

THE TEAL PEACEMAKER

Living in the Now

Lesson Two

THE OUTER LAYER OF THE MAP

YOUR PERSONALITY TRAITS

Let's be clear here. Learning to Live the in the Now is learning to FEEL! Or more accurately it is *remembering* how to feel. This programme is about learning to feel the immediacy of life. ALL of it. Not just the good bits. The problem is that long ago you decided that this was not a safe way to live and you closed down your contact with the present moment. Developing awareness of the ways you avoid feeling your everyday experience is the first important step to living in the now. One of the biggest problems in our modern society is that we think our everyday ways of existing are normal, to be expected, are as good as it gets. They are not. When we develop mindful awareness of our immediate experience, we get back to who we were before the world got its hands on us and remember what we long ago forgot, who we really are.

In this session, we are exploring the outer layer of your map. Your personality traits. Your aim is to learn to recognise how these traits have become conditioned patterns of closure to living in the now. Your traits developed because you do not want to feel your own depths and taste life directly. Unconsciously you believe it is not safe and you would rather be safe than be happy. Eventually, your traits became ways of being that increasingly distanced you from the immediacy of life so that you gradually lost intimacy with it. This is why you feel so much dissatisfaction with yourself and your life. Is that normal? No, of course not.

The more you flee the present moment, the smaller and more isolated you become. You experience what I think of as an 'inner shrivelling'. You become dogmatic, inflexible and self-protective, and you become a victim of fear, anger, distrust, and neediness. You lose your sense of delight in life and instead of feeling full, alive, and energetic you feel depleted, empty, and dissatisfied. When you are not in the moment, you are in a reacting and avoiding mode of living. Even though you may not be aware of it, when you are acting out your habitual patterns of behaviour, thought, and emotions, most of the time your breathing becomes tight and muscles become armoured. You become tense and have negative feelings. At such times you have dropped out of the present moment and are likely to think reactively, behave poorly and make bad decisions.

THE OUTER LAYER OF THE MAP

WHAT THE PRESENT MOMENT FEELS LIKE

So what does the present moment feel like? Present moment awareness is experienced and recognised through your three centres. Your head centre, your heart centre, and your body centre.

Present moment awareness or nowness is experienced in the head centre when your mind is clear and spacious, and is free from clutter and busyness. You feel an unmistakable lightness of mind that feels clear, responsive and agile. Remember how your mind feels when you are on holiday, like you have left the cares of the world behind? That's it!

Present moment awareness or nowness is experienced in the heart centre when your heart is open and warm. You experience an outpouring of love for everyone and everything and there is an absence of tightness and defensiveness. When your heart is open there are no barriers or walls of protection. Remember how you feel when you look at someone you love or cuddle your pet? That's it!

Present moment awareness or nowness is experienced in the body centre when your body is grounded and centred. You were gifted with life and it is your birth right to feel its immediacy, to feel the humming vibrance of your body and the exquisite joy that exists within every moment. Remember the last time you felt FULLY alive? That's it!

When these three centres are operating in the present moment you will recognise it as feeling relaxed, peaceful, and joyful. Anytime you are not feeling these things you have abandoned the present moment. (Which for most of us is most of the time!)

So, let's explore your everyday experience starting with the outer layer of your map. Your aim with this is to directly experience the ways you leave the present moment through your habitual patterns of behaving. We will do this through an inquiry exercise at the end of this lesson. But first, let's get familiar with your personality traits. Read the description of your personality traits on the next two pages. These are describing what is detailed on the outer layer of your map. Do not be discouraged if you do not recognise ALL the traits described. It often takes some time to own all aspects of yourself. Once you have read the description and had some time to digest it all move on to the exercise.

THE OUTER LAYER: YOUR PERSONALITY & DESIRE FOR PEACE

As well as the personality traits shown in this layer you will see your core values, a key component of your personality. As a Teal Peacemaker you are devoted to the quest for internal and external peace. You want to be agreeable, peaceful, easy going and comfortable. More often than not you will be a spiritual seeker. You attach great importance to remaining calm, and if at all possible, to avoiding inner turbulence and conflict. As a Teal Peacemaker you will focus on the bright side of life. As a result, you see yourself as accepting, unassuming and laid-back. You would like others to see you as humble, easygoing and approachable. Your idealised image is that you are content and harmonious.

One of your most admirable features is your deep capacity to let people be and your extraordinary acceptance of others. You are very able to see the good in everyone and you can listen without judgement offering others support, freedom and dignity for people to be just as they are. You have a tremendous capacity to put others at ease and because you give others plenty of space your company is often sought.

More intellectual than you let on, you have a natural gift for seeing many different points of view.

