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Psychoeducation Series

True vs False Self

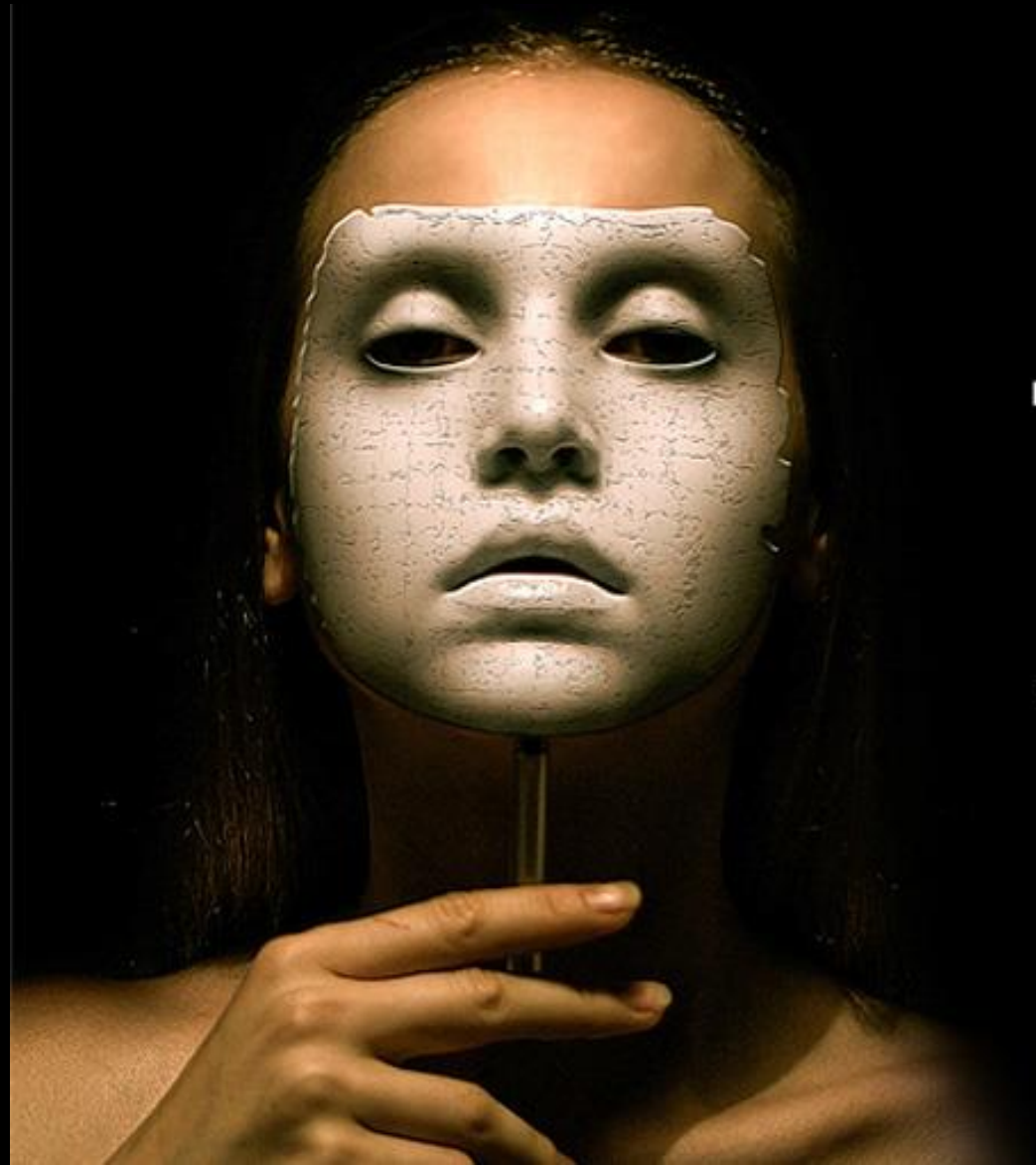
Implications for Your Mental Health

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THE FALSE SELF

VS

THE REAL SELF



True self,
Real self,
Authentic self,
Original self, or
Vulnerable self.

