* overcome evil, we think. Life must overcome death. Having must overcome not having. Happiness must overcome unhappiness. Health must overcome illness. What we want must overcome what we don't want. Pleasure must overcome pain.

You may have already realized that just as the bee and the flower go together, Black and White also go together.

In other words, "good" is defined in terms of "evil." Without evil, how would you know what is good? Good only makes sense in contrast to evil. In the same way, "having" makes no sense except in terms of, and in relation to, "not having."

Life makes no sense except in terms of death.

The same is true of happiness and unhappiness, pleasure and pain, health and illness, clarity and confusion, here and not here, light and dark, empty and full, and all the other Black and White pairs of opposites. They're all defined in terms of each other. And, they all go together. You can't have one without the other any more than you can have a one-headed coin.

In each case, you wouldn't know that the White side even existed if it weren't for the Black side, in the same way that you don't feel your stomach unless it feels bad, or you don't experience your eyes unless there are spots in front of them, or something else is wrong with them. Until its opposite comes into play, things are invisible, unimaginable.

Now it's certainly possible in any given moment to have more of one side of the equation than the other, but you're never going to totally get rid of the side you don't want. That would be impossible, in the same way that you can't have buying without selling, or up without down. Just try to make everything in your house "up." You can't, because up and down go together.

You can, though, have more good than bad in your life. This depends, as you might imagine, on how aware you are. Those who are unaware unconsciously attract more of what they don't want. But you'll never get rid of one side of any polarity, because both sides go together.

What is more, as I described earlier, where one side of each pair of opposites ends and the other begins is totally arbitrary. Where does up end and down begin? Where does good end and evil begin? In reality, they're one thing.

(Just as an aside, let me give you the real secret to all metaphysics: opposites look as if they're completely

separate and at odds with each other, when they really go together and depend upon each other for their very existence.)

Any division you make, then, is conceptual, not real, and where the division is made is just a social convention. So, as I said before, it might be useful in some cases to divide things, but to avoid problems you must remember that you're making it up. All divisions are ideas about reality, but not reality itself.

And please don't misunderstand. I'm not saying that you should just passively allow bad things to happen, either to yourself or other people. I am saying, however, that when you make certain things wrong, you disown them in yourself. Then you attract more of them, create bad feelings for yourself, and exhibit these disowned qualities in covert, immature, and dysfunctional ways. And who wants that?

“Winning” the Unwinnable Game

So why am I making such a big deal about dividing things up, and especially about this *Game of Black and White*? What's wrong with wanting things to be a certain way?

Well, nothing, if you do it gently, but most of us don't.

The truth is that to be here, to be a human being, you're going to prefer certain things to other things. I'm more concerned about my children than yours. I'm more concerned about my car than yours.

To be human is to want certain things. Without desire you wouldn't eat or come in out the cold, or procreate, and the whole human race would come to an end. But when you play a really hard version of the *Game of Black and White*, where *White must win*, and where you strongly resist what

you've placed in your Black pile, you set yourself up for suffering.

Why? For one thing, you've put yourself in a double-bind, an unwinnable situation, where you're trying to get rid of or defeat something that can't be gotten rid of or defeated. What you're resisting is, first of all, just an idea, and second, can't be successfully resisted anyway, since it's one side of a coin, and you can't get rid of it without getting rid of the other side, too.

Disowning a certain aspect of yourself—what I've called *creating a shadow*—is a result of playing the *Game of Black and White*. If you've experienced some sort of trauma, what you associate with that trauma will go into your Black pile. You'll disown it in yourself and dislike it in others. And, *unless you're aware*, you'll focus on avoiding it, which will cause you to attract or create more of it and express it in covert and dysfunctional ways.

The more trauma (fear, anger, shame, disappointment, etc.) you suffered during your childhood, the more likely it will be that you'll play a hard version of the Game of Black and White—in other words, the more likely it will be that you'll have a lot of shadows, disowned parts. You could also say that you'll be more easily pushed over your threshold. This means that you'll focus on what you don't want more often—which, if you'll remember, you do by making internal representations of what you don't want.

When you focus on what you don't want, you feel bad, because *all bad feelings are caused by focusing on something you don't want*. And, because your mind takes what you focus on as an instruction to create or attract more of it, you'll unconsciously attract or create MORE of what you think is Black, more of your shadow, more of what you don't want.

If your father frequently yelled at you and then spanked you when you were small, this was probably a traumatic experience. If, in the present, another authority figure—your boss, for instance—yells at you, it's very likely that you'll mentally attach the traumatic memory, particularly the negative emotions, to your boss. You'll drag the past trauma—or rather, your idea of it—into the present and associate it with your boss. When he yells, you'll feel the same fear you felt as a child.

