**CONNECTING TO YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF PART 1**

1) Do you know how many masks you wear from day to day, how many people you are to the world?

The purpose of this question is two-fold: firstly to bring you awareness that in most cases you are being a persona, a character in your day-to-day interactions and dealings. Secondly it’s to get you to think about how many personas you play or masks you wear.

2) How often do you take them off (if ever)?

For some of us, we never stop being something to someone and often that is at the expense of being ourselves for ourselves and the people around us. Do you ever stop and just ‘not be’ a persona? Do you ever connect with that true sense of ‘You’?

3) What does the face under them look like? Have you seen it lately?

This is really about asking the question “If you aren’t checking in with the real ‘you’, when will you?” Can you describe who you are, what you are truly passionate about, that particular something that is for you and no one else?

4) When do you mostly cover that face up? Under what circumstances?

There are many reasons we mask our true self (that in itself is a book on its own), but if you were to stop and think about it, when do you most hide your true self? Is there ever a time when you don’t? This is a good way to truly learn about yourself and where you feel most weak or vulnerable or afraid or ashamed and so on.

5) If you were to take an educated guess, why would you say you cover your authentic face?

It can be quite profound and even overwhelming working through the above four questions, especially if you had not realised you had lost yourself? But this is a critical part of the exploration process. Understanding why you hide your true self can let you discover areas you need to work on in yourself, your self-esteem and your confidence and it can also help you to rejuvenate yourself.

6) When all masks are off and you are free, what do you do and/or yearn for the most?

You may at times take the masks off or, after asking the first five questions, you may find you are making some changes and are able to at times take off the masks, or at least it may start to feel like that.

Observe yourself and what you do in those moments, what you enjoy doing or reading that relaxes you, that gives you a deep sense of pleasure and satisfaction. It’s important that you look at activities and things that are all about you and your satisfaction and pleasure and fulfilment, not anyone else’s

**CONNECTING TO YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF PART 2-** Building Power & Momentum

When you finally uncover your authentic self, you will experience significant and empowering changes within yourself; it will be like a weight has been lifted off you.

You will find that you will feel the need to defend yourself less, be more comfortable in yourself and what you do, and be able to connect more with what you want in your life and feel great about it.

Your relationships will also improve, people will react differently to you. You will attract better relationships and a better calibre of people and cleanse away the ones that no longer serve or empower you.

This, however, takes some practice, so we need to build and keep the momentum and in return, give strength and power to our authentic self so as not to lose it again.

**There are six things you can do towards this.**

1) Think of between one and three ways you could incorporate these yearnings and activities more in your life?

As with most things that have some worth, you need a plan and in this case you need to make a plan of inclusion to condition yourself. This is a question designed to make you think about a few ways you can incorporate the new you and the things that give life to the real you into your everyday life.

2) Can you think of five good things that can come about by taking off the masks or bringing more of your authentic self to the surface?

Here is where you really start to understand why being your authentic self is far better than being lost in the many personas you can become. What are the benefits for you and for those around you.

3) How would that change your everyday life for you?

It’s important you visualise the positive change possibilities and the freedom that comes with being true to yourself. You want to see in your mind’s eye all the great changes and the good they bring, and there will be many.

4) How would that change things with your relationships, work, home? How could you help those in these areas grow with you in understanding and acceptance, even when resistance may initially come through?

Always remember that your visions are your visions and in making that transition to living more authentically, it is possible that those around you, the people you care about may not be sure of what’s going on.

They may feel concerned, although in most cases they feed off your positive energy as you become happier. In any case, it pays to talk with the people in your life that matter and explain to them, help them to understand and feel assured that you are fine, in fact better than ever.

This may actually inspire them to do the same and rise up with you in living a better and more authentic life.

5) What do you need to let go of/change to facilitate this positive transformation?

The journey to your authentic self may bring up some internal struggles or matters that will need attending to. Sometimes the masks you wear are as a defence against something that’s making you uncomfortable. The mask may act as a wall between you and that issue, often giving you an excuse to keep putting off dealing with it.

It is important you stop running from these issues and address them; there is a relief and a freedom in doing so. The sooner you deal with whatever it is, the sooner it will be behind you.

6) What are the positive alternatives you would then have to add and incorporate into your life to facilitate this positive transformation?