



INSPIRATIONAL LIVING SERIES



The Journey Home

Living from Your Essential Self Instead of Persona

As we mature, the urgency to live an authentic life becomes paramount. We grow tired of keeping up the facade and being on the endless search for genuine love, happiness and fulfillment. We want what is real! The realness that we seek is living a life in congruence with who we are at our core, our Essential Self.

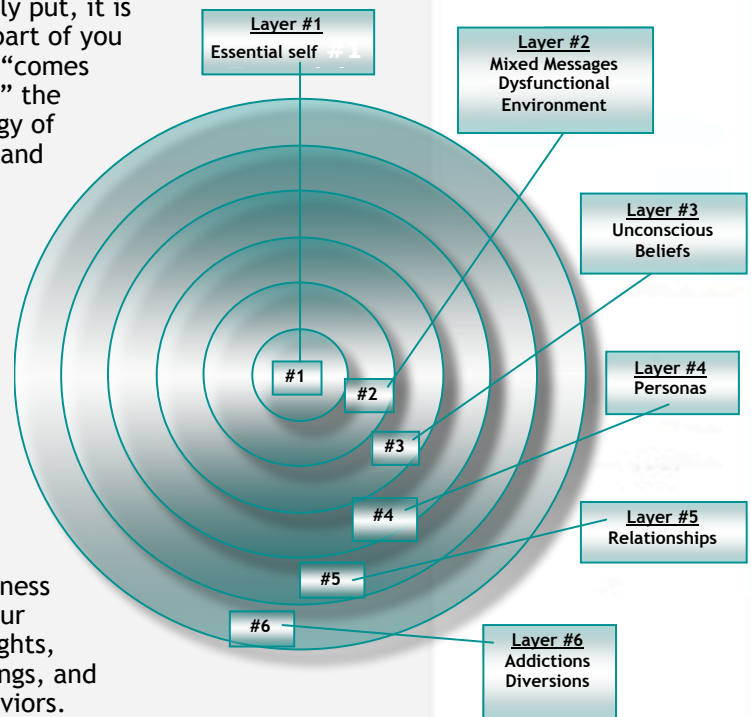
Each of us have a natural thermostat setting that facilitates either the experience of ease, flow, and genius in our lives... or of stress, conflict and stagnation. That thermostat setting depends on whether we are living our lives from our Essential Self or from our Persona's. So, the journey home is the journey of shifting out of Persona into living a life guided by Essence.

As you read this article, refer to the diagram. Instead of viewing it as two dimensional, think of it as three dimensional, or as a ball that is formed in layers. It begins with the Essential Self at the center of the ball.

Layer #1: Essential Self
(also called Essence, real self, authentic self, genuine self, or spiritual self)

When you came into this world, you arrived as your Essential Self. This is who you were created to be and who you are at your absolute core. Naturally loving, trusting, and open, you had an innate desire to connect with others, to love and be loved. Your Essential Self remains with you all of your life (and beyond) although it becomes covered by many other layers, as you will see.

Your Essential Self is the part of you that “comes from” the highest place, and holds the best intentions for you and for others. Simply put, it is the part of you that “comes from” the energy of love and



goodness in your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Your Essential Self is a composite of your most deeply held values and your unique genius (gifts, talents, and attributes) which are always seeking expression. Your Essential Self yearns to step into full potential and fully express love and creativity in the world. Your Essential Self flourishes unselfconsciously in those times in your life when you feel happiest and most fulfilled.



Layer #2: Mixed Messages/ Dysfunctional Environment

Throughout the early developmental stages of life, all sorts of mixed messages are sent your way. Coming from a dysfunctional family (which the vast majority of us did) serves up all sorts of scenarios that are not supportive to the healthy development and nurturing of the Essential Self. Addictions, arguments, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse are some of the things that happen in families. In these scenarios you, as an innocent child, take what is happening in the environment and unconsciously interpret it (often in a distorted way) and give it meaning... to include what it means about you.

