



MODULE 1 Handout: Thoughts, Attitudes and Patterns Stories We Tell Ourselves

Untangling the webs

Growing-up we develop patterns as a way to address life's situations. Patterns are repeatable. They make day-to-day life easier. Our actions are generated from these patterns. We repeat actions in situations that appear to be similar to what we've experienced before. Every pattern we have has an underpinning that has been developed over a lifetime. Added to this are generational patterns that live within us as part of our legacy. A depth of patterning becomes established that can provide a rich tapestry of expression or become chains that bind us.

Patterns tend to fall into categories

Have you noticed patterns of approval, of self-judgment or of needing to be right? Does competition drive your life? Do you hold tightly to your image of how a situation should be? Do you resist change? What is unfamiliar can be threatening. The tendency can be to interpret the unfamiliar through structures that are known in order to make it comfortable. You maneuver the situation to fit a known picture so that you can respond with a pattern that is well-established. You work hard to do things the right way. But the "right way" to be may become stifling. It's like living life in jail. You become trapped in a feeling of victimization. With no opportunity for freedom, how could you possibly feel celebration? Or embrace life? It's layered: you may think there is no jail, but maybe you have just widened the bars.

The Universe screams louder and louder all the time, with life presenting situations where you can discover and learn. What is a crisis? Is it an opportunity? Is it showing you a path towards a greater sense of freedom? If you look at life's situations as a way to learn something new, then you have a framework to allow you to recognize truth.



We are all human

You can learn how to recognize your “shortcomings”. They are your self-imposed limitations, where you take actions that undermine life. Do you receive the unfamiliar and let it be a new experience? If you view all of your actions as simply a series of patterns, then you can become free from those patterns. You can create life with a freshness that opens doors to a new level of awareness: untangled...unchained...free to choose.

It's all patterns...

1. *Holding on?* It shows up in looking for what is *wrong* in a situation. Looking for what is wrong isn't productive. Concern occupies your mental space and energy. You place yourself and others in a box. What if you were to expand your awareness and take a different approach? Imagine looking at the situation from another viewpoint. How does your perspective change? Has the feeling in your body changed? Pay attention to that.
2. *Consider the unknowns.* There are always new directions to take and new choices to make. Work with the ones you feel an inner urge to express. Take the steps that open you to freedom of expression. Speak the truth you feel is necessary. Pay attention to your inner compass. You may need to take more steps than you anticipated, but they may be necessary. If you take a shortcut, you might end up in a dead-end!
3. *Situations repeat themselves.* There may be something you need to learn from repetitive experiences. Do you believe there is more to realize? Are there new aspects to examine? Are there elements that are hanging on and ready to be released? Situations get stronger each time they are repeated. It's like the Universe is encouraging you to “get” the learning!
4. *Are you limiting your outlook?* Are you focused only on the end-goal? Some options cannot be seen until you are actually on the path; they unfold as you take your steps. Things move with a rhythm or flow when you are navigating with inner direction. Take action and listen; adjust your direction as needed. The end-goal may be very different from the original. You may find it has been replaced with an expanded path that surpasses the original.



5. *Distance yourself from the situation.* What would the stranger across the street tell you? Look at the situation from the viewpoint of that stranger. There are options outside of your field of vision. How does he/she describe it? What does he/she suggest? Look at the same situation from the viewpoint of a favorite teacher, counselor or mentor. How does he/she describe it? What does he/she suggest?

“Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win, by fearing to attempt.”

~ William Shakespeare