False self, fake self, idealised self, superficial self, or pseudo self.







Pretenders lose themselves, bit by bit.



The Persona as Social Mask (Trap of a Successful Person)

Persona: The “I,” usually ideal aspects of ourselves, that we present to the outside world.

Originally the word persona meant a mask worn by actors to indicate the role they played.

On this level, it is both a protective covering and an asset in mixing with other people.

Civilised society depends on interactions between people through the persona.

The False Self



This false self is no doubt an aspect of the true self.

It hides and protects it, and it reacts to the adaptation failures and develops a pattern corresponding to the pattern of environmental failure.

In this way the true self is not involved in reacting, and so preserves a continuity of being (Winnicott 1956, p. 387).



The false self lives mainly through memory and anticipation. Past and future are its main preoccupation.

— Eckhart Tolle



Unease, anxiety, tension, stress,
worry – all forms fear – are caused
by too much future, and not enough
presence.

— Eckhart Tolle

Presence

Presence is a state of consciousness that transcends thinking.

You probably have noticed that, most of the time, you have a voice in your head (your self-talk) that never stops speaking.

To be present you need to break the conditioning of your mind (your automatic thoughts).

If you identify with the voice in your head, you will be the voice in your head.

Presence is the raising of consciousness from where you can become aware that there is a voice in your head.

That awareness is beyond thinking.

And it allows you to be the observer of your own mind.

It is the awareness behind your thought processes.

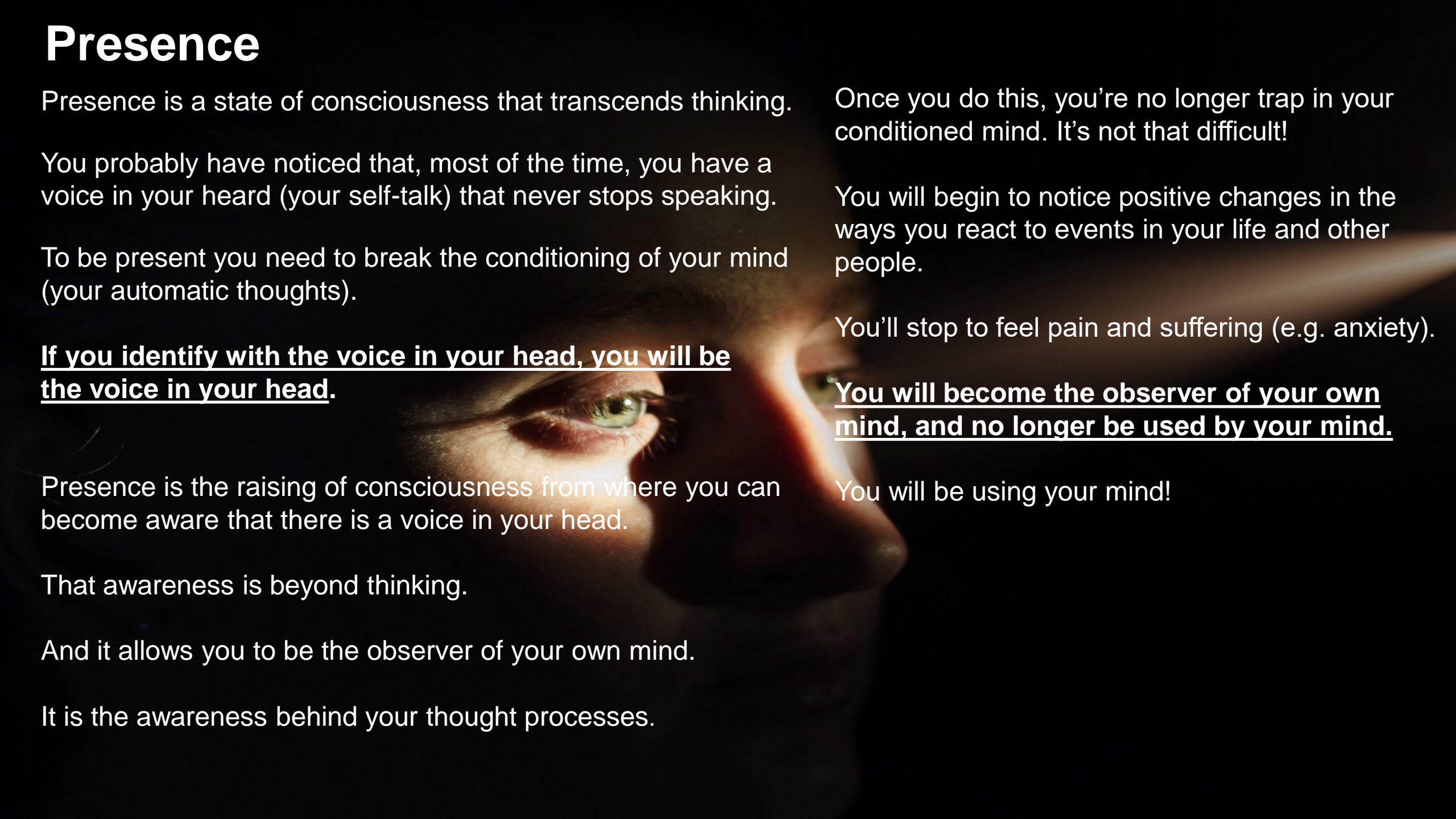
Once you do this, you're no longer trapped in your conditioned mind. It's not that difficult!