Layer #3: Unconscious Beliefs

The conclusions and/or decisions you make about yourself and the world form your belief system. Bottom line conclusions are typically something like... *"It is not okay to be me" or "There is something wrong with me."* Other conclusions you might make are... *"It is not safe to trust (men, women, myself), nothing I ever do will be good enough, it is not okay to express my thoughts or feelings, I'm weak, I'm inadequate," etc.*

While these beliefs are not real, they unfortunately serve as the foundation for the reality in which you base your life. You continue to act out of these beliefs for the remainder of your life, or until you intentionally challenge them through therapy, coaching, workshops, or other types of Personal growth or spiritual transformation work.

Layer #4: Personas (also called fictional self, mask, façade, protector, or ego)

Out of beliefs, Personas form and are the masks that you wear to get love and approval so that you can feel as if you are acceptable and okay. For instance,

if you took on a belief *"nothing I ever do will be good enough,"* you may grow up to be a perfectionist who is always striving to be more, achieve more, or be seen as having it all together... the perfect house, the perfect car, the perfect body, the perfect life. You think that being perfect will get you the love and approval you are looking for. Yet, no matter how hard you try, you find it impossible to live up to your own (or others) expectations. So the love and approval you look for by using your perfectionist Persona doesn't manifest, or if it does, it is very fleeting.

Personas are born out of fear, and quite paradoxically out of a positive intention to get you love and approval. They are created in early childhood out of the need to protect and defend yourself from the beliefs that are lurking in the background, or to protect you from other people and how they might judge you or treat you. They serve as coping mechanisms to life's difficult situations.

You can know you are in Persona because the energy of it is stressful and often includes conflict with others or conflict within yourself. Persona energy is hard and effortful. If you feel stagnant or stuck and lacking in vitality, creativity, and aliveness, these are also signs that Persona is in the driver's seat.

It is important to note that even though your Essential Self is covered up with unconscious beliefs and Personas, you will still experience times when your Essential Self shines through and your life becomes flowing, easeful, creative, and you have a sense of aliveness and joy for living and connecting with others.



The Journey Home (Page Two)

*The love you are
searching for lies at
the center of your
being in your
Essential Self, and yet
you may continue to
look outside of
yourself to find it.*

~ Chris Lucerne





Layer #5: Relationships

When you can't find the love and approval you want by living in your Personas, you will begin looking for another source. Typically, the first place you will look is to other people and often to primary relationship. You might tell yourself something like... *"If I could only find the right partner, then I would be happy, then I would feel loved."* So you find someone and sure enough while in the "Romance" stage of relationship when Essence is present, you do feel an intense amount of love. That changes. At some point, you and your partner's Personas show up and get into conflict with one another. It seems that your partner's Personas know precisely how to push your buttons, and visa versa.

Amazingly, your Personas actually emerge as opportunities to grow and connect at even deeper levels. Yet it is rarely viewed in that way. The love you are searching for lies at the center of your being in your Essential Self, and yet you may continue to look outside to find it.

Layer #6: Addictions and Diversions

When you unconsciously realize you cannot reliably depend on your partner to give you the love you need, you begin looking for something that will. Many people simply change partners and the cycle begins again. Others turn to addictions and diversions for the answer... alcohol, drugs, shopping, sleeping, exercise, work, video games, internet, TV, food, etc.

Suffice it to say that an addiction is anything that you do (especially to excess) that allows you to escape from reality in order to feel good; to give you the sense of "okayness" you long to feel. Feeling "okay" leads to wanting to feel it again and that is how addictions form.

The Journey Home

In the meantime, while your Personas are desperately searching for love and approval outside of yourself through achievement, relationships, and addictions, what you seek lies easily within your reach at the center of who you are, your Essential Self. So, the journey home is very much about challenging your beliefs, discovering and de-energizing your Personas, and stepping fully into and being encircled by your Essential Self. The journey home is about love. It is about learning to love and accept yourself fully and completely, for all that you are and all that you are not... and when you do, you will attract an endless supply of love from outside yourself.

I invite you to take this journey. Is it easy? Not necessarily, although it doesn't have to be hard. How you decide to approach it and your level of willingness to transform your life will determine how you experience the journey.

What I want for YOU is to feel deeply loved, alive and full of vitality, expressing your true genius and inspiring others to do the same. What do you want for you?

The Journey Home

(Page Three)

Personas are the masks that you wear to get love and approval so that you can feel as if you are acceptable and okay.

~ Chris Lucerne

