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The Kaleidoscope That We Are

When we look within, we see how rich are the stories contained within our psyche, how varied the many ways we have of seeing and responding to a given situation. There's a whole cast of characters within, each one with a different perspective, a different function, a different outlook on life. We are like a kaleidoscope. We tilt the tube and the color bits change. Never the same, yet patterns interacting, repeating, ever changing.

When we're unaware of our own psyche, we unconsciously shift from part to part, from role to role, never knowing that we are bringing forth different aspects of ourselves. We think that we are the same all of the time and that people see us as the same all of the time. We become puzzled, upset, or fearful when we sense that other people perhaps sense these different aspects and are confused about what's going on with us. When others act strangely to us, when they suggest that we're somehow different, we close down and deny the range of diversity within ourselves, in our mistaken fear that somehow we must be wrong or that we need to always be consistent, be the same.

However, we are multidimensional beings who have a wide range of inner capacities that allow us to respond to a wide range of outer and inner experiences and dimensions in different and appropriate ways. When we are in touch with our inner aspects, it's never boring.

To consciously access these inner resources stemming from our inner dimensions, we must learn how to be consciously observant of ourselves. Being consciously observant requires that we be willing to look deeply in to our conscious and unconscious realms and be willing to always be asking ourselves "What part of myself is coming forth now? What aspects within me are activated now?"

We must ask ourselves some searching questions:

What are the subtle bottom line emotions and belief systems that are receiving attention from my active psyche now?

What is the energy that I'm putting forth now?

Am I heavy and logy?

Brittle or fragile?

Distant or preoccupied?

Uninterested? Tuned out?

Scared? Not fully present?

Feeling inadequate? Wanting to be rescued? Being victimy?

Feeling abandoned? Lost? Like a stray animal?

Needy? Like a little child?

Sarcastic? Angry? Unkind?

Self-righteous? Superior?

Self-defeating? Self-sabotaging?

Or, am kind and loving?

Accepting? Giving? Considerate?
Moving beyond myself to approach another?
Feeling successful and on top of the world?
Feeling like I belong to the Universe?
Willing to be vulnerable and approachable?
Present in the moment?

Perhaps you've noticed that you feel differently when different aspects of yourself come out. If you feel differently, others will feel differently toward you. They catch the subtle and not so subtle differences in the different aspects of you. Sometimes people stay away from you, sometimes they come near, depending on which aspect of you is out for the moment or the day. They react to you in a similar way that you react to them. We all protect our selves when things don't feel safe.

You were always able to tell, weren't you, when mother or dad or your spouse was 'in a mood'? You learned when to stay away and when to approach. Other aspects of you came out when it was safe, depending on which part of them was out.

Do you every feel confused by all these parts and moods, roles that you can play? Ever feel like you are at the mercy of outside forces that seem determined to 'do you in'? Do you feel like you have no control?

The secret is that the problem is not out there? It's within us! Everything is dependent on how we view the situation and our ability to handle it.

People sometimes feel like they're having to learn to survive in a world into which they've been rather rudely dumped without even so much as a road map or a guidebook! You've had to learn to survive on your own. You soon learned that different people expected different things from you, and if you didn't perform to their standards, then you had the feeling of 'woe is me'. You were in deep trouble. So you developed, often quite unconsciously, many different responses to different situations in life. These became habitual methods of response to similar situations in life. After a period of time, they became rather recognizable aspects of yourself, almost like separate parts of you. However, it's all you. You are all of these aspects, and even more. The more you become aware of the aspects you have access to now, the more you'll be aware of other aspects of you that might want to come forward to enrich your life.

It will be helpful if we become more conscious about the existence of these aspects within. They have different needs, values, fears, desires, strengths and weaknesses, as well as personal resources.

If we are to become a 'whole being' then we must get acquainted with all of these inner aspects and make peace between them, including our so-called 'dark and light sides'. Many of our aspects that we don't know, and often don't want to know, are aspects that other people have disapproved of for some reason or been intimidated by. Over time, when anyone important to us disapproved or questioned our behaviors, or were in any way critical of us, then we began to judge those aspects of ourselves and feel inadequate or less-than because of them. Or perhaps, we ourselves stumbled on to aspects that we really didn't understand at the time and they seemed more powerful than we knew how to handle. For whatever reasons, we have distanced ourselves from many aspects of ourselves, hidden them away in a closet or pretended they weren't part of us. Every time we've done this, we've deprived ourselves of inner resources, aspects of ourselves that long to be included,

loved, and utilized. It's like we've cut off our hands or feet.

The journey to wholeness is a process of getting acquainted with all our inner aspects, within ourselves. As we learn to observe ourselves and determine what aspect is showing up in the moment, we then have the possibility of learning to consciously choose which aspect to bring forward at any given time. Thus, we have some choice in how we might respond to a situation. When we more consciously choose what aspect is in charge, then we aren't at the mercy of the unconscious, automatic operation of the psyche. For instance, rather than whine and complain, we might ask for assistance. Rather than take everything personal, we might ask for clarification as to what the other person means. Rather than move to fear and inadequacy, we might move to courage and feelings of competency, or at least a willingness to do our best.

And, in addition, the more we know about ourselves, the more we'll be able to tell about another person because the same thing is going on inside of them. Maybe then, we can learn to dance better together.

This is a journey of unconditional love and nonjudgmental acceptance for all of our inner aspects. It's an appreciation for the complexity of life that lives within us and wishes to express. It's also an appreciation of the intent of our psyche to know itself, to be able to make conscious all of the riches contained within. It is this desire to realize Our Self, our whole being, and learn how to be unconditional love that activates our life. Living from the awareness of the multidimensional nature of ourselves and the acceptance of all these aspects enables us to live the *examined life*, which has been said to *be the only Life worth living*.