

*The*  
**INNER TRAVELLER'S**  
*Guidebook*

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**Taster Version**

The Inner Traveller's Guidebook is divided into five sections. Each section begins with a "Journey Itinerary" which introduces the main themes of the following chapters. There are practices and exercises within every chapter and each one concludes with a short summary.

In this taster version you can read from the beginning of the book to the first page of Chapter Two. Thereafter the section headings and the journey itineraries are offered, along with the first page of every chapter in the book.

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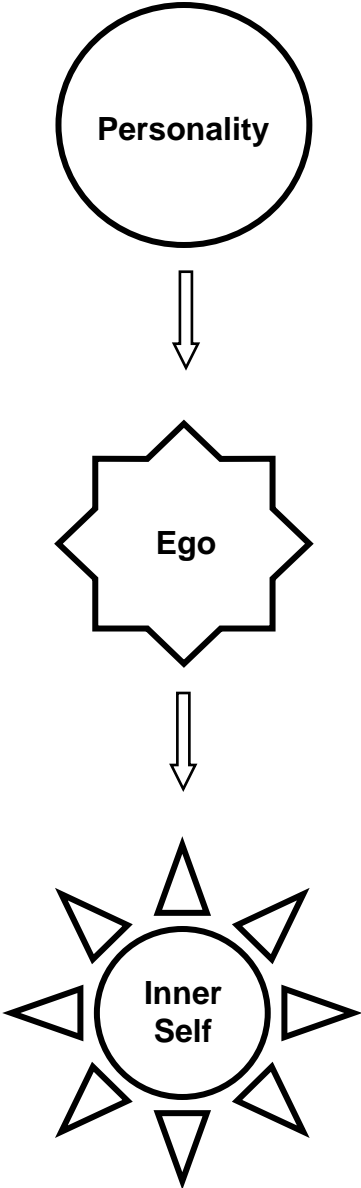
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# Journey Map



# Introduction

My own inner journey began as a young man. I remember catching sight of my reflection in a mirror and hearing a quiet voice whisper a question.

*“Who am I?”*

Soon after, the voice spoke again.

*“How should I live?”*

From that time I have walked the inner pathways and explored many methods and practices for self-discovery and personal-development. One of the common themes to emerge was that the inner world was where the answers might be found.

*The Inner Traveller’s Guidebook* began as a way of articulating and making sense of all this research. When I re-read my notes I realised that if I ordered the ideas sequentially they created a step-by-step approach to this universal quest. The contents follow a logical sequence: first to understand the personality, then to identify the ego and finally to communicate with the inner self.

If you will permit me through this book I will act as your guide along those paths which I have travelled. These excursions cover many years of exploration but even so they are only the beginning of a long journey that lies far beyond. On a note of caution, the inner realm has its difficulties as well as its revelations and I would urge you to find companions, teachers and helpers along the way.

So here is a moment of choice. Will you become an inner traveller? It depends, I suppose, whether or not you have heard a quiet voice in your head whisper a question.

## *The Inner Traveller's Journal*

Every traveller should keep a journal! As you walk the inner landscape it will be useful to keep a record of the doors that you open and the pathways you explore. You are encouraged to write down your thoughts, feelings and experiences. This is a psychological and spiritual journey within, the record of which may become invaluable. A page for *Reader's Notes* is provided at the end of each chapter.

# **PREPARATIONS**

The Inner Landscape

## **Journey Itinerary: Preparations**

- The traveller is invited to preview his or her inner landscape and consider the benefits of making a personal journey within. An exercise reveals an intriguing insight into the nature of consciousness.
- Every adventurer should go equipped for the journey! Attention, awareness and observation are the lights that guide the way into the labyrinth of mind. The Buddhist practice of Mindfulness prepares you for the experiences that lay ahead.

# Chapter One

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## The Journey Ahead

You can do what no-one else can. You can travel inside your own mind!

But why should you want to go within? There are many benefits to be gained from making an inner journey, after all, the purpose of this quest is to understand yourself and develop your resources. What can be achieved depends on the point from where each individual begins but by using the methods offered by those seekers who have gone before, the inner traveller can access both knowledge and potential, and return to the external world with greater confidence and ability.

So what might you discover when you enter the world of the unconscious mind? It is true to say that every journey is unique because anyone who undertakes it is going inside their own mental landscape. Nevertheless, there are generalisations that we can make about the inner experience which may provide an indication of what lies ahead. Here are some personal impressions about the inner realm.

### The Whisper of Thoughts

The first thing you are likely to encounter when you close your eyes and shut out the external world is the whisper of your own thoughts. If you observe closely you will find that when you concentrate you are usually in control of this personal voice but when you relax, the internal monologues and dialogues simply continue to chatter away quietly in the background, like echoes in the mind. Raising awareness of this subconscious activity can be

extremely useful, for this silent running of ideas has the power to subtly influence everyday actions and decisions.