You are able to see all the shades of grey in any given situation and have a way of diffusing conflict and handling crises because you have enormous inner stability. The little ups and downs of life do not knock you off balance, nor do major problems, setbacks or disasters. Focusing on similarities rather than differences, you make an excellent diplomat and peacemaker.

Often the strong, silent type, you have the power of patience, persistence and resistance. You see yourself as having stamina and take pride in your ability to endure. You tend to procrastinate and take longer than others to make up your mind. When you do make a decision, you are like a dependable elephant pursuing its goals.

Not one to self-promote, you would rather be discovered than announce yourself. Others may underestimate you due to your casual and nonchalant attitude. This is nearly always a mistake you are happy to let others make because you prefer not to flaunt your talents or appear egotistical.

You have a philosophical approach to life that enables you to see universal truths. You have the ability to arrive at a new idea at completely new levels and can be very creative. You like to express yourself non-verbally through art, dancing or music and enjoy exploring the world of dreams and symbols.

OUTER LAYER: YOUR PERSONALITY & AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT

As the Teal Peacemaker the ways you struggle to remain in the now is connected to your fear of conflict. This fear means you don't want to be drawn into conflict or inner turbulence and avoid being pressured to react. You don't want to deal with anything until you are good and ready, and until you are ready you will retreat to your inner sanctum for safety!

Self-forgetting by nature, you repress your anger and neglect your needs in order to avoid the discomfort that comes with conflict. Retreating to your inner sanctum you may lose yourself in life's simple pleasures, the needs of others, or the basic task of living. You may never go after what you truly want and struggle to find your one true passion.

At the heart of your self-forgetting is a resistance to being deeply affected by life. You do not make effort in making contact with yourself or the world and you diffuse your awareness so that the full impact of reality does not touch you. The world goes into soft focus so that it feels safer, but this is at the expense of your vitality and aliveness. Teal Peacemakers tend to ignore the disturbance of life by numbing out and often deny the existence of any pain or discomfort.

Your inattention and forgetfulness can also manifest as 'crimes of omission'. You may also be stubborn or turn a blind eye to someone in need. Everyone interprets your understanding as agreement and you are most likely to hurt the people around you by not keeping promises due to your lack of follow-through. This can make for a passive-aggressive stance in life where you don't see the impact of your inaction and can appear callous or detached.

Being shut down, overlooked and not included by others are among your greatest fears. You are afraid of being loveless and of not receiving or being able to give love. Because of this fear you would rather merge into someone else than run the risk of alienating others. As a result you can become almost invisible and go with the flow in order to get the love and connection you are looking for.

The average Teal Peacemaker sees themselves as nobody special, the modest person who stays in the background so as not to cause any inconvenience. At their core they feel that their presence, options and involvement do not really matter and are of no particular consequence. This stance offers them a camouflage and ability to blend into the background and not be intruded upon.

In the end The Teal Peacemaker can become easily fatigued and taking positive action can become increasingly difficult.

EXERCISE

Congratulations, you are now ready to begin your first exercise.

- Give yourself some quiet time, have your map open in front of you and bring yourself into a state of mindful awareness with a few deep breaths.
- Choose one personality trait from the outer layer of the map it can be a 'good' trait or a 'negative' trait.
- Using the trait you have chosen, 'answer' the three inquiry questions below.
- For one, or even two of the questions you may get the answer "It doesn't." That is fine, move on to the next question
- Avoid rushing through these questions with your thinking mind. Mindful Awareness is needed here.
 - **How does this trait create distraction and busyness? (meaning I lose contact with my feelings and the immediacy of my body)**
 - **How does this trait create overthinking? (meaning my mind is cluttered and full)**
 - **How does this trait create avoidance and withdrawal? (meaning I feel closed off and unavailable.)**

Remember, anytime your mind is not clear, your heart is not open, and your body is not grounded you are avoiding or fleeing the present moment.

You may not always find this inquiry easy because your traits have become so normalised. Simply remain with your mindful awareness and notice whatever arises into the space of inquiry. It is important that you stay open and curious and not judge what arises. **It is also important that you do not do anything or try to change yourself.** People often think they have the change their behaviour, do things differently, nothing could be further from the truth...**there is nothing to do but simply hold the space of mindful awareness.**

Spend a week or two doing this exercise **choosing a different trait each time.** Choose traits that you have noticed popping up in your day. When you choose traits that you notice in your everyday life you are learning to catch yourself in the act of fleeing or avoiding the present moment. The more you do this the faster your awareness grows, the more spontaneous and authentic you become, the more you develop a growing connection to the present moment.

Listen to the guided meditation called 'Your Traits'. It will support you with this exercise.