



INTROSPECTION

Your Spiritual Toolbox.

ABSTRACT

Self-examination is crucial in a spiritual life, as it allows us to understand our feelings, passions, and inclinations. Introspection helps us identify our purpose, how to achieve it, and the best path towards our goals. Your path of enlightenment begins with you and ends with you.

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Spiritual Toolbox

The Tool of Introspection

Self-examination is one of the most important duties when living a spiritual life. We desire to know ourselves and to become acquainted with our feelings, our passions, and our inclinations. Such introspection allows us the opportunity to see what we have done with our abilities and with our life.¹ What is your purpose? How shall you achieve your purpose? What is the best path toward your goal? These are the questions we need to examine, if not daily, then periodically. We must remember, if all things begin and end with the self or with the mind, meaning your mind, then all acts are motivated by the self, or you, in whatever form they manifest. This means that everything you do serves a purpose, serves a goal, and that goal or purpose is directly tied to you as an individual.

We have spent a great deal of time investigating spirituality. When turning to any of the Buddhist writings we are told that the path of enlightenment, in the Buddhist world, begins and ends with the self. The path of your enlightenment begins with you and ends with you. You have begun to explore yourself and expand your awareness. As your awareness continues to expand, it will envelope others. That was the first step. The second step is activity within the environment. We are talking more than just plants and animals, we are referring to those people who come into your world, who interact with you. They comprise your environment, and because you have no control over their behaviors, you must develop the ability to adapt to those behaviors,² because we do not adapt to ourselves. We must adapt to all that lies outside of us. The path of enlightenment, or rather the spiritual path, is not about developing yourself. The path of spirituality is about development through adaptation, specifically to those about you. No one can adapt to themselves because they do not change. You do not change, ever. However, change comes through motivation, and motivation comes from those people in your environment who encourage you to change, who discourage your present behaviors, who are concerned

¹ (Edmonds & Dexter, 1853)

² (Leifa, 1998)

about you, and who dislike you. They are all your teachers. There are four basic types of people. Those who desire to be confident. Those who desire to be competent. Those who desire to belong and those who wish to be valued.³ Which person are you?

Self-worth

The desire to be confident, competent, and valued are all connected. They all deal with self-worth, or self-esteem. There are a variety of definitions that describe self-esteem such as feeling valued, feeling worthy, and feeling accepted. Self-esteem has no cohesive theory as to what it is, how to maintain a healthy sense of worth, or even why you feel worthless. There is no adequate way to describe the role it plays. We only know that your sense of value is in constant flux. At any given moment, it can be high, or it can be low. We know that problems can plague those experiencing chronic low self-esteem, which is essentially feeling worthless most of the time. People such as this may feel they lack direction, lack competence, and are unsuccessful. The interesting thing is, while we like to say it all resides within you, the largest contributing factor to your sense of value resides outside of you. You do not necessarily make yourself feel good, and choosing to feel good is difficult. Therefore, we rely on others.

It is human nature to take our cues from those around us.⁴ While we like to say happiness is a choice, and in order to be happy you simply choose to be happy; it doesn't actually work that way. We can choose to be satisfied, but what is being satisfied? Satisfied resides somewhere between joy and dismay. Thus, the idea of simply choosing to be happy may be a misconception. We can choose to be satisfied, but unless we are acknowledged by another, we may not be happy. It's when we are validated by someone who says good morning to you or who smiles at you that you begin to experience happiness, other than that, it is utterly worthless to simply choose to be happy. Consider this. As you walk through a store casually looking at those you walk by, or those standing in your way, you are

³ (McKay & Fanning, 2000)

⁴ (Langdridge & Butt, 2004)

reading them. You gaze at their faces. You see their body posture. This is information you are taking in; judgements are being made, all of this is occurring below the threshold of consciousness. All of what you are seeing are cues that are automatically interpreted. You don't think about it because it's habit, and because it is habitual, the consequences of doing so don't register with you. At the same time, you have the option to say good morning, hello, or smiling at those very same people. They are doing the same thing you are. It could be you who is giving them false impressions, just as they are likely giving us false impressions.