### The Stream of Consciousness

If you maintain your inner awareness you will probably become sensitive to a host of reactions and feelings which appear and disappear like bubbles in the stream of consciousness. These responses are generated by thoughts and memories that run constantly through the mind. At any moment you may be caught in their spell and engaged with a pleasure or a concern, which in turn triggers more images and narratives. You might spend a long time in this river of ideas without realising just how far you have travelled. When you finally return to the external moment you may find that you are carrying emotions which reflect that internal experience, even though no physical event has taken place. Thought alone, it appears, has the power to create feelings!

### The Enchantment of Imagination

The inner realm is the birthplace of our hopes, desires, fantasies and amusements. It is easy to be swept along by their enchantment into a daydream world, where everything that takes place is an experience of our own making. The magic of imagination can be both a distraction and a powerful tool. It is a distraction if it leads us into mere fancy or wishful thinking; it becomes a powerful tool when it is developed and channelled towards positive ends. Harnessing the power of our creative nature enables us to solve problems, invent new ideas and achieve personal goals. It is also one of the keys to improving self-understanding.

### The Hidden Archives

The exploration of self inevitably stimulates the recollection of memories and the revelation of our subconscious thoughts and ideas. According to both ancient teaching and modern psychology a vast record of all our experiences is held in the library of mind and the deeper we probe the more this hidden archive is likely to be exposed. Our "Inner Guidebook" or "Book of Self" is here, together

## Preparations

with the laws, rules and beliefs that play such a key role in the quality of our lives. These references also determine our self-image and world picture. It is from this source that we make our response to the people, places and events in our lives, reacting to subtle cues in our environment, often without full awareness of the processes involved. Memory plays an important role in self-discovery and it is skill which can be enhanced with practise.

### The Populated Realm

One of the surprises that we may experience while trying some psychological methods for self-analysis is to discover that a large population inhabits our personal universe! Not literally, of course, but one approach towards self-exploration is to give different aspects of our personality an image or an identity that represents its key qualities. This is a device that allows us to better observe and study our personal make-up. Thus we could give our anger or our kindness a face and a name, or personify other strong traits by representing them as a mini-character. In psychoanalysis these creations are generally called subpersonalities and the term can also be extended to include the expressions of who we were at different ages in our life, for example, as a child or an adolescent. After all, when we talk to ourselves, who are we talking to if not one or more of these internal “voices”?

### The Inner Player

The journey within might eventually put you in touch with the ego. This may seem to be a strange statement to make, after all, when we say “I” then that’s the ego, isn’t it? Actually, a lot of the time when we say “I”, it simply reflects the part that we are playing at that moment but doesn’t reveal the real “actor” underneath. Our subpersonalities are the cast of our personal drama and it is very easy to switch from role to role as we interact with the many situations and demands that life makes on us. But who is the real self? The ego tends to be surprisingly elusive but identification of the inner player is an essential part of the journey.

## Into the Mystery

Does anything lie beyond the ego? Spiritual teachers who use meditation and other methods of inner communication assert the existence of an Inner Self or Soul. Whatever you believe, their techniques certainly seem to tap into a hidden potential. Insights, inspiration and innate intelligence must have their origins somewhere and mind training may encourage their expression. The strange nature of dreams and synchronicity provide further tantalising clues of a deeper mystery. There is also plenty of anecdotal and experiential evidence, even among ordinary people, of something spiritual at the heart of our existence but it is hard to use the scientific method to prove it. If we want to know more then it is up to us to use the guidance provided and look for ourselves.

For all its promise few people attempt to understand themselves with any real commitment. Consequently, the opportunities within generally remain untapped, the various forces that drive the personality may do so without skilful direction, and little or no conscious connection is made with latent inner resources.

On a personal level, exploration of the inner pathways has enabled me to form a better understanding of the different aspects of my personality and more skilfully direct my affairs. Alongside mainstream psychotherapy and psychology I have also studied Buddhism, Theosophy, and philosophy, as well as a number of self-help and mind-body-spirit approaches. Certainly I am convinced that the way forward for self-understanding and personal development is to go within and seek the answers there. Which method to follow is up to each individual but this book outlines several alternatives, both psychological and spiritual.

## Your Inner World

So what might *you* experience if you close your eyes and look within? Try the following exercise and see what you can discover. Hopefully it will also reveal an intriguing curiosity about the nature of consciousness.

## A Glimpse Within

You can do this exercise indoors or outside so long as you are relaxed and comfortable. Make sure that you will not be disturbed and take a couple of minutes to compose yourself and settle. This is not a meditation, just a practice of observation. There is no need to spend a lot of time on the initial preparation.

When you are ready, look at the farthest object away from you and simply register what it is. If you are indoors you can look out of the window or start with what you see on the wall. It doesn't matter what you look at, just acknowledge what it is and gradually move inwards towards yourself, noting any objects along the way. Try not to form any opinions about what you see but keep on moving towards yourself until you reach your body. Now pay attention to what you are wearing, observe the colour and style of your clothes and how they feel. Then become aware of your physical self. Start with your feet and continue upwards through each part: legs, torso, arms, hands, and so on, until you reach your head. Finish your scan at your eyes, then close them. Listen to the voice that you use when you talk to yourself. Perhaps you might like to start by asking a question, for example:

"How do I feel at this moment? Are my emotions positive, negative or neutral?"