You will begin to notice positive changes in the ways you react to events in your life and other people.

You'll stop to feel pain and suffering (e.g. anxiety).

You will become the observer of your own mind, and no longer be used by your mind.

You will be using your mind!



False Self

False self, fake self, inauthentic self, idealised self, superficial self, or pseudo self:

False self, fake self, inauthentic self, idealised self, superficial self, or pseudo self are also interchangeable terms. They refer to a defensive disguise or façade we put behind a mere appearance of being real.

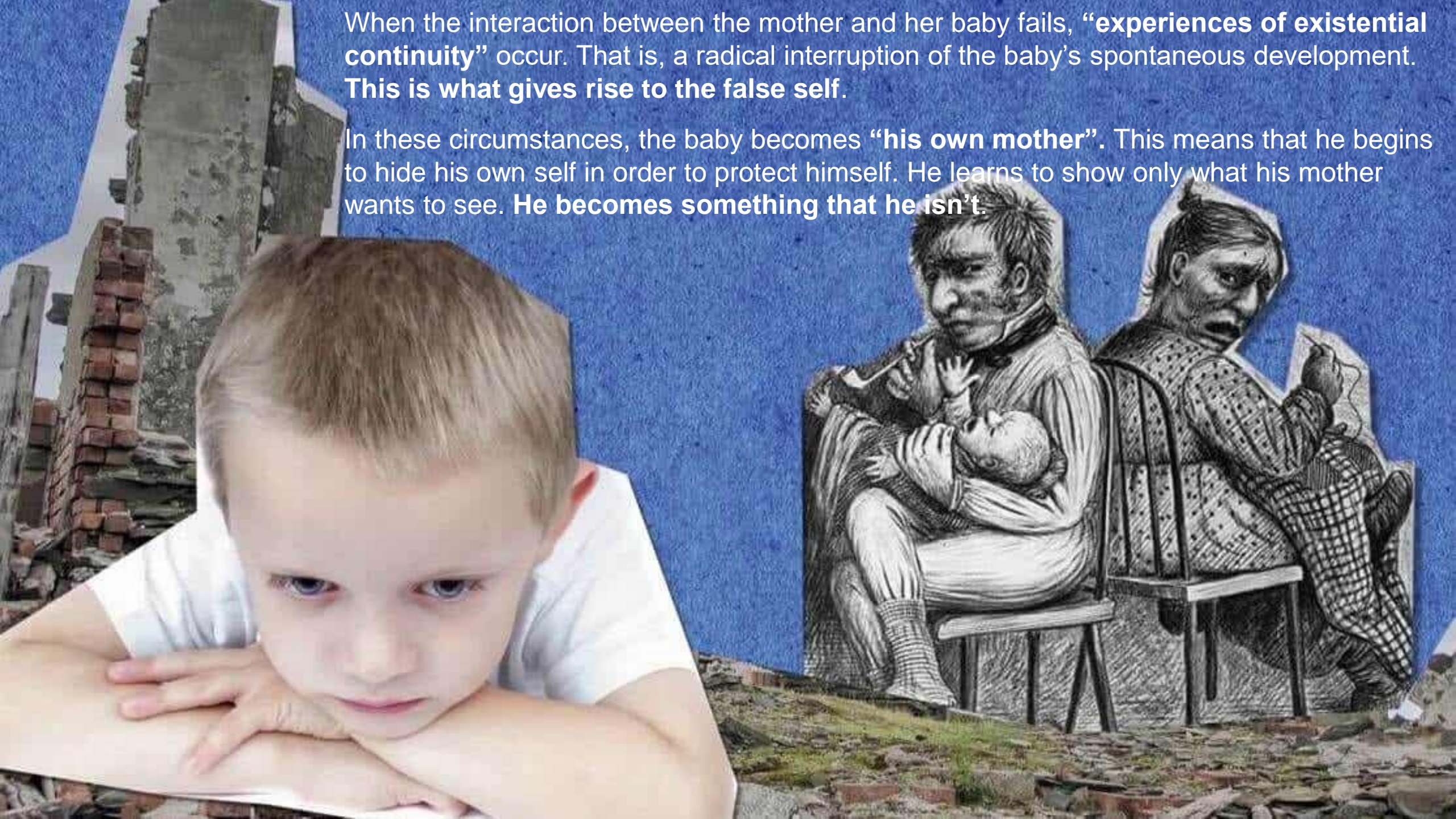
This usually leave its holders lacking spontaneity and feeling depressed, hollow or empty inside. The false self develops when 'not good enough parenting' (not necessarily perfect) has been absent.

This absence puts the infant's spontaneity in danger of being encroached on by the need for compliance with the parents' wishes or expectations. As a result, the false self emerges.

This means that people's expectations become of overriding importance, overlaying or contradicting the original sense of self – the one connected to the very roots of one's being. The risk is that through this false self, the infant builds up a false set of relationships, and by means of introjection even creates an illusion of being real. In reality, however, that infant is merely concealing a barren emptiness behind an independent-seeming façade.

When the interaction between the mother and her baby fails, “**experiences of existential continuity**” occur. That is, a radical interruption of the baby’s spontaneous development. **This is what gives rise to the false self.**

In these circumstances, the baby becomes “**his own mother**”. This means that he begins to hide his own self in order to protect himself. He learns to show only what his mother wants to see. **He becomes something that he isn’t.**





The False Self and Mental Illness

The false self predominates most mental illnesses. In such cases, individuals use all the resources available to them in order to build that false self and maintain it.

The purpose of this is for those individuals to be able to face a world that is perceived as unpredictable, unreliable, and overly demanding.

Most of the efforts of individuals with a strong false self are oriented towards the 'intellectualisation' of reality. This means that they try to turn reality into something that can be reasoned – without emotions, affections, or creative acts.

When such intellectualisation succeeds, these individuals are perceived as normal. However, they do not experience what they live out as something that is truly their own, but rather as something alien to them.