Authority figures, then, particularly those with more aggressive personalities, are part of your Black pile. Focusing on avoiding them causes you to feel bad. It also causes you to do subtle things, outside your awareness, that actually attracts them into your life and draws their attention to you.

Even worse, if authority figures are a shadow for you, you'll exhibit the same qualities you don't like in authority figures, but in a covert and dysfunctional way. You might be bossy, stubborn, arbitrary, controlling, merciless, or opinionated. These qualities will come out in covert and dysfunctional ways, and everyone will see them—except you.

If you re-own this shadow part (in other words, if you acknowledge that like all humans you have these qualities in yourself, and stop playing such a hard version of the Game of Black and White around authority figures), the *immature* version of these negative qualities will mature into something else—leadership, perhaps, or wisdom, or mentorship.

What causes you to re-own a shadow part—or, you might say, take a particular game-piece off the game board in the *Game of Black and White*—is **awareness**. As long as you are unaware, this entire dynamic will operate on autopilot,

and you'll suffer the consequences.

Genpo Roshi's Big Mind process, where you allow a disowned voice to speak, is an effective way of re-owning a shadow part of yourself, which is one reason why I've strongly encouraged you to attend one of our workshops.

When you speak from a disowned voice, you become aware of it. Once you become aware—once you're able to see how your shadow expresses itself, internally and externally—this awareness causes it to mature. You stop expressing it in a dysfunctional way and begin to express it in a mature way (since all voices exist in all people, you will express it—you might as well express it in a mature way).

As I said in my last post, you can only do something that isn't resourceful if you do it unconsciously, without awareness. When you become aware of something you are doing—when you are able to observe it as it happens and see the consequences, as they happen—it becomes very difficult to keep doing it if it doesn't serve you.

Also remember that awareness is not the same as merely *knowing* something. Awareness is watching the actual creation and seeing the consequences as they happen. Knowing is just an intellectual activity. *Knowing* is the booby prize in personal growth.

Homework

I would suggest that you spend some time discovering some of the key shadow elements in your life, so you can re-own them. Or, to put it another way, to identify the major aspects of life you've assigned to the Black pile in the *Game of Black and White*, and to begin to notice how you play the game. That awareness will cause you to re-

own the disowned parts. In the language of the *Game of Black and White*, you'll stop playing such a hard version of the game around certain aspects of your life.

So sit down and make a list of the "negative" qualities that really trigger you emotionally when you experience them in others. You might be triggered when someone else is sloppy, stupid, dishonest, sexually perverted, selfish, conceited, angry, stubborn, controlling, disorganized, critical, unreliable, show-off, etc. What really bugs you in other people? List these, then put them in order, with those that trigger you the most at the top of the list.

You might also create a list of the main qualities you have in your "White pile"—what you think of as good, desirable, and appropriate—and those qualities you've assigned to your "Black pile"—what you think of as bad, undesirable, and inappropriate.

Then, take each quality that triggers you (or each quality you've put in the Black pile) and speak from it, either out loud or in writing. See what that disowned part has to say. Let it out of the basement so it can express itself. If you've disowned being a victim, let the victim in you speak. Everyone feels like a victim once in a while, so let the victim speak. Whatever the disowned voice is, it has something to say, and allowing it to speak gives you awareness about it. And with awareness comes choice.

When you do this, the areas of life where you tend to experience a lot of bad feelings, or where you repeatedly experience outcomes you don't like, will shift. Believe me, this is possible, and when it happens, it will blow your mind. The positive change in your life will be huge, I promise. As I've done this in my own life, I've changed in ways I never could have imagined. Negative feelings and outcomes I'd lived with for decades faded away. My sense of well-being

increased tremendously. Decades later it still continues to increase.

The same thing can happen for you.

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Chapter 33

Does Your Past Affect What Happens to You Now?

Boy, do I get some good letters. Here's another one, with my answer.

Hello Bill,

I'm interested in understanding better why people in general can know that a certain way of life is good for them but continue on a course that isn't. For example, smoking or being overweight. There is as much information available as we'd care to read on both topics, but people continue to do what is not good. Are they all "unconscious incompetents" even though they cognitively know what they are doing is not good for them? I haven't smoked in many years but have just lost some weight and want to keep it off permanently. I "believe" being at this weight is good for me. What beliefs do I need to be aware of and guard against to stay at this healthy weight? How do I reach "unconscious competence" on this issue?

Thanks.