When you connect with your feelings try not to engage with them, simply observe and become aware of the ebb and flow of your responses and reactions. What might your emotions look like if they had an image?

Test your memory by imagining people, places or things. Observe how you create your impressions. Which senses do you use to conjure up the essence of your inner projections?

When you recall your relationships with other people, become aware of the different voices you use and roles that you play. Which of these, if any, is the single actor of all these parts?

Try not to get carried away by any particular line of thought. Just note its presence and let it go. Watch how your mind works as you go through this process. You might even like to attempt to sit in complete silence and see where this leads. Stay a little while exploring your inner world!

## A Curiosity

I suggested that this initial survey of your inner world might reveal a curiosity about the nature of consciousness. Let us briefly go through the process again and examine what happens. You began with awareness of the external world and then you reached the boundary where your physical form began, in effect you moved from object to subject, from things that are 'not-self' to a sense of self. At this point you would likely take ownership of your body, your emotions and, of course, your thoughts. You then became aware of your feelings and tested your imagination and memory. You also experienced the observation of these thoughts and perhaps also the condition of no thought.

*The curiosity is that you are able to observe all of these things. Your mind can look at itself!*

Take a moment to really appreciate this. Pick up any train of thought. Take a little time over it and become aware that you are once more watching the ideas, opinions and processes that make up your mental activity, and then ask yourself this question:

*Who is the "I" that watches these thoughts and observes these inner feelings and manifestations?*

## Preparations

When I first did this exercise I was surprised by the sudden awareness of the dual nature of mind. I realised that I was both generating and watching my thoughts at the same time. At that moment I became aware of a presence at the heart of myself and glimpsed a realm that seemed to have no beginning or end, nor any confines of time or dimension. This all happened in an instant but each time I do this I am struck by the mystery and sense of potential of the inner world.

Whatever you experienced, the journey within can offer some real opportunities for personal growth but at the same time it may also challenge your established world picture, beliefs and ideas. Remember that this book is just an outline of the pathways and possibilities. If as a result of trying some of the methods you become interested in understanding more about your psychology then seek out a good counsellor. If you would like to do more work with spiritual practices then find a competent teacher. Join a group and talk to people. There is no need for you to travel alone!

## *The Inner Traveller's Journal*

### *Author's Notes*

- *An exploration within may assist towards a better understanding of self and the development of personal potential.*
- *There are both psychological and spiritual approaches that can open the inner pathways.*
- *The mind can observe its thoughts but who is the Observer?*

### *Reader's Notes*

## Chapter Two

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### Lighting Your Way

Every traveller should go equipped for the journey! But what will you need to take with you on your expedition within?

The unconscious is traditionally symbolised by a dark, subterranean environment and so perhaps one of the essential things we will need is a means to light the way. In my own experience, *Attention* is the lamp for the exploration of mind.

There is a Buddhist practice called “Mindfulness” which develops a capacity for sustained attention. Mindfulness means that as we go about our daily affairs we should try to remain fully aware of our actions, feelings and thoughts, as well as our surroundings. Raising our level of awareness allows us to appreciate the world and our own being, as well as furthering understanding of the internal mental activity.

The two most important aspects of Mindfulness are *Awareness* and *Observation*. Awareness brings us into the present moment and Observation enables us to focus on the detail. The beauty of practising Mindfulness is that it requires no more time and effort than would normally be used, only a shift in focus.

### The Outer World

The practice of Mindfulness begins by raising awareness of the outer world. All too often we don't give the present moment our full attention. How many of the following experiences sound familiar to you...?

# **EXPLORING THE PERSONALITY**

Psychological Pathways

## **Journey Itinerary: Exploring the Personality**

- The traveller explores the various entrances to the inner world, provided by psychology, for the understanding of personality.
- The first stage on our journey within is to understand the influence of childhood on our adult character. The past is often visible in the present, if you know where to look.
- Doorways are opened which will lead you to meet and converse with the “inhabitants” of your unconscious. These are the subpersonalities of psychology.
- Each of us has an inner guidebook which forms our world picture and self-image. The traveller is invited to explore and assess the authenticity of this personal map.
- The seeker views his or her image in a mirror made in the metaphysical world. Its surface reflects your perception of self-image.

## Chapter Three

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### Meeting Yourself

*"The child is the father of the man." William Wordsworth*

Counsellors usually begin their understanding of an individual by determining the influence of childhood and the conditions that surrounded the person during early life. If you want to develop self-knowledge then you could start your journey by exploring the young personality who formed the foundation of your subsequent world picture and self-image.

It may not seem likely as an adult that the child you once were is still playing an important part in your present day affairs but psychologists understand that the early interpretations the young mind placed on experiences may be highly significant in later life and continue to form a subconscious basis for action.

"The Child" is a term widely used in psychoanalysis and alludes to that part of our nature which expresses as our younger self, *even in adulthood*. Identification of this aspect of your personality is the first step in exploring your inner world.