Such individuals are never able to feel happy about their successes, nor feel valued, even though others may see that value in them. As far as they are concerned, it is their 'false' self who has achieved it or their 'false' self that is being valued. This just creates a breakdown with themselves and with the world. Their 'true' self is trapped, fantasising about, and experiencing, a despair that it is never able to be understood by itself.

Level Two
Personal

Evolutionary Emergent of Unique Self

- The New (Integral) Enlightenment--Personal and Impersonal
- Personal face of Essence
- Personal face of Impersonal
- Personal Incarnation of the Evolutionary Impulse
- Seamless but not Featureless
- True self + perspective = Unique Self
- Individuation beyond ego
- Being and Becoming
- Aware of living evolutionary context

- Evolution awakens as Your Unique Self Catalyst for the Evolution of God
- Give Unique Gift
- Unique Gift not distorted by Ego Fixation
- Second Tier Obligation
- Joy of Unique Obligation
- Obligation = Love
- Respond to Unique Need
- Trace Unique Shadow back to Unique Self
- Boundary, No Boundary



Awakening State
Impersonal

True Self

- Classical Enlightenment (Impersonal)
- Seamless Coat of the Universe
- Oneness without perspective
- Beyond illusion of separation
- Being
- One with all arising forms in gross,
- Subtle and casual

- Aware and indivisible from larger
- Context of essence
- Beyond exclusive identification with ego
- No evolution beyond ego
- Transcend and include ego
- No-boundary consciousness



Level One
Personal

Personality - Separate Self - Ego

distortion

False Self

clarification

- False self is the unhealthy version of separate self
- Pre-enlightenment
- Requires false self clarification processes such as shadow integration
- Enneagram Fixation
- Healthy Ego Strength
- Positive Identification with Ego
- Good boundaries



Pre-personal

Pre-differentiated Ego

- Stage before ego individuation
- Or after pre-personal regression
- Example: babies and cults

True Self

True self, real self, authentic self, original self, or vulnerable self:

A sense of self based on spontaneous authentic experience and a feeling of being alive, having a real self.

Rooted from early infancy in the experience of being alive, including blood pumping and lungs breathing – simply being.

Out of this, the baby creates the experience of a sense of reality, a sense that life is worth living.

The baby's spontaneous, nonverbal gestures derive from that instinctual sense, and if responded to by the parents, become the basis for the continuing development of the true self.

Authenticity:

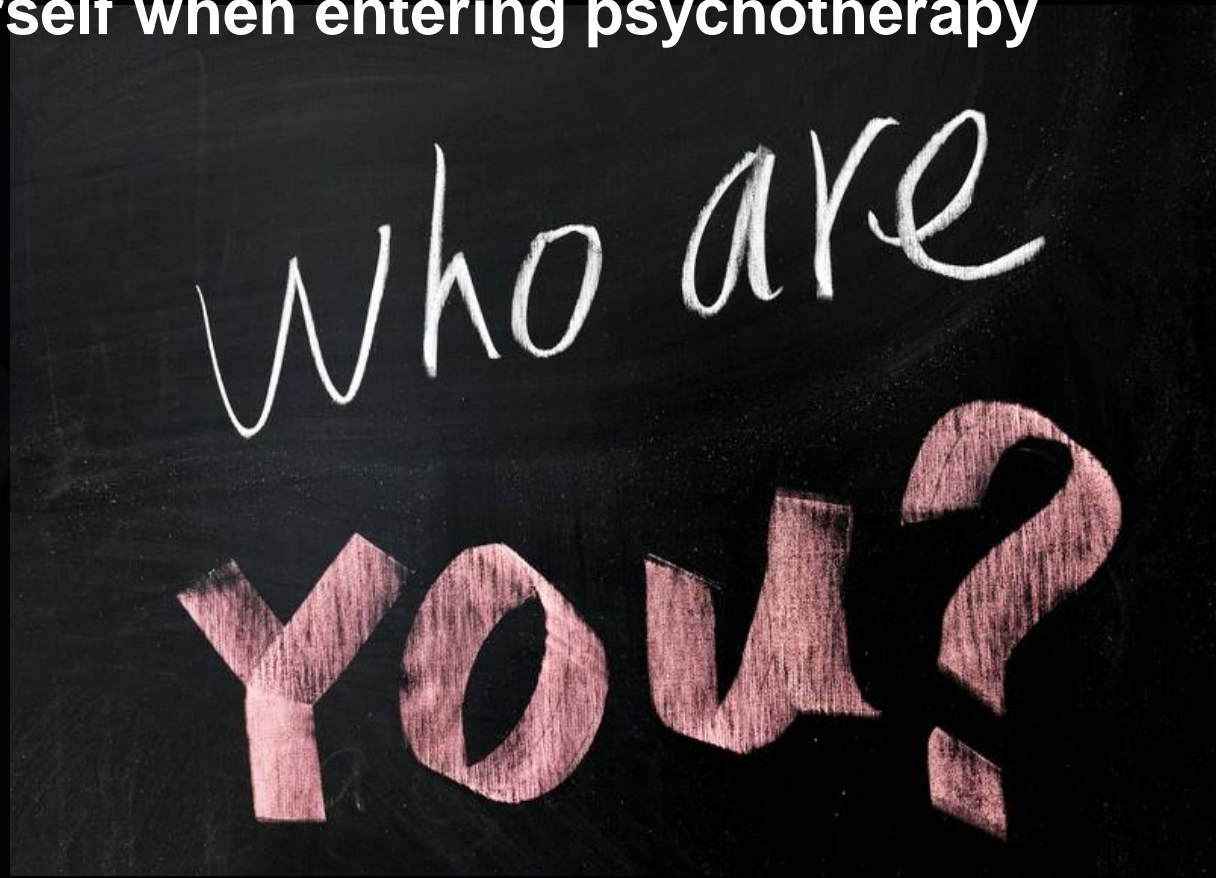
Authenticity is about considering how to live a 'free' life.

Authenticity comes from owning up to your self-defining choices and transcending your current situation to make something better of (and for) yourself.

Knowing your true authentic self predicts self-actualisation, self-esteem, vitality, and effective coping with the adversity of everyday living.

Conversely, lack of authenticity causes distress, as forces you to engage in unnatural and forced behaviour (often to please others), leaving you feeling devalued, unfulfilled, empty, with a lack of voice, and – overtime – depressed or even desperate.

Possible useful questions to ask yourself when entering psychotherapy



- *How do I come across to others?*
- *How are others experiencing me?*
- *Why do I come across this way?*
- *Are my relationships working?*
- *Is this how I want to be perceived (experienced)?*

- *How do I experience myself?*
- *Why am I experiencing myself in this way?*
- *Is the relationship I have with myself working?*
- *Is this how I want to keep experiencing myself?*



Discovering Your Authentic Self in Psychotherapy



Reclaiming Your Authentic Self in Psychotherapy



Psychotherapy can sometimes be scary because it entails looking inward.

It can be scary to consider what we might learn about ourselves when we look inward.

What if you don't like what we find?

Perhaps you'll feel awkward or embarrassed.

With compassionate acceptance and by bringing history and context into the equation, we can find the full significance of what's there and put that understanding to work to make things better.

In the end, this will make you stronger, more resilient, calmer, more focused, and peaceful.

During psychotherapy you're never alone.
Your psychotherapist is there for you!

Take Off Your Mask And Become More Comfortable Being You

Seven Key Practices:

1. Uncover your blind spots by practicing mindfulness. Pay attention to your actions and notice when you do the opposite of what you really want (or would like) to do, or when you want to hide.
2. Meditate to improve self-awareness.
3. Show vulnerability. Learn to name your fears and hopes.
4. Ask for, and listen to, feedback from others.
5. Recognise your 'Authentic Self' that makes you unique and interesting.
6. Dare to be you. Be brave and take small risks.
7. Reveal your strengths and feel proud of who you are.