Your self-worth is directly linked to your perception of others. Chances are very good that your perceptions have been conditioned⁵ throughout your entire life without you knowing about it. Try not to be taken aback by this accusation. Conditioning itself is not a dirty word. Self-awareness is about identifying these instances; recognizing that you are most likely providing a conditioned response. Self-awareness is the only thing that allows you to respond differently. Awareness allows you to give a response other than one that is conditioned. The challenge you face, as well as everyone else, is to choose to alter your perception, or to consciously evaluate a given situation. Sometimes this can be accomplished by changing your goals, other times it's recognizing that the negativity you may be experiencing is due to your perception of others, and not their actions.

How can you know if you are experiencing a low self-esteem event? If you feel you are continuously anxious, fearful, or have the need to withdraw from a situation, then the chances are your sense of value is being threatened. Of course, this is nothing to be alarmed about. We all experience this from time to time. However, if you happen to notice extreme behavioral or emotional reactions from others, such as anger and hostility, you may be dealing with someone who most likely experiences chronic self-esteem issues. You can help them by validating their concerns. How do you do this? You simply try to understand what they are experiencing. The best way to do this is by asking questions. The question not to ask is why are they acting in that fashion, or feel that way? The question you

⁵ (Lonnqvist, et al., 2009)

should consider asking is what can I do to help you, to alleviate your pain, or simply, what can I do?

If you ever wonder why you are acting in such a way, or why other people are reacting in certain ways, keep this in mind. People tend to act in ways that are consistent with their self-view.⁶ How do you develop self-view? Through the feedback of others.⁷ Believe it or not, we arrange ourselves in a way that accommodates others. We do this to feel accepted. There is no complex reason, no sophisticated theory. It is simply how we react to certain comments or around certain people. We tend to always act in ways that are consistent with ourselves. We form our view of ourselves based on our desire to belong. There's nothing wrong with this, it is natural. The only thing you can do is to become aware of your view of the world⁸ and your view of yourself. Through this awareness you can make changes that are more agreeable to your aspired version of yourself and feel more comfortable with those around you. It's as simple as that. We adjust our personality and our behaviors to accommodate those we prefer to be around. It has nothing to do with people pleasing or anything of that nature. It has everything to do with your desire to belong and be part of something that validates or acknowledges your existence.

If you are curious why you, or others, seem to find themselves at odds with people, here is something to think about. One of the mistakes we often make is that we never assume we are witnessing a series of meaningless behaviors.⁹ We assume people are like ourselves and we believe their actions to be the same response we would make. Thus, we mistakenly read too much or too little in the actions of others. In regard to ourselves, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. If you are unsure of the meaning behind someone's actions, take a moment and ask about it. Yes, it is as simple as that. Most of the problems we encounter in life are due to a lack of communication. Many of your problems can be resolved by simply asking for clarification. This is something most of us are too

⁶ (Swann, Change-Schneider, & McClarty, 2007)

⁷ (Bloch, 1993)

⁸ (Bloch, 1993)

⁹ (Langdrige & Butt, 2004)

embarrassed to do because if we should ask, then we assume the person we are asking will become angry because they may assume that we were not listening. Yes, this will happen. Try not to feel offended by it. Accept their response and continue to ask for clarification.

The need to be part of something.

How often do you wonder if you belong where you are? How often do you ask the universe where do you belong? While we may ask this question aloud the only one who can answer it is yourself. This is another example of self-examination. In order for you to determine where you belong. You must first determine where you are. We do that by asking questions, because what it comes down to is that you belong where your ideals are at.¹⁰ What are your ideals? They are your beliefs, how you see yourself, and how you view the world. You belong with those who are similar to you.

While your ideals tell you where you belong, they do not fulfill the need to belong. They point you in a direction and it is up to you to move in that direction or to remain where you are. The need to belong to something can only be fulfilled through contact with others. For you to belong, you must be accepted, and before you can be accepted by others you must first accept yourself.

Why do you seek others? You seek others because you desire approval. While many of us claim we do not need such approval, the only one who knows you are incorrect is yourself. The only deception you cannot see through is your own deception. Consider this, before you can be approved by others, you must be approved by yourself.

You have needs that must be satisfied. You have emotional needs, you have psychological needs, and these needs are separate from your physical needs. The way people describe these needs, or I should say, the way people describe this need, is a need to be loved. Thus, we come to this question, what is love? We have not addressed this

¹⁰ (James, 1902)

question because love is an individual definition. I can only provide you with my definition, and my definition is nurture. We desire to be nurtured, and in turn, we desire to nurture others. While this may not make sense to you now, eventually it will. You desire to be nurtured by others because when you are nurtured by others, you have been accepted, and you have been approved.

