

# THE BLUE LOYAL GUARDIAN

## 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 a time 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 FOR HAPPINESS

As a Yellow Enthusiast, your core value is happiness. You believe that if you are 'happy' then you will be truly happy. The ways that you ensure you stay happy is by being fun-loving, vivacious, spontaneous and visionary. You want to be fascinating, fascinated, optimistic and enthusiastic. More importantly, you want to be stimulated, creative, positive and excited. You see yourself as visionary, curious and playful. You would like others to see you as interesting, sophisticated and fun loving. Your idealised image is that you are happy and joyful. Fun and exciting to be around you have a unique ability to lighten up a room, be playful, and inspire others with your quick wit, ready smile and high spirits. You are focused on the unlimited and exciting experiences that the future holds.

Friends value you and seek you out for your optimism and vitality. A charmed charmer, you are fascinated by people, places and ideas. Up-beat, positive and optimistic, you naturally cheer up and inspire others. Quick to laugh, with your natural humour you easily entertain people and you have a knack for avoiding and diffusing conflict. You are easily entertained.

Eternally young, you have the light-heartedness of a precocious child or court jester. Even if you are shy, you wish to be seen as a cool, hip trendsetter. You are engaging and spontaneous and are sought after in fields that require natural ability in marketing, communicating, and salesmanship. Your enthusiasm for many different callings creates a person who is a 'jack of all trades, but master of none.' You will often focus your attention on the best-case possibility, pleasant plans, and additional options, avoiding being bogged down by details. Outgoing and spontaneous, you love anything that is new, novel or unusual and as a free and creative spirit, you need to be free to follow your heart. You don't want to be stifled or locked into one career path so you may frequently leave behind one career to go after a new and exciting one.

An idealist and visionary, you strive to create a paradise on earth by sharing your vision of love, equality and freedom. An equalitarian, you enjoy people from all walks of life. As a result, you become very versatile and continually plan and enjoy looking at what is ahead. If life gets you down, you escape your anxiety and boredom through variety and activity. Because you are innovative, you can easily turn lemons into lemonade. Uneasiness is kept at bay by keeping busy with interesting and diverse. Seeking a positive future with unlimited possibilities, you believe that the sky is the limit. You value joy and variety and envision making the world a more delightful place.

## THE OUTER LAYER: YOUR PERSONALITY & AVOIDANCE OF UNHAPPINESS

As a Yellow Enthusiast, the ways you find it difficult to live in the now is connected to your fear of being unhappy or trapped in painful situations. You believe that if you are unhappy or are trapped in painful situations you will be overwhelmed. Because of this your weaknesses and negative tendencies are related to remaining happy at all times. The ways you do this is by focusing on ways of avoiding pain and suffering, frustrations, feeling trapped. This focus on avoidance tends to lead you to becoming easily distracted and fickle. Because you become quickly bored with your life and start to feel trapped or claustrophobic, you can become scattered in an attempt to divert from your current situation. A glutton for choice you often appear extravagant when looking for ways to have your cake and eat it too. This extravagant nature can also show up as you look to the future and the next pleasurable experience, trip or even the next meal. This future orientation causes you to continually plan in order to escape from your inner anxieties and introspection.. Always on the look- out for the BBD (bigger, better, deal), you need plans that are flexible and fluid.

You enjoy flexibility because it gives you the option to change your mind at the last minute. Your attention goes to a positive future, with multiple options, but you can become paralyzed by options because you are afraid of missing out. You may feel like a child running down the aisles of a toy store who is fearful of choosing one toy and missing out on the rest. Your vices are gluttony, overdoing and seeking stimulation until you collapse or become ill. In order for you to experience joy and fulfillment, it is critical that you follow through on your ideas by realising them. If your dreams remain unmet, you can become jaded, selfish and/or greedy. As you become increasingly self-indulgent and lose your sense of commitment and follow through, you can become flaky, letting commitments slide and people down. You can also be dogmatic and overly critical of others and if you have clamped down on your excessive ways, you may judge those who are mirrors of your indulgent past. Feeling incomplete or cornered, or missing out are among your deepest fears. You avoid boredom, sadness and emotional pain and fear limitation, feeling trapped or appearing inferior. You avoid painful emotions because you are afraid that you will become overwhelmed if you talk about or feel them. You also avoid negative people as they can bring you down. This can lead you to avoid the present by living in a future fantasy of plans.

# 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.