

## CHAPTER ONE

### Awakening

This workbook concerns itself with overcoming the obstacles that prevent individuals from fulfilling their dreams, accomplishing their goals, and experiencing the happiness, peace, freedom and tranquility that is the desire and right of most people.

Seen as the epitome of living, reaching the heights of one's abilities and talents constitutes the challenge of being alive, and at the same time, of being fully human. The decision to embark on a personal journey, to break free of the past and embrace the future, assumes an encompassing perspective that will be helpful to those who trust in a purpose, the creative potential for each person, but also to those who doubt themselves or their principles. The workbook will offer them a challenging vision of their emerging autonomy, an "awakening" of senses and promises, as they too journey toward realizing their individual potential.

Each person is unique, a solo artist in the chorus of all others who are searching for a common destiny, unity and revelation of spirit. All individuals must sustain testing, reflecting, and experimenting before their potential, that precious state of wholeness of spirit, is realized.

Sadly to many, the adult is a symbol of passivity, cut off from autonomy, accomplishment and freedom in an apparent hostile environment. It is the persistence adopted by this workbook that suggests the phoenix-like aspect of the human spirit. Out of the ashes of a desperate personal condition arises a dynamic symbol, calling forth to a "spiritual awakening" and ultimately to a personal maturity. And, as in the myth of the phoenix, transformation is attainable.

"My Precious Child" is a comprehensive workbook program for people who seek the knowledge and awareness of sound mental and spiritual health. Because of its unique philosophy, "My Precious Child" identifies itself as a philosophy committed to restoring the dignity and self-respect of each person by encouraging natural growth and renewal. "My Precious Child" enables individuals not only to begin the process of making healthy choices, but also to develop the confidence and conviction to use their newly acquired skills to confront the periodically overwhelming emotional pain that comes from the loss of innocence, of self-worth, of self-control, of reality, of friends and family, of spirit, and other unresolved losses that people experience throughout their lifetimes.

"My Precious Child" focuses on promoting excellence built on the theory that each person is innately a spirit-centered being, who is capable, concerned, determined, and persistent, revealing a positive personal-concept and a highly developed ethical character. In the final analysis, each one of us is the only one who can initiate our innate inner strength, and the power to choose and to create our own life.

I truly welcome you to “My Precious Child”. The workbook is here to support your personal transformation. These changes may come slowly and painfully, and you may have to experience many things in order to find new ways to keep yourself growing. Your commitment to your own liberation and growth should be an important reason for beginning, but also concluding this journey.

The purpose of all of the exercises in this book is to help you learn more about yourself and eventually resolve and change the thoughts and behaviors that keep you trapped and unhappy. With the successful resolution of each problem comes a systematic feeling of relief that will provide you with an increased sense of well being. After enough problems have been solved and enough experiences have been resolved, your inner-spirit will automatically shift into a more tranquil way of being.

Of course the process will be different for each individual.

### **A Strategy for Rational Living**

It is difficult, at best, to behave in appropriate and rational ways when we live in such an irrational and hostile world. Many people were not taught the basic rules of life, and how to behave in ways that support cooperative relationships. Presented here is a strategy that if practiced and used routinely, will improve your chances of developing a healthy life-style and satisfying relationships. This strategy will help you to change your attitude toward yourself, your life, your family, your relationships, and the challenges that you face each day.

When you follow a precise and sound plan, you will find that even the roughest of times of your life will be more serene, more fulfilling, and life will be more rewarding.

**BELIEVE THAT LIFE IS INTENDED TO BE GOOD.** Develop the attitude that life is not always bad, or awful, or abusive; or full of pain, but good. Although throughout life, all individual’s experience struggles in many different areas, life itself is not meant to be a struggle, but a celebration. As you learn to celebrate life, the struggles and trials tend to be less intense and joys seem to come more often.

**DECISIONS ARE DEMANDED OF YOU.** Whatever the consequences in life, they are a direct reflection of the decisions you make. If you choose not to make a decision about a certain issue, you have, by default, made a decision. Life then takes a course of its own, and you may be left in the wake of a crisis. Decisions are not always easy, nor are they always hard. They do have to be made, however, whether you want to make them or not; whether it is fair or not. The reality remains that you will have to make decisions for the rest of your life.

**THERE ARE NO ACCIDENTS.** By and large, what happens to you in your life does not occur by accident. It is the choices that you make, or fail to make, that determine the course of your life. The more you are willing to look at your life and the problems that

continue to occur, and make the appropriate adjustments and course changes, the more control you will have over your situations.

**YOU DO COUNT; YOU ARE IMPORTANT.** You must be willing to take good care of yourself and put your well being first if you need to. If you have people that are depending on you, ask them if they will support you in this decision. Healthy people are able to ask for what they need; this radiates a positive attitude and a commitment to the relationships you have with others.

**OTHERS COUNT TOO.** You must accept that others are also important. No person has been able to develop healthy ways of living if they try to exist by themselves. Many people have learned that others are not trustworthy. What they have learned is that no one can be counted on and they feel left alone to fend for themselves by themselves. The healthy person is able to be independent (care for self), dependent (ask for help), and interdependent (I help you; you help me), as occasions arise.

**FEELINGS ALONE CANNOT DICTATE YOUR BEHAVIOR.** It is important to know how you feel about specific situations, but you cannot let how you feel dictate your behavior or your decisions. In fact, if you rely solely on how you feel about a situation, you will probably make the wrong decision. Feelings alone will steer you into making the decision that is the least painful one; the one that feels the best or brings relief. When you are faced with a crisis situation, the decision that is the hardest to make, the one that feels the worst and the most difficult, may often be the best.