As part of my own self-analysis I used an approach from the work of a psychologist called Eric Berne, in which we observe our interactions with others in the present in order to discover various aspects of our self from the past, now stored in our mind as memories. The Child within is said to be one of the main influences affecting our external life.

You can test this assertion yourself by experimenting with the following practice...

## Chapter Four

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### Your Many Selves

When you say “I”, who do you really mean?

Psychologists recognise that we are subject to a vast array of powerful drives and needs that dwell just below the surface of our awareness. These are the basic instincts: such as survival, sex and the desire to be part of the group; and more sophisticated aspirations: like loving relationships, artistic expression and spiritual unfolding. They are the motivating energies of our being, bringing joy or unhappiness according to their degree of fulfilment or frustration and breaking into our consciousness as emotional expressions that come and go like waves on the surface of the sea but their undercurrents run deep in the labyrinth of mind.

So we continue our journey with an exploration of these further aspects of self and we will do so by using an approach called “psychosynthesis”, first formulated by the Italian psychologist, Roberto Assagioli.

Assagioli realised that far from being a unified whole the personality is actually made up of a number of different states which variously express as past personalities, roles, traits, motivations or attitudes. When we are engaged in any one of these states we tend to identify with it and use the word “I”. So if we are feeling fulfilled we will say, “I am happy.” If we are frustrated we might say, “I feel angry.” If we are strong then we say, “I am determined.” These expressions are accompanied by a look, a tone of voice and a posture that, in effect, become parts that we play. We identify with each state until the next “I” comes along. Hence the idea that we are not always a single, unified self...

# Chapter Five

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## Dialogues

Who can you meet and talk with on your inner world journey?

The concept of subpersonalities was introduced in the previous chapter where, using a technique from psychosynthesis, we described and named various expressions of character in whatever form seemed appropriate, either as people, animals or things. In so doing we created personas for some of the vital energies that are part of our being, in effect giving form to desires and aspirations, and substance to attitudes, motives and traits. This practice increases our knowledge about the make up of personality and offers us a device to observe our psyche. If you have not yet identified these psychological energies then you might like to go back to the previous chapter and create two or three to work with. The next exercise requires you to speak with "The Leader".

The technique of imaginary dialogue can be used to engage with any subpersonality. The following exercise is a method for getting to know more about the population of your inner world.

### Speaking with The Leader

The primary internal voice that we use is that part of us which organises and controls our self-expression and makes decisions about how to act. We have previously identified this aspect of character as "The Leader". You may well have decided on a more personal title for this symbolic feature of your psyche, if so, please use that description when you engage in the following dialogue...

## Chapter Six

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### Your Inner Guidebook

What makes you who you are?

The structure for the development of personality and the mechanisms for learning, are now well understood by psychologists and any basic textbook will offer a similar explanation. Our understanding of the world and our place in it begins from the moment we are born. As infants we interact with our environment and other people, and make an interpretation of events. Slowly we build up information that describes our identity and how we should behave. We file this data away in our memory, ready for use whenever the need arises. In effect we create an “inner guidebook”. As we grow older and life becomes increasingly complicated, we rely more and more on this reference. Eventually we use it to create our “world picture”.

This personal manual has many authors. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, The Child is one of the biggest contributors, followed by parents and other significant adults. Peer groups also add their opinions. This developing “Book of Self” subsequently affects our status and sense of worth. Even as we become older and better able to manage our personality, we are still affected by the experiences of the past, the influence of which is generally so prevalent on our current ideas and behaviour that we are hardly aware of it. Most importantly, its wisdom is rarely questioned. If nothing happens to modify these accumulated beliefs, then our self-image, place in society, tenets and creeds, will likely be defined at an early age and remain as the foundation upon which all else is built...

# Chapter Seven

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## Reflections

When you look into a mirror, who do you see?

The experiences of childhood and the influences of parents, other people and peers, have all contributed to what we perceive when we look into the mirror of self. In addition, the voices of our past selves, influential adults and subpersonalities may still be whispering in the background, promoting or undermining our self-esteem so subtly that we may not even be aware of their silent commentary. These conditions modify our self-view in a shifting kaleidoscope of ideas, opinions and emotions. Over time, many of these beliefs may become set and internalised.

A positive self-image is the foundation of personal development. Individuals who possess self-confidence are more likely to be happy and enjoy life, their optimism creates energy and their sense of security allows them to take risks; for these people problems will be interpreted as challenges and their self-belief will attract opportunities. As a result, their projects gather momentum and success usually follows.

Conversely, people with poor self-esteem find difficulty in creating a positive mental attitude. Challenge and change will seem daunting prospects and they are always in danger of becoming immobilised by procrastination or fear of failure. These people give subconscious cues to others about how they should be treated, so instead of generating supportive relationships they tend to invite a negative response. The belief that one isn't up to much then becomes reinforced and consequently potential is stifled, while opportunities are missed or eventually stop appearing altogether.

