

AWAKENING NEWSLETTER

Oct. 2005

Living Consciously Part 1

"Once you know yourself to be the personal essence, what you do doesn't matter much. You choose what will enlarge and enhance your real self. There can never be a sense of lasting fulfillment unless you have realized that essential part of yourself. Nothing else can take its place." - A.H. Almaas

There is a clear distinction between living life from a conscious and an unconscious perspective. When the unconscious rules, what we react from is, by definition, unavailable to awareness. Our preferences, prejudices, likes and dislikes, fears, greed, needs for approval, self betrayal – all exist beyond the light of self examination and are accepted as “that’s just the way I am.”

Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The way you really are exists beyond the realm of preferences, attachments, and automatic responses. It has nothing to do with your occupation, relationship status, level of success, or the religion you were born into. What, then, characterizes a Self-Realized life? Here are some principles.

If you desire to live consciously, you have to want your inner freedom more than anything else. More than comfort, more than relationship, more than security, approval, or being right. It’s not that you can’t have these things, but personal integrity is never sacrificed for them. Why this desire to live in the truth arises spontaneously in some lives and not others is a great mystery. Remaining true to this calling involves being willing to look deeply into our own behaviors and motivations to seek out those places that are bound by old conditioning, what the Toltecs call “stalking.” We do not accept fears and limitations as “who we are” and attempt to control our lives so as to avoid experiencing them; rather, we know ourselves to be whole and complete and actively ferret out those inner places where contradiction exists.

This requires, at times, entering into uncomfortable territory. Fears, insecurity, self loathing, shame, grief - all the accoutrements of human experience must be liberated from the shadows of repression. We have to be willing to face anything that would seduce us from our Self-remembering – addictions, distractions, habitual reactions. It’s not always easy, but it is always worth it. We know where the alternative path of self betrayal leads us.

There is much pressure to believe in fear and lack. It takes courage to acknowledge and live from our magnificence. And at times it means we cannot take the “easy” way out – to compromise, to stop short, to not give our all, to play it safe. The greatest joy comes from knowing that the responses we give, the way we behave and experience ourselves, are coming from our own authenticity and not some conditioned state. (Conditioned state = unconsciousness).

"Allowing oneself to embrace a life without compromise and free from pretense is utterly liberating in its depth and singularity. Like none other, it enables the individual to give their full and undivided attention to the destruction of all that is false, wrong and untrue." - Andrew Cohen

I would revise the “destruction” part, nothing needs to be destroyed; rather, we need to turn our attention to what is true and live our lives from that place.