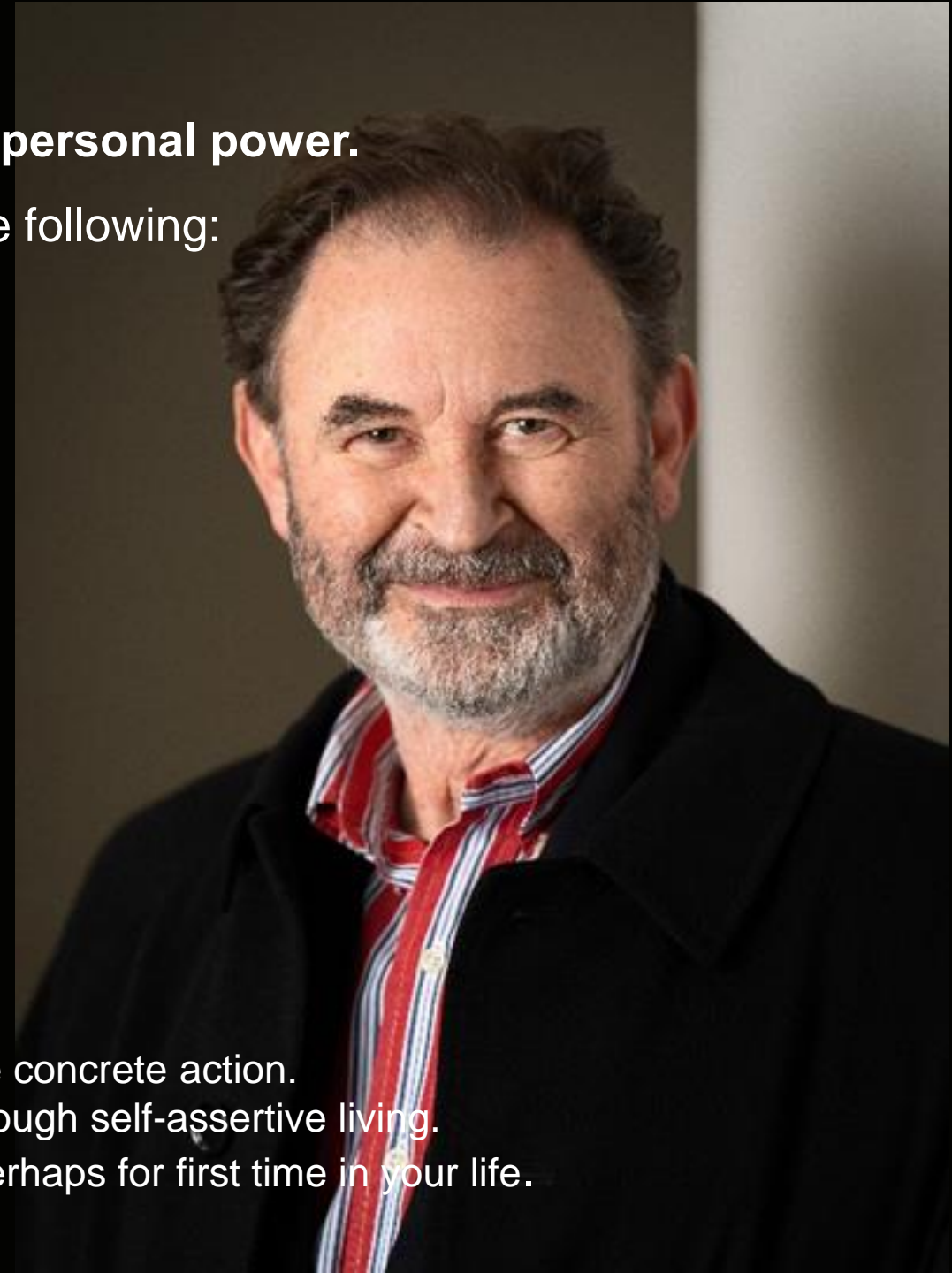
Authenticity = Empowerment = Confidence = Serenity = Pace of Mind

What is Psychotherapy?