# **DISCOVERING THE EGO**

The Inner Player

## Journey Itinerary: Discovering the Ego

- The journey continues with a quest to meet the actor of all the parts that we play – the ego. The ego loves to judge but the practice of non-judgement reveals the inner player. Exercises demonstrate how this practice also refreshes our vision and calms the mind.
- The ego is further defined by the practice of empathy. We take a trip into the world of imagination and temporarily become other people. Strangely, this act of “self-sacrifice” allows us to find our self within the inner labyrinth.
- “Letting go” is our next ego challenge. The real source of our difficulties in the world is often not external but inside the mind. We discover ways to reveal the hidden mental triggers for our anger, frustration and unease. Approaches are then explored that can help to resolve these difficulties.
- The traveller encounters a law of energy-flow that may create both positive and negative outcomes. Giving and receiving is our fourth practice for revealing the ego. The wise use of this law in the outer world can enhance the quality of our lives.
- The seeker is invited to contemplate the twin concepts of Interconnectedness and Interdependence. The law of karma emerges as a logical consequence of these conditions and an approach is then offered for identifying and working with individual karma.

# Chapter Eight

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## The Hidden Actor

Of all the characters and roles that you play, who is the star of the show?

We have used techniques from psychology to identify the various expressions of our personality but behind all the parts that we portray there may actually be only one performer - the ego. Identifying this core sense of self is a primary aim of the inner journey. We should try to understand what it means when we say "I".

Before we go any further, "ego" is a term that has a wide range of meanings, for the purposes of this section, here is a general definition:

### Ego

- An awareness of existence as a separate, physical being.
- Our sense of psychological individuality.
- The collection of personality traits and characteristics that together make us unique.
- A subjective experience of the world through the senses, emotions and mind.
- An awareness of a boundary beyond which we identify people, places and things as other than self.

## Chapter Nine

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### Being Someone Else

What is it really like to be someone else?

To understand who we are we need to experience our concept of who we are not. Our second practice for defining the ego is, therefore, empathy.

When we empathise we temporarily let go of our identity but this act of "self sacrifice" is often resisted by the ego. It is this resistance that tells us where our ego is. To understand our general reluctance to take on another person's mantle we must challenge ourselves to look at what might be behind this anxiety.

The ego's boundary ends at our fingertips. The experience we have beyond that is of being a separate self among countless others who are all striving within an ever-changing environment, which sometimes seems to be out of our control. Humanity is subject to the demands of evolutionary processes: the powerful drives of survival, sex and the group instinct pull at our psyche and urge us towards fulfilment. At the same time we live in world of apparently limited opportunities and resources, this shortfall creates situations of competition and conflict, leading to frustration, anger and fear. In the extreme this can result in discord, famine, disease, and war. On top of this, the Earth's natural forces - earthquakes, tidal waves, volcanoes and climate change - are no respecter of human life and we are constantly at the mercy of these disasters. If we manage to survive all this and live to a good age, we are still faced with the prospect of ill health and our own mortality. The Buddha's insight of "dukkha", dissatisfaction or suffering, sums up this human dilemma...

# Chapter Ten

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## Letting Go

How good are you at turning the other cheek?

The ego can be sensitive and quickly roused by confrontation and challenge. If our self-esteem is threatened we often feel a need to defend and counterattack. Even if we manage to keep control of our emotions, the aftermath can remain with us for some time. To a greater or lesser extent, the ego finds it difficult to let go of transgressions, insults and slights, let alone more serious hurts. Therefore the skill that is the subject of this chapter is “letting go” or, to give it an ethical description, “forgiveness”. This is forgiveness both in the moral sense and as a practical tool for self-management. It is also a further way to raise awareness and understanding about our ego. Indeed, since the world’s great religions put its practise very high on their codes of conduct, we would be wise to give it our attention.

How then is it possible to reconcile letting go with the need to protect ourselves against acts of ignorance and selfishness? First of all it is a matter of perspective. The ego tends to treat all infringements of its dignity as equally important. Even trivial slights and quarrels can be interpreted as major insults and our reaction to them can be out of all proportion to the original incident. The phenomenon of road rage is a case in point and we will not have to look far into our own experience before we find examples where a small irritation quickly became a serious matter. So the first thing to do is to be able to discriminate between those issues that are truly important and those which can be safely set aside...

# Chapter Eleven

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## Going with the Flow

How true is it that we get back what we give out?

The energy that powers the cosmos must flow and the universe evolves through a process of exchange. Creation gives freely of itself in order to grow and this process happens on every level of manifestation. Life continues on the planet because minerals, plants, animals and people co-exist in a symbiotic relationship. Evolution takes place because life gives itself to itself. Giving and receiving is one of the fundamental laws of existence.

It follows that if we take without giving then we will eventually suffer loss. Hoarding will burden us with too many possessions and material excess may be accompanied by anxiety about losing it all. The same rationale applies to the accumulation of non-material benefits. Accepting effort and kindness from people without reciprocation will cause our relationships to suffer. Refusing to forgive will block not only the other person's attempts to clear a debt but burden our own progress, so long as we carry the hurt. Boosting our ego at the expense of others may eventually leave us isolated. Sooner or later the habit of taking without giving will create a reversal of fortune and may cause us to be disempowered.