Along with this sense of belonging or this need to belong, there is this need for social acceptance.¹¹ This is more than just being accepted by another person. This is acceptance by a group of people, by a community. What composes a community? A group of people who have similar goals, similar beliefs, are independent of each other, and participate in discussions.¹² In short, they have chosen to nurture each other. Community is important. Community provides a sense of camaraderie. It is good to be in the company of others. It is good to be in the company of those who are similar to you. When we are not amongst people who are similar to us we begin to feel alone, and that aloneness encourages loneliness. Loneliness is a sense of no connections. Loneliness is a sense of powerlessness. Loneliness is a sense of helplessness. We do not like to experience these sensations because we are social creatures. The worst thing you can do to someone is to ostracize them, to isolate them. It is something worse than death.

We will all experience loneliness more than once in our lifetime, and we all must find ways to alleviate the pain. The only way to do that is to begin asking questions. One of the questions we may want to consider asking is, do you like yourself? If you do not like yourself, how can you expect others to like you? If you do not like yourself, then you must ask the question, what is it about myself that I do not like? We may say, I have no friends, no one likes me. It still comes back to you. Everything in this course has demonstrated that all aspects of your life center around you. How you feel about yourself, what you think about yourself, how you choose to see the world, all of that has an effect on you. The only way you are going to like yourself is to accept yourself. If you do not like what you see, what you have

¹¹ (Evaluating self-esteem in children, 2012)

¹² (Gruss, Abrahams, Song, Berry, & Al, 2020)

discovered, what you have uncovered in your explorations, then you must change it. The simplest way to initiate change is to choose not to respond, not to behave, not to act, not to think, not to be as you were yesterday. This is no easy task, but it must be done. If you want to belong, then you have to belong to yourself first. All of this contributes to your general well-being. If you do not like where you are. If those people you are with are different from you. Perhaps it is time for you to move on.

Introspection

We have explored some of the inner workings of your world. There are many more than just what we looked at, but these are the major influences upon your behaviors. Your self-worth and your need to belong are prime motivators for many of your responses. Now we consider introspection and why we should reflect upon what we have encountered, what we have done, and what we are about to do.

In the course of discovering tools to further or deepen your spirituality you may have learned a few things that are not necessarily tied to the tools themselves. For instance, these exercises may have awakened you to a different consciousness of reality, and you may have discovered that reality itself is a conscious development. Consider this, speculations are developing within the scientific realm along the lines of philosophy about the connection of the quantum realm, the realm of potentiality, with that of consciousness, and of reality. As part of their proposals, reality may be nothing more than the fluidness of the quantum realm, or the realm of potentiality, and the collective thoughts of all that is considered to be alive.¹³ This means that reality has no fixed point. You may ask about recorded history but the history we know and are familiar with is the history preferred by those in power. During what has been called ‘culture wars,’ history that is familiar to some is being rewritten to favor those in power. Thus, historical reality has no fixed point. It is

¹³ (Gornitz, 2017)

becoming clear through scientific insights that no area of reality can be understood without considering quantum theory, which focuses on probabilities and potentialities. One thing you may have learned about reality and the insights and certainties it offers regarding life is that it is best to expect change. You will never remain in one place for any given length of time. While it may seem as though you have been in a certain mental state for such a long time, when compared to the nature of reality, it is but a blip. You may have also learned that it may be best to detach yourself from certain entanglements. Meaning, to avoid suffering, it is pointless to grasp at something that is beyond your reach or may not even be necessary to move you forward. Existing within a culture of life that many of us have been conditioned to believe is that the measurement of one's life is determined by the possessions one may have. It is not the possessions that enhance life, it is the experience they may offer that enhances life. The experiences of life do not center around what is called material objects. The experience of life is exactly what it is intended to be, experiential, and through your discoveries you may have considered setting a new standard of conduct, a new standard of thought, and new goals. You may have changed your overall outlook of the life that exists around you, and in so doing, you have taken steps to change, to comply, but to embrace the experiences you foresee. Introspection allows you not only to look inward, but as you look inward you see your past, your future, and the potential of your present. It's not that you see these states of existence, but that you experience these states through your contemplations, through reflections, and through curiosity.

