



The Compass Within

Module 4 - Dialogue: Connecting with the Bigger Picture

Developing discernment: The Witness

What does discernment mean to you? How do you use it in your life?

Discernment is needed in every moment of life. To know which way to turn. To know what (and who) to trust. To determine your next step.

Do you know when someone is telling you the truth? How about the right next step for you in your life?

Discernment is needed in every moment of life. Discernment isn't judgment. Judgment has elements of control and a need to be right. If you are judging something in yourself or in another, you cannot uncover what is true in a situation. If you are to take the "road less traveled", if you are to discover a path that resonates with an inner sense that has been longing for expression, you must learn how to use discernment.

Your path appears just ahead of you as you walk. Often, you cannot see very far down the road. You may not even know which way is "forward"; you simply trust that a path is there. You must be willing to move even if you are afraid. In the act of stepping out you open yourself to the landscape of what is possible.

The creative moment lies in the willingness to trust that your feet will find the earth—or that wings will sprout to carry you over the divide. As you learn to feel with your inner sensing the difference between a true step and a false one, you build that sensitivity into a foundation of discernment you can rely on to guide your choices.

That's why discernment is needed in each moment.

Do you have a need to be right? If you are judging something in yourself or in another, you cannot uncover what is true in a situation. If you are to take the “road less traveled”, if you are to discover a path that resonates with an inner sense that has been longing for expression, you must learn how to use discernment.

Discernment comes from the heart. The heart knows truth. When you keep your attention in your heart center, you are able to discern truth.

What do you believe?

You have a set of values and beliefs that impact every choice you make in life. These values are deeply embedded in your way of thinking and are often hidden from conscious awareness. Yet they guide you, nonetheless, as you move through life. Your values and beliefs become part of your foundation through your upbringing, societal influence, role models and life experiences.

Without examining the underpinnings of what you hold to be true, your perception of situations is limited, framed by something that you may not even realize. You react to situations or deal with things the same way you always have, only to have the result reinforce the original belief.

What if you were to pause in your reaction to a situation or to a person and question what is behind that feeling?

As you are willing to question our responses to situations that feel challenging, you discover the beliefs that lie underneath, ferreting out the strands from the structure of your mindset. Is there an expectation about how something should be happening or about how you should behave? Does the other person need to see things the way that you do? Notice if a long-held value is no longer serving who you are today. Do you still believe what you used to believe? Really?

Be willing to question everything: your actions, your beliefs, and especially, the way you feel. Questioning is different from self-doubt. Questioning allows you to discover something new about yourself and the situation at hand. *The attitude you have in questioning is key.* If you have any attachment to being right, or any concern about being wrong, you cannot discover. If you judge yourself or another in your questions, you cannot discover. With a commitment to question yourself and an openness to discover, the answers begin to unfold.

“If you don’t change your beliefs, your life will be like this forever. Is that good news?”
~ W. Somerset Maugham

“It’s not the events of our lives that shape us, but our beliefs as to what those events mean.”

~ Tony Robbins

Do you listen to your inner direction and align it with your outer world?

Everyday life can have such a strong hold on your attention that you forget that it is only part of the picture. You often move through life ignoring the sustenance, fuel and guidance that is available from within you.

An alignment between the physical world and the inner world allows you to harness your energy, moving forward without inhibition. Change is accelerated when your actions are grounded in the energy and direction from the inner dimensions.

When you attend to your inner world, becoming quiet and developing a feeling of peace, a new kind of clarity can become the norm. Worry drops away as you listen with discernment, and your actions become an expression of this magnificent relationship.

This partnership of self with Self becomes the dance of life in each moment!

What Matters to You?

If someone asked you what matters to you, what would you say? If you get quiet inside and ask the same question, notice what comes to you. Is the picture different? Is there something from your deepest self that you had not recognized or been willing to express?

Pay attention to the feeling in your body as you embrace this new picture. Life begins to work differently when you allow what gives you meaning to take root. Life situations may change. Your choices may change. When your actions align with this new vision it will ground the picture in the physical world, allowing for manifestation. Let your picture unfold, expanding and changing as you take action. It is a dynamic process, bringing new dimensions of meaning as you are willing to align with it.

When you connect with something that gives your life meaning, you find that it sustains and impels you, nurturing you and provoking you to move forward. Your next step emerges, followed by another. What gives you meaning offers both a container and a pathway for your life.

Do you have a commitment to yourself to live your life with meaning? Do your actions reflect this? If not, what needs to change? What is your next step? And the one that appears after that...?

“Life has no meaning. Each of us has meaning and we bring it to life. It is a waste to be asking the question when you are the answer.”

~ Joseph Campbell

The Power of Inner Inquiry: Speaking and Writing

Inner inquiry is the doorway to new awareness. Do your own inner research to uncover the message. Once the message is understood, you will feel yourself back in the flow.

When something happens that is disturbing to you, when you are making a choice, ask, ask, ask.

Life gives you messages. It is up to you to pay attention. Ask the questions and discover your next steps.

The Power of Reflection

Reflection allows you to look backwards with purpose. Sometimes situations come to mind as “unfinished business”. Sometimes you move so quickly through an experience that you neglect to learn the lessons that were available. If you think about the situation in the same way you’ve always done, nothing changes and nothing is discovered. It becomes a missed opportunity.

Reflection, done artfully, allows you to consider a past experience from a fresh perspective, often bringing a sense of completion and greater clarity. Reflection becomes a key to new ways of seeing an old pattern, freeing you to respond creatively as you go forward.

When you revisit an experience, allow yourself space to explore more deeply. Ask questions that look for what is new. What calls out to you to be acknowledged? Is there energy that can be reclaimed in the service of a new picture? Imagine how you would describe this experience to someone else. Notice if you are engaged as you tell it. What do you share with excitement and passion? What stands out?

“Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.”

— Søren Kierkegaard

Receiving and Surrender

What do you do when you feel stuck in a situation? How do you move beyond the feeling of being trapped? Are you a “victim of circumstance”? You may not know what

to do to change direction. Or you may expect someone else to take action so that your situation changes. Are your pictures open-ended or are they limited by your expectations? Have you only considered actions that others would approve?

Have you forgotten who you are? In a moment of forgetting, you give over validation to outside forces, firing up self-doubt and self-judgment. A downward spiral of destruction begins, your thoughts fueling a picture of yourself with no options. These false beliefs become the whip you can use to punish yourself. The downward path will continue as long as you believe in things that are not true, that you cannot rise above your situation, your obligations or your sense of limitation.

You have a choice to let go of self-critical pictures. You must be ready to release your grip on self-denial. Find the desire to be responsible for your own well-being. Replace blame, of you or of anyone else, with a sense of curiosity about your patterns of thought and behavior. Once you see them, you can move on.

If you wish to fuel creativity, you must trust that there is something more, even if you have forgotten the details. With trust comes a recognition and acknowledgment that another place exists. Remember the feeling in your body when there was a sense of flow. You've felt it before, that clarity and sense of direction. An intimate relationship with yourself brings a deep feeling of connectedness, opening new possibilities for moving forward.

The light exists within you. Open yourself to experiencing it and you will. When you surrender to the life force within you that keeps you alive, you will remember. You will find yourself.