Problems start to arise for the ego when exchange is associated with loss and giving seems like a sacrifice. There are reasons for this fear. Throughout history humanity has experienced natural threats to its existence and we have survived because we have set store against future difficulty. This instinct to make sure that we have sufficient put by is no less relevant in the modern world but very often we accumulate much more than we actually need. In reality...

# Chapter Twelve

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## Interconnectedness

Perhaps it is an illusion that you journey alone, a separate being among billions of others.

In fact we are more closely connected to our fellow travellers than we might think and the truth is that we are totally dependent on each other for our existence. Let us look at some of the arguments that support this claim.

Interconnectedness means that in one way or another everything is linked together. Our bodies are made up of materials that we have shared with things and other people since the formation of the Earth. This is because most of the atoms that exist today were created when the universe began. If scientists have correctly understood the process, all the matter that exists manifested and exploded outwards from a single point to eventually form the galaxies, stars and planets. Our bodies are made of this same substance and some imaginative people once called us “stardust” because many of the elements that constitute our physical form were originally manufactured in the chemical laboratories of suns. We do not add material to the cosmos when we grow our skin and bone and muscle because when we take in food and water we assimilate particles that have existed since the beginning of time. The food itself is grown from recycled matter whose origins stretch back billions of years. If you were to trace the history of one single atom on the planet then quite possibly you would find that it previously existed in the bodies of plants, fish, animals and other people before it came to make up part of your physical vehicle. A carbon atom in your hand may once have been part of...

# **TRAINING THE MIND**

*Accessing Your Potential*

## Journey Itinerary: Training the Mind

- The next section offers training in basic mental techniques which will aid the traveller on the continuing journey within.
- Thought is powerful. It affects our state of mind, our emotions and our behaviour for good or ill. Therefore the first practice is the observation of mental activity and the deliberate choice of thought.
- The seeker learns how to develop a natural ability to visualise into a powerful tool for manifesting positive mental states, creating emotional well-being and improving physical health.
- Meditation is one of the key skills to develop. The benefits of this practice include greater mental ability and calmer states of mind. Meditation is a means for the traveller to explore further into the self.
- The potential of the mind can be accessed through imagination. The seeker learns a simple, two-stage method to develop creativity and find solutions to problems.
- Memory is the ground on which we walk and the foundation for our actions and beliefs. The traveller is shown how to access memories locked in the unconscious and use them to enhance the inner and outer journey.

# Chapter Thirteen

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## Mind and Choice

If you could make things happen by thought alone, what script would you write for your life?

All spiritual works, self-help guides and books on popular psychology have one thing in common – they refer in one way or another to the creative nature of mind. The Buddhist ethical text, *The Dhammapada*, for example, expresses this concept succinctly in the following verse:

*“What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday,  
And our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow,  
Our life is the creation of our mind.”*

One of the world's most respected psychologists and thinkers, Carl Jung, had this to say about the creative power of the mind.

*“All the works of man have their origin in creative fantasy.”*

Many popular self-help books have taken up this idea and suggested that all we have to do to get what we want in life is to visualise our desire and eventually it will appear. At first sight this might seem an attractive proposition but of course it isn't that easy otherwise would we all be living like the gods! Yet there is truth in the assertion that what we dwell on has a strong influence on our state of mind and therefore on future conditions. It is also true that a trained mind can enhance our potential for creating what we want and so this section will deal with practical practices for...

# Chapter Fourteen

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## Mind and Visualisation

If thoughts and ideas are powerful enough to affect our state of mind, our emotions and even our physical health, what could we achieve with the intelligent use of visualisation?

Everybody can visualise, in fact, we do it all the time. Here are some examples of common “visualisations”:

- Recalling past experiences.
- Anticipating a future event.
- Rehearsing interviews or meetings.
- Remembering an incident from the past and imagining different outcomes.
- Mentally retracing your steps in order to find something you have lost.
- Planning a project before you start it.
- Working through a number of options before coming to a decision.

What we are doing in these everyday functions is picturing something in our mind’s eye, either actually seeing it or getting a sense of it, and using imagination to predict, recall, plan, and anticipate.

Visualisation means different things to different people. If asked to close their eyes and imagine an object some individuals will...

# Chapter Fifteen

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## Mind and Meditation

What do we actually mean by meditation? The following explanation may help to clarify the practice.

Meditation is a way of reducing random thought processes in order to create clarity of mind. Our usual mental activity is like a fast-running river which stirs up mud and debris so that all we are aware of is the swirling surface of thoughts and emotions. To see into the river the rushing waters need to be slowed so that the contents can settle. Only then will the depths become transparent enough for us to perceive what is under the surface of the moving mind.

Meditation is a means by which we may transcend the intellect, that is to say, go beyond the day-to-day mental activity that is the province of the ego. The faculties of logic, reason and rationalisation are all useful tools and these ordering and deductive functions play an essential role in guiding and directing our endeavours. Meditation, however, is more about contemplation than thought; stillness rather than movement. It is a state where all our mental energy is focussed on a single point and directed towards a chosen aim.

