



Spiritual Warrior Training 101 ~ Lesson 5

Attending to Awareness

“Who Am I? I am not my thoughts. I am not the voice in my head.

I am the awareness that recognizes the thought. I am the essence of being.

~ Eckhart Tolle

As humans, we have been gifted with a phenomenal tool with which to understand our world, the transformative power of awareness. Awareness is the consciousness that allows us to perceive our world. Every creature on the planet has awareness; however, it is uniquely human to be aware that we are aware. From this vantage point we can make choices unavailable to other species on the planet. Yet in our culture of distraction and excessive stimulation we learn to distance ourselves from our perceptions. Our ego-mind judges what we will and will not pay attention to, causing us to move through life fundamentally unconscious. Once we discover the damaging role our judge often plays in our lives, we can reclaim our positive attitude and heartfelt emotions, along with the voice of intuitive guidance. Awareness is the Samuri’s weapon, tuning into the vast world we tend to miss in everyday life. Attending to awareness is the first step on the path of awakening.

Unlimited awareness integrates all our senses, including our five material senses of touch, taste, sight, sound and smell, along with our spiritual sense of intuitive knowing which is channeled through our heart. Intuition is often ignored because its voice has largely been silenced in the commotion of everyday life. Because our ego-mind doesn’t understand where these messages are coming from, it trains us to ignore them. Developing intuition, however, is an invaluable tool for the spiritual warrior.

The power of pure awareness is a power of the soul, not the personality. As we increase awareness of our thinking patterns, we can consciously choose to respond from our soul instead of habitually reacting from our personality. The more awareness we hold of our body, the more comfortable we are in it. The greater awareness we have of our emotional nature, the easier it is to accept our periodic tearful states or to notice what triggers our anger or frustration. With each new awareness, we are lifted to an increased level of understanding. From there we can choose a new way to respond, a new way to be in the world. Awareness brings us closer to peace as we eliminate the habitual reactions that imprison us in the fight. Being a spiritual warrior means knowing when the fight is appropriate and when a softer response is called for, perhaps one of love, or compassion.

The Buddhist practice of “mindfulness” is the first defense against rampant thought patterns. Mindfulness teaches us that the way to harmony is to experience what is happening in the here and now. Mindfulness practices teach us to be present with all of our senses, experiencing with equanimity and non-judgment each moment, one at a time. Our attention is directed away from our past, which is often filled with suffering, frustration, memories, beliefs,

and judgments, and out of the future, which is rife with worry, dreams and fantasies. The present simply is. Any form of activity in which you maintain a quiet, mindful presence is the first step toward training your awareness. In the words of mindfulness trainer, Jon Kabat-Zinn, “Mindfulness is empowering because paying attention in this way opens channels to deep reservoirs of creativity, intelligence, imagination, clarity, determination, choice and wisdom within us.” It brings us in to the present moment. As we learn to attune ourselves to our inner realities and tame the racket of our “wild mind,” we can begin to hear that intuitive voice within. This is the beginning of our awakening as we learn that we are more than just our minds. There is something deep within us that beckons us to hear its wisdom. Are you willing to listen?

Dancing Lesson for Your Soul ~ Tuning In

Explore a natural setting: a forest, ocean, lake, waterfall, mountain, or meadow, by yourself for at least one hour. Sit quietly, doing nothing, and ask yourself, “What is now?” Just look around for about 10 minutes focusing your awareness on all the visual stimulation all around you. Take in all you can see: the colors, textures, sizes, and shapes. Now close your eyes and begin tuning in to the various sounds around you for another 10 minutes, silently absorbing all the sounds you can. Continue on with feeling the energies around you and inside of you, just sensing your experience of being out in nature. After half an hour, just sit and be, feeling your connection with nature, where your body is touching the earth, how it feels to be breathing in fresh clean air. Journal your perceptions.

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