Psychotherapy is not about happiness; it's about true personal power.

Psychotherapy, among other things, is an integration of the following:

- Taking more risks.
- Facing your fears.
- Accepting yourself.
- Speaking your truth.
- Trusting yourself more.
- Growing and developing.
- Taking more responsibility.
- Feeling safer to trust others.
- Developing a stronger sense of self.
- Re-authoring the narrative of your life.
- Experiencing transformational learning.
- Legitimising and coping with your suffering.
- Exercising the freedom to think for yourself.
- Learning to tolerate and live with uncertainty.
- Developing a sense of meaning in life and a life purpose.
- Re-thinking and challenging your assumptions about yourself.
- Learning to make difficult life decisions and choices, and to take concrete action.
- Moving towards realising your goals, potential, and fulfillment through self-assertive living.
- Experiencing calmness, poise, balance, peace, and serenity – perhaps for first time in your life.



Transformational Learning

Transformational learning is the process of deep, constructive, and meaningful learning that goes beyond simple knowledge acquisition and supports critical ways in which you consciously make meaning of your life.

It is the kind of learning that results in a fundamental change in your worldview as a consequence of shifting from mindless or unquestioning acceptance of available information to reflective and conscious learning experiences that bring about true freedom or liberation.

Transformational learning means becoming critically aware of your implicit or tacit assumptions and expectations, and assess their relevance for making interpretations.

Transformational learning often leads to profound changes in your thoughts, feelings, perspectives, beliefs, and behaviors because it is a radical shift of consciousness that permanently alters your way of being in the world.

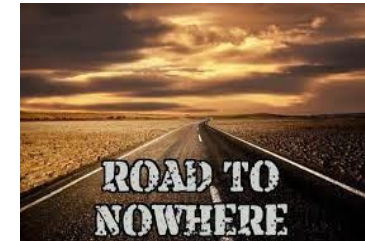
Transformational Learning => 2nd Order Learning

Observer, Actions, and Results

In 1st order learning, I change my actions to create a different result, without considering the type of observer that I am. This generates a vicious cycle in which I keep repeating the same actions without achieving the changes I want.



1st Order Learning



The
Set-Up-To-Fail
Approach

Observer + Action = Results

2nd Order Learning



2nd order learning entails reflecting upon myself (the observer that I am) and the way I view myself (observing myself as an observer). This enables me to learn about myself and adjust my actions, so I can achieve the result I want.



Meditation practice allows us to access the true self, strengthening our inner awareness.

It helps us identify the areas in our lives that need more attention and intention so we can work on the parts of ourselves that need healing.



6 signs you're healing

1. You accept yourself without judgment.
2. You can talk about your feelings with someone you trust.
3. You identify your triggers and use healthy strategies to love on them.
4. You know your value is not defined by other's opinions.
5. You are comfortable setting boundaries and expressing your needs.
6. You feel whole, safe, and lovable.

Signs You're Becoming True to Yourself



Authentic Person



- You question things.
- You feel safe and centered.
- A desire to contribute to others.
- Know that your life has meaning.
- A sense of joy in everyday activities.
- You make decisions that surprise you.
- A sense of mental and physical lightness.
- Some of your interests and hobbies change.
- You freely share your thoughts and feelings.
- Some people like you, some people don't, and you're OK with that.
- You honour your needs and say no to requests that conflict with them.
- You focus more on your own values than what society deems acceptable.
- You listen to your intuition and trust that you know what's best for yourself.
- You have different feelings when you look back at old photographs of you.
- You surround yourself with people who respect and support you as you are.
- You do what feels right for you, even if that means risking approval from others.

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