Meditation also helps us to relax, it increases the ability to concentrate and its practise can result in clarity of thought and peaceful states.

All mental training and spiritual systems make use of some form of inner contemplation, including Yoga, Tai Chi, Buddhism, Hinduism, and the prayers of the Abrahamic faiths. The earliest known representation of a figure sitting in the lotus posture...

# Chapter Sixteen

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## Mind and Creativity

What do you create in your inner world when you use the power of imagination?

Everybody has imagination; we couldn't live our lives without it! Every time we choose what to wear, where to go and how to act we use this faculty. Imagination is simply the ability to project thoughts into a notional time, place or situation. It allows us to change things on a conceptual level and view the world, and our self, in different ways and trial ideas before we commit ourselves to act.

Whenever we do something in a different way we interpret and synthesise existing ideas and knowledge into new combinations, visualising possible alternatives and contrasting one thing against another. When we invent something we search for that which is not yet manifest but which lies waiting in potential to be brought forth. It is imagination that makes possible our personal transformation, as we project, in our mind's eye, what we may become.

Art, literature, music, drama, philosophy and technology all make use of imagination and part of our self-development should ideally involve some creative work.

Imagination can be developed through exercise and use. Like any skill it can be improved and strengthened by regular practise.

The following questions and statements are designed to take your thinking beyond the rational into the realm of fantasy where there are no limitations. Your responses can be serious or light-hearted. But the main thing is to stimulate your mind and have fun! Please attempt one or two tasks under each heading...

# Chapter Seventeen

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## Mind and Memory

If everything that ever happened in your life - every action feeling and thought - was permanently stored in your mind, what subconscious effects might this be having on you now?

Many people believe that they have a poor memory but this is not actually true. Research suggests that in fact most of what we experience is permanently recorded in our brain; trillions of neural connections give us a huge capacity for storage and, rather like a computer with a big hard drive, we are able to retain a massive amount of data. There is plenty of proof that this is the case. Medical tests show that when certain areas of the cerebrum are stimulated then near perfect recall is experienced, including sense experience and emotions. Under hypnosis, subjects are able to remember long-forgotten events and names of places and people that under normal circumstances would have remained deeply buried. Given the right stimulus, for example, a particular song or a certain type of smell, the memories associated with those senses will come flooding back. So storage of what we experience is not the problem - everything seems to be in the unconscious somewhere - what is often lacking is the ability to retrieve the information.

Fortunately, the act of remembering can be improved by using certain techniques and systems based on how memory functions. In simple terms, recall works by linking one thing to another, with each link in the chain triggering a recollection of the next. These links can be remembered by association, imagination and visualisation...

**REVEALING  
THE INNER SELF**

Communication

## Journey Itinerary: Revealing the Inner Self

- During the final part of our journey we will explore what may lay behind the ego and so test the claims of spiritual authors and practitioners that we have innate wisdom and that our real being is a metaphysical Soul.
- The “Universal Language” is the means of communication with the inner world. Like a visitor to a new land the traveller compiles a working “vocabulary”, not of words but of symbols.
- The seeker learns how to communicate with his or her inner intelligence through the medium of imagination, using selected images to initiate dialogue and receive feedback.
- The imagery of communication is rich and multi-layered. The visitor to the metaphysical realm is shown methods for interpreting feedback, which is often in the form of symbols and metaphor.
- Dreams are the traveller's experience of dialogue! This ancient means of communicating with the unconscious is explained and there are exercises in dream analysis.
- Synchronicity is the final medium for inner communication. The seeker is invited to read the Universal Language, which is written in the physical world, through the strange phenomena of meaningful coincidence.

# Chapter Eighteen

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## The Universal Language

If you could consult a Wise Man or Woman – what would you ask?

The proposition of many spiritual teachers and some psychologists, such as Jung or Assagioli, is that we already are that wise person and our creative ideas and insights come from our innate, inner intelligence.

In the esoteric tradition our real being is said to be metaphysical, transcending time and space, and thus infinite and eternal. Known by many names it is sometimes referred to as the Soul, the Inner Self or the Higher Self. This assertion comes to us from mystics and sages who have made their own journeys within and have achieved great insights about the nature of mankind. These Masters state that the body, the personality, and even the ego, is just a small part of our total being and that our current level of consciousness is merely the tip of the iceberg. Their teachings tell us that we are immortal souls who each project an ego which manifests through a physical vehicle and then develops a personality based on complex cause and effect chains known as karma, living many lives through the cycle of birth, growth, death and rebirth. The effect of this process is that the mind is apparently split in two: the conscious part is ego awareness, while the vastly greater remainder is the province of the Inner Self, much of which is hidden in the unconscious. Ego and Inner Self are actually two parts of one thing, it is just that our ordinary perception is limited and thus our experience tells us that our mortal, individual personality is all that there is. It is this delusion that is said to be the prime cause of all our distress and difficulty in the world...

# Chapter Nineteen

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## Communicating

So how can we “speak” and “listen” using the language of the Soul?

