

THE PURPLE INDIVIDUALIST

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 when your body feels 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 when 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 inquiry exercise.

THE OUTER LAYER: YOUR PERSONALITY & DESIRE TO BE UNIQUE

As a Purple Individualist, your core value is to be unique. You believe that if you are different to everyone else then you will be happy. The ways that you ensure being unique is by being a truly original and trend-setting artist. You have an uncanny knack for expressing through images, words or music what others are feeling but are unable to communicate. In this way, you can describe deep truths about the human condition and the profound mysteries of life. Compared with other types, you feel your emotions very intensely and have a sensitivity that makes you stand out. Your insightful nature leads those seeking a deep connection to covet your friendship. Passionate by nature and true to your feelings, you want to be perceived as uniquely authentic and you value the expression of authentic emotion and see yourself as sensitive, expressive and spiritual. You would like others to see you as idealistic, emotionally deep and compassionate. Your idealised image is that you are unique and authentic. Your strength lies in your capacity for emotional sensitivity and depth. You have the gift of being able to see what is going on with people on an emotional level.

Motivated by the need to understand and to be understood, you desire experiences that are rich with feeling and meaning and may find it easier to deal with painful emotions than to deal with the tedium of daily routine, often seeing the beauty in darker emotions that other types would rather not feel much less acknowledge.

Because you are relatively unafraid of strong emotions you can support others with great care and respect when they are experiencing painful emotions and your greatest strength is your ability to transform painful life experiences into profound opportunities for growth and healing. Believing that everyone is an individual and all emotions have value you are astute about human nature and can see and appreciate what is truly unique, special and rare. You have an intuitive ability to distinguish between subtle emotions that others often miss, identify what others need, what is missing and like a knight on a quest, you search until you either find or create it. Painfully self-conscious, you are often overly focused on how different you are from others and, with a tendency to over identify with your feelings, you can become too focused internally, easily getting self-absorbed and lost in a narrow band of emotions such as sadness, loss, melancholy and hopelessness.

In many ways, you seek happiness through pain, which is why you often seek out the pain of others either individually or globally and make this your cause.

THE OUTER LAYER: YOUR PERSONALITY & AVOIDANCE OF BEING ORDINARY

As a Purple Individualist, the ways you struggle to stay present are connected to your fear of being ordinary. You believe that if you are the same as everyone else you will be subjected to the same feelings everyone else experiences and you will become overwhelmed by them. Because of this your weaknesses and negative tendencies relate to the ways you ensure that you remain unique in all circumstances.

The Purple Individualist's drive is to crave what is missing, and you believe that through focusing on what is missing or wrong you will regain wholeness and connection. But this over-focus on what is flawed, broken or painful means you become convinced that you are lacking in some way, which prevents fulfilment and leads to patterns of self-destruction. Underneath, the Purple Individualist feels dissatisfied with who they are and this type represents the tendency we all have to develop an inferiority complex. This makes it difficult for you to feel good about yourself and often leads to sadness, hopelessness and melancholy.

In an attempt to deny your feelings of deficiency you will often recast yourself as being special or unique as a way of valuing yourself on a surface level, and when this is taken to extremes you can often appear grandiose. You have a hidden fear of being emotionally cut off and abandoned and can seek connections that are not necessarily good for you, and you will go to great lengths to avoid feeling lost, disorientated and without personal significance, meaning or direction. You avoid appearing to others as inadequate, defective or flawed and will often portray an outer appearance of strength that you don't really feel.

Craving ideal circumstances, or love, you often ruminate on what is missing and perceived to be important. You tend to worry that others may have a better deal, or are being recognised while your talents are being ignored.

Profound and insightful, you have an uncanny knack for transforming the dull and the ordinary into the exciting and extraordinary and have the artistic impulse that allows you to see the beauty in everything. Although it would be wrong to see all Purple Individualists as artists you have the temperament of one and long to freely express yourself and need to be seen as artistic, gifted and accomplished. You focus on your individuality and on carving your own distinct image.

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.