**REFUSE TO BE THE AGENT OF YOUR OWN UNHAPPINESS.** People are often their own worst enemy. By looking carefully at your life, you can choose how you feel about it. You can be as happy as you choose to be. Many people do not know that they have the power to choose. Many have lived as a victim for such a long time that they have been robbed of their power to choose. By refusing to remain a prisoner of unhappiness and unfulfillment, you can choose to be happy and fulfilled.

**BEHAVE CONSISTENTLY.** Whatever skills you develop in your life are the result of consistent habits. Just stopping one behavior and starting another does not guarantee the positive results you may desire. Healthy, sane behavior is the result of acting consistently in a healthy way, paying attention to the results, and making changes quickly when necessary.

**YOU CANNOT DO IT ALONE.** Certainly no one else can grow and change for you, only you can accomplish that. But it is a deep-rooted spiritual truth that you are not a solitary being. You need a support system; friends, family, sharing, a divine sense of being. You cannot walk alone. You need other people.

## **Personal Boundaries**

Understanding the personal boundary system that one relies on to achieve and maintain a sense of safety and security in relationships is, by its very nature, confusing. This

complex system is not a tangible and is easy to miss, unless you have purposely developed limits that alert you to trouble that may lie ahead.

You were born with a vigilant inner-sense that automatically lets you know when someone is inappropriate with you. That is why even small children and infants know when their boundaries are being violated. They do not have the mental maturity to make sense of the experience or to understand the emotional pain that is left behind, however.

You were also born with a natural urge toward the growth and development stages that necessitates testing boundaries of all kinds. This is the way people learn and acquire coping skills and abilities. The quality of your childhood determines the quality of your acquired set of personal boundaries. The healthier the primary family system was during your formative years, the better your ability to safeguard against destructive relationships in adulthood. Children need to learn that there are lines of authority that are present in all facets of society, and that every one has an ultimate authority with which to reckon. Even though you were born to test boundaries, you need to learn to properly manage your circumstances.

A person that grows up in a family system that does not validate the family members for their integrity and goodness, or that does not guide the child to become confident and forthright, has trouble recognizing when a personal boundary is in jeopardy. If a person's personal space, body, mind or feelings were violated as a child, and he learned that to be a normal part of living, he will not be able to recognize a boundary violation as an adult. He is just left feeling contaminated in some way, with no way to identify the basis for the feeling.

Authority and control is always an issue for a person with an unhealthy boundary system. Due to an unfulfilled or confusing childhood, and not getting basic care needs met, individuals have a tendency to want what they want when they want it, and they usually want it immediately! This phenomenon is called "immediate self-gratification".

### **Feeling Powerless**

The feeling of powerlessness keeps people immobile, trapped in the past, paralyzed in the present, and helpless in planning for the future. Many people have not experienced authentic power, or power used to promote positive change. Rather, they have experienced the victimization of another's negative power, used against them for the purpose of control. When the individual feels powerless, the natural response is to find a way to cope. Defense mechanisms are then created, allowing the individual to connect with the fear and form an emotional hedge of safety. There are problems, however, in coping by using defense mechanisms. Coping skills, although necessary at the time, do not resolve the situation. You may often find yourself subconsciously repeating the same type, but equally unfulfilling situations, until the initial experience has been resolved.

If this sounds like the life and experiences that you are living, the exercises in this workbook will be most useful. The exercises will allow you to explore situations that you have experienced in the past and identify how they continue to create problems for you now. Do not be surprised if you begin to experience a wide variety of emotions while completing these exercises. It is important to start [Planning the Journey](#) you are about to embark upon and set up a security zone of people and events that are immediately available to you in case you find yourself immersed in unfamiliar or uncomfortable feeling states.

People may live with the emotional pain of damaging experiences for a long time. You may not have recognized the extent or depth of your grief until you got “fed-up” and stopped to “take stock” of where your life was headed. You may not have realized it, but you may have experienced deep emotional pain in some way, at some level beyond your awareness, at some other time in your life.

Writing about painful experiences has a unique way of healing emotional pain. Writing and drawing about experiences and memories circumvents the defense mechanisms that were developed to hide the painful experiences from the perceptive part of the mind. By bringing them into awareness, these old and painful experiences can be revealed and resolved.

The exercises in this workbook should be completed in order. Some of the questions may seem very similar. Asking a question in different ways usually elicits different answers, and makes the mind look at the same situation from different perspectives. You will probably get “bits and pieces” of information in answering each question. All of the pieces will eventually come together and complete a clear and comprehensible picture.

It may surprise you to know that each and every traumatic or negatively charged event need not be worked through on an individual, one-by-one basis. Once a critical mass is established, and you have developed a new paradigm from which to live, the mind will perceive relief and the spirit will be lifted. It is an experience that you will not be able to overlook.

**DIRECTIONS:**

**After reading the question, write down what comes to your mind immediately. Do this with all of the questions.**

Why am I interested in this Workbook?

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What do I hope to gain from completing these Workbook exercises?

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What goals am I intending to reach by completing this Workbook?

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How much effort and time am I willing to give to completing the Workbook exercises?

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How motivated am I in making the life changes I may be required too make as a result of completing these Workbook exercises?

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