Ellen

Ellen,

You've hit on precisely why becoming more aware provides a solution to every human problem that has a solution (some don't).

People do most of what they do OUTSIDE their awareness, which means they do it automatically. What you do with awareness, though, you have a choice about. Awareness creates choice, and these courses are about how to direct your awareness to what YOU DO inside your head that creates:

1. How you feel and the other internal states you experience
2. How you behave
3. Which people and situations you attract or become attracted to
4. What the events around you seem to mean

Notice that I'm implying that you create these four things (in fact, I'm flat-out telling you: you create these things). If you create them with awareness, you have a choice about them (and you'll always choose what is most resourceful, for you and for others). If you create these four things outside your awareness, they will happen automatically, based on your past experiences and the internal programming they created.

So, the question is, how *do* you create these things, and how can you become aware of how you create them, so as to create choice in these four key areas (which, you might notice, pretty much create your entire experience of life)?

It Starts in Your Internal Map of Reality

You create them by what you do inside what I call your Internal Map of Reality. When I say that you need to be aware of what you do in your Internal Map of Reality, though, I do NOT mean that you “know” about it. When I use the term “aware” I mean *the ability to observe yourself* as you create these things, to see how you do it, as you do it, and also to see the consequences of what you’re doing.

The most basic thing you do in your Internal Map of Reality is make internal representations: internal pictures, sounds, kinesthetic sensations (touch, balance, hot and cold, physical sensations, etc.), smells, tastes, and internal dialog.

These six kinds of internal representations directly create your feelings, as you make them. The simplest distinction is that when you make internal representations of what you want you generally feel good, and when you make internal representations of what you don’t want you generally create some sort of bad feeling.

This means that if you are aware of how you do this (and which of the two kinds of internal representations you’re creating) you’ll have choice about the feelings, behaviors, etc., that these internal representations create.

Why, then, would you make internal representations of what you don’t want?

Here’s why:

When you have a traumatic experience, especially when you’re small and powerless, you develop a belief that something out there is dangerous, or potentially dangerous. This causes you to automatically make internal representations of what you don’t want (the danger) whenever you experience it again—or, even when something

reminds you of it.

This happens without awareness for nearly all people, though you can learn to become aware of it. If you do learn how to watch yourself as you a) see, hear, touch, etc., something that triggers this danger response, b) make internal representations of avoiding that danger, and c) as a result, feel bad in some way—if you can see all of this as you do it—whether or not you make those internal representations (and experience their consequences) will become a choice.

If there really is a danger in that moment, you might take steps to avoid the danger. If there isn't a danger (which is often the case—something just reminds you of a past danger, but there's no real danger in the present moment) you'll clearly see that there's no real danger and you'll choose not to make the internal representations of what you don't want.

As a result, the bad feelings and other negative consequences will dissolve.

The Angry Father

An example: you were yelled at and punished when you were small by your authoritarian father.

A male authority figure is a danger to you (this is a belief).

When you experience a male authority figure, especially if he yells, you instantly and automatically make internal representations of the danger you want to avoid, and because this is something you don't want, you instantly feel bad, which may also lead to certain behaviors.

As a child you were powerless when your father yelled. Now, though, as an adult, you have many more choices and

much more personal power. When triggered, though, you'll automatically feel like a powerless child—IF this process happens automatically, outside your awareness.

On the other hand, if you have enough awareness to see *how* you create the bad feelings, as you do it, what you create will be a choice and you probably won't create the bad feeling.

Internal representations are the basic unit of your Internal Map of Reality. Beliefs, for instance, are collections of internal representations about something you think is true. Values (which we will look at after beliefs) are collections of internal representations about what you think is important. As you'll see, all the other aspects of your Internal Map that we will look at are also built on internal representations.

The most basic skill to be learned, then, is how to observe your internal representations as you make them, and to see the consequences YOU create by making them in a certain way (the consequences being your feelings, behaviors, which people or situations you attract, and what meanings you place on the events of your life).

Beliefs Are Self-fulfilling Prophecies

Once you deeply believe something, you'll unconsciously seek "proof" that you're right about them. In the lessons I list three ways you prove that you're right about what you believe:

1. You'll attract and/or become attracted to people and situations that help you prove that you're right.
2. You'll interpret what's happening in a way that supports the "truth" of your belief, even if there are

other interpretations.

3. You'll act in ways that make what you believe come true.

The woman above with the abusive father will probably attract, and be attracted to, male authority figures who are assholes. She won't find authority figures who are more kindly to be interesting. She won't even see them. She'll also give off unconscious cues that will cause the kind of authority figures she doesn't like to be attracted to her.