When we begin to proposition the Inner Self it is usual to start with some kind of “call signal”, like the one described in the previous chapter, with the sun rising out of the sea. You may prefer more simple means to initiate a dialogue, such as sitting quietly and holding the intention to communicate in your mind, visualising the sun to represent a desire for illumination, or lighting a candle and ringing a small bell. The advice in all cases is to repeat the same ritual each time.

### Speaking in Visual Phrases

Suppose you wish to formulate a simple question using your vocabulary of images and symbols. It might be a query about personal development or something to do with more ordinary matters, involving home, career, finances or relationships. Whatever the subject the process is the same, you will need to determine which images best represent your situation and in what context they should be presented. If the matter is to do with specific people then their image should be used. Similarly, with actual places and things, visualise the situation or object. Archetypal and personal images can be combined to create simple “visual phrases” with which to proposition the Inner Self and commence a dialogue. It is also beneficial to include some appropriate emotional desire to energise the communication.

The following examples give a general idea of what is meant by a visual phrase and how it can be used to form a question...

## Chapter Twenty

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### Interpreting

As we become more practised at recognising feedback from the Inner Self we will need to develop the ability to interpret meaning.

To understand the guidance we receive we must draw on our vocabulary of archetypal and personal symbols, as well as knowledge about our psychological make-up. Your journal now becomes an invaluable document, for not only does it contain your dictionary but it also holds the record of your journey within. It is by examining these pages and cross-referencing the revelations, themes and ideas recorded there, against communications from the Inner Self, that meaning may be revealed. Your rational, deductive mind also plays a part in this process, helping you to make sense of all this information.

Let me use a personal example to show how this communication might work in practice. In a dialogue with my Wise Man I asked for advice concerning a difficulty about a relationship and, in my imagination, he gave me three gifts: a candle, a seed, and (accompanied by a mischievous smile) a bag of sweets. On the face of it these objects seemed quite arbitrary and unrelated but they were the first things that came into my head and therefore that was my feedback. I now had to consider their meaning in relation to my question.

The seed is an archetypal symbol, an image that is often used in parables or sutras. It conveys the idea of potential, new beginnings and something that will grow with nourishment. The candle, another archetype, suggested the possibility of illumination or...

# Chapter Twenty-One

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## Dreamscapes

Dreams are the inner traveller's direct experience of the unconscious realm. When you dream, where are you if not inside your own mind?

Dreams are the traditional way for the unconscious to communicate with the conscious personality and dream interpretation has been used throughout the ages as a means to receive guidance from within. Artists, politicians, scientists, writers, religious and military leaders have all experienced dreams that have resulted in great works and inventions, or decisions that sometimes affected the history of nations.

All religions and spiritual texts contain references to the importance of communication by dream visions and many figures, from the Apostles to Bodhisattvas to North American Indian Shamans, have received wisdom by this means. Famous leaders in history have used dreams to guide their nations, among them, Alexander the Great, Constantine, Caligula and Churchill. Writers of the classics such as Dickens, Mary Shelley and Coleridge (who heard the whole of his epic poem, "Kubla Khan" while asleep) have been inspired by dreams. Scientists have used them to solve great problems: Neils Bohr discovered the structure of the atom, Friedrich Kekule saw the molecular composition of benzene, and Albert Einstein's theory of relativity was inspired during sleep. Ramanujan, the brilliant Indian mathematician, claimed that beings visited him in dreams and gave him new mathematical formulae. In modern times, Paul McCartney heard the melody for one of his most famous songs, "Yesterday", the novelist Stephen King...

## Chapter Twenty-Two

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### Synchronicity

Mystics say that wisdom is all around us, written in an ancient language of metaphor and simile. If this is so, what might we interpret from the symbolism and imagery of our daily lives?

Throughout the ages men and women have looked for signs to guide their endeavours and help them make decisions. Seers observed the heavens for portents, shamans studied the natural world for omens, and tribal wise men divined meaning from the bones of animals. The I Ching, tarot, rune stones and astrology all have their practitioners whose task it is to interpret the arrangement of the external symbols that guide their particular craft.

It is reasonable to ask how these apparently disconnected phenomena could contain any useful information or make significant reference to our lives. Sages and seers give us the answer. The “Ancient Wisdom”, a body of esoteric philosophy garnered over the ages, offers three postulates which support the concept that there is a meaningful relationship between all things.

- The first assertion states that all things ultimately originate from one source and therefore *everything* that exists is interrelated in some way and is part of a greater whole.
- The second, hylozoism, says that all form is living intelligence and the only separating factor between organic and inorganic states is one of degree in the level of sentience.

# Conclusion

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## The Traveller Returns

Socrates once remarked that all we can do when faced with a sea of uncertainty is to build a raft that will help us stay afloat until we reach the truth. By going within we attempt to build such a raft. We try to answer questions about who we are, how we should live and what we can do to improve our lives.

The methods and practices in *The Inner Traveller's Guidebook* are pathways into the unconscious. Each time I have made the inner journey I have returned with some new knowledge or discovery. I would like to share with you some of the ideas that make up my own raft and form an approach to life. They also try to answer the questions posed in the Introduction when, as a young man, my inner voice set me off on this quest...