Obviously this is not what either person would choose, but this is what happens when you operate without awareness. Such people don't have a choice. They're automatic response mechanisms, acting out what their Internal Map of Reality has been programmed to create.

This woman will also interpret events in a way that helps her to be "right."

If a male authority figure is an otherwise kind person, but has a bad day, or in some other way does something that reminds her of the abuse she experienced from her father, she will interpret this behavior as dangerous, even if there are other explanations.

And, she'll unconsciously act in ways that trigger male authority figures to act in the way she fears they will act, thus accumulating more evidence that she is "right."

An Observation Exercise

Your job in this course is to learn how to observe your internal representations, and to see the consequences they create. Then, you'll use this skill to observe your

beliefs and see how you use these three methods to prove that what you believe is true.

Then, as we get into the other aspects of your Internal Map, you'll watch to see how you use each of them to create how you feel, how you behave, which people and situations you attract or become attracted to, and what the events around you seem to mean.

If you really apply yourself to doing this, you'll gain choice about everything that a person can have choice about.

There are, of course, things we don't have choice about.

If you exercise choice about those things you can have choice about, though, your personal power becomes huge.

I hope this information allows you to answer the question you posed, and also gives you a better idea of what this course is all about.

Here's my suggestion:

Practice watching your internal representations (mostly your internal pictures and internal dialog) for 5 minutes or so three times a day: when you first wake up, when you turn out the light to go to sleep, and perhaps one other time during the day.

Just pick something that happened during the day and think about it.

Notice what internal pictures you make, and notice what you say to yourself about it. And, notice how your internal state (which includes your feelings) changes as a result of the internal representations.

You can also think of something you really want, notice the internal representations you make (and the internal state that is created).

Then think of something you strongly want to avoid, notice the internal representations you make (which will be of something you don't want), and notice how your state changes (it will probably change to a negative state).

Seeing how you create your internal state begins the process of having choice over it.

Let it be okay that this watching isn't easy at first.

Just play with it a little bit every day and you'll start noticing what you're doing more and more often. You'll begin to see ways that you're sabotaging yourself by focusing on what you don't want.

As long as you do this outside your awareness, you can keep doing it, and keep creating bad feelings and negative outcomes.

Do it with awareness, though, and what doesn't work falls away.

Be well.

Bill

A Letter from Ellen

Hi Bill,

Once again, thanks so much for the insight. I see where you are coming from and I've been doing the 3X a day exercise and getting much clarification on the issue. Knowing when to stand up for myself and when not to - knowing how to avoid the "victim" and be the problem solver from a more "power" position is a challenge for me.

I'm watching my internal representations about when I am "assertive" and when I am not. My past trauma includes a parent who was very controlling and managerial, who reinforced my dependence and actively thwarted independence, perhaps out of a combo of some fears of her own for me and also out of a narcissistic orientation. So, even in my 50's I struggle to get beyond that and be visible as the effective, autonomous person I truly am.

I noticed in the visual activity you teach about making a picture that if I am traumatized, the picture is a panorama - if not it's a snapshot. I'm working on making the panoramic situations right-sized (snap shot) where I feel I can manage them.

It's absolutely amazing to me that I can be this old and still struggle with the same primary issues despite many years of training and therapy. I'm a work in progress and your help has been invaluable. Thank you so much.

Ellen

Bill's Response:

Ellen,

Age doesn't have much to do with any of this. Not many people EVER deal with this stuff and as a result die with it.

One of the main points I'm making is that you don't have to know when to stand up for yourself, or know how to avoid being a victim. Using willpower to do things in a different way doesn't really work very well because the old

unconscious patterns based on past trauma are stronger than your will power. What causes them to stop dominating your feelings and behaviors is awareness—awareness of how you create them.

If you watch to see HOW you create the feeling and behavior of not standing up for yourself and JUST WATCH YOURSELF DO IT, as you do it, you'll find that if it doesn't serve you it will become difficult to keep doing it.

So forget about trying to not be a victim or trying to not allow others to dominate you. Just watch to see how you create these feelings and behaviors. It starts with internal representations you make in response to certain outside events.

Watch the process. Don't try to change it. Just watch. It will change itself.

Be well.

Bill

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This has been a free 5-chapter sample from Bill Harris's book, ***Expanding Awareness: Secrets of the Super-Aware***. The full book is available for purchase on the Centerpointe website at centerpointe.com. You can also get the full book as a free bonus when you sign up for the first level of the *Holosync Solution Program*, **Awakening Prologue**.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to the Centerpointe Support Team at support@centerpointe.com.

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