*As you go about your daily routine, as many of us do, there are points throughout the day, throughout the night, throughout the project you may be engaged in, that are natural points for introspection.¹⁴ These are points where you may search for opportunities to simplify your life, to expand your experience, or perhaps to deepen your understanding. These natural points offer you opportunities, and it would be prudent to take advantage of them. Through these reflections you not only discover, but your discoveries are reinforced. You will discover that the only Natural Law in nature that never changes is that change is

¹⁴ (Rinpoche, 1992)

the nature of all things.¹⁵ There is no permanence, regardless of how long it may appear to take for any sort of noticeable change to occur. Through these reflections, you may discover the futility of old habits and through this you may discover that in changing those habits new possibilities may unfold. You may discover that grasping and reaching for desires, objects, or wants that are elusive may be the source of your problems. Through these reflections, you may discover that nothing is independent from anything around it. You may discover that all people, all animals, all plants, all of nature exists through subtle relationships.¹⁶ You may also discover that this could not have happened any other way. You may also discover through reflection that, despite being conditioned to believe if you release something you will have nothing, letting go may be the path to true freedom.¹⁷ Do not mistake this from for disinterest or dispassion or aloofness, because the releasing of what you are clinging to and resisting the desire to reach for something else is merely recognition of a pattern. Not necessarily a pattern of suffering but a pattern that may not be beneficial. Through these reflections you may discover that we are all interdependent, particularly as the population density continues to increase. You may also discover that you are not able to resolve all of those issues you carry with you, all of those circumstances, events, and situations you carry around with you in the form of baggage, in the form of luggage, you may discover that you cannot release them without the assistance of others. Whether that assistance comes through visualization or face to face encounters, you need others to assist you in releasing those items, that baggage you carry around.

Self-dialogue

There are a variety of ways to engage in introspection. You can talk to yourself. You can write to yourself. Through these dialogues you may discover it would be best for you to

¹⁵ (Rinpoche, 1992)

¹⁶ (Rinpoche, 1992)

¹⁷ (Rinpoche, 1992)

seek professional assistance for those minor difficulties. Here are some approaches to consider.

The idea of talking to yourself has been inundated with comments or derogatory sayings along the lines of, you must be crazy or only crazy people talk to themselves. Fortunately, these colloquialisms are false. We all have some kind of an inner dialogue that is ongoing. Sometimes those whispers encourage us to do things. Other times those whispers discourage us, and like all other conversations, sometimes those whispers are just whispers. We all have this inner dialogue that is more or less continuous. Much of your self-image is built around these internal conversations, which often skew our version of life, or rather, provide us with a skewed perception of life. It is through these internal conversations that we manage to build mountains out of mole hills. The first rule you should keep in mind is that such dialogue is healthy, and that when you engage in this dialogue you should respond. You have the opportunity to maintain an optimistic view of life because it is not an independent voice communicating with you. This voice you hear is a reflection of your deepest thoughts, your deepest concerns.

Consider this. A 50 year old church attendee suggests speaking to your higher power. Now this is more than just prayer. This is a conversation they are encouraging you to initiate. This can be interpreted as speaking with God, Allah, Jesus, Buddha, or any other Identification you have given to a higher power. Of course, why might someone have a conversation with their God? Sometimes it's just for reassurance. Other times, yes, it is to provide a list of complaints. Typically, though, it is reassurance that is being sought. Prayer is communication; it is an internal dialogue.

When might be a good time for an internal dialogue? Those occasions when you recognize that you may have reacted poorly, and you feel the need to apologize, either to the person or to reconcile the event within yourself. When we talk about reconciliation, we are referring to forgiveness. Many are of the opinion that forgiveness is a natural principle. We have already determined that it is not because within nature there is no judgment. There is only judgment within civilization. Therefore, forgiveness is not a natural principle.

This does not mean that forgiveness has no value. Forgiveness is valuable to you. You may have a conversation with the one you have wronged in a meditative state, or merely relax and visualize the person as being there. When you are able to see their image, when you are able to experience their image, their presence, then you have an opportunity to resolve whatever is troubling you through a conversation. You present your side of the experience. Relax, and allow whatever words that come to mind, hear them through their voice, or whatever voice seeks to express itself to you. Think of this as their potential response. In this manner, the two of you can carry on a conversation, allowing you to reach a conclusion that is beneficial.

For the most part, though, our internal conversations center around ourselves. Your internal conversation centers around yourself. Sometimes there may be two voices, one voice maybe referred as the critical voice, pointing out all that you have done wrong. The other voice may be an inner coach, praising you for all that was done correctly. Unfortunately, our society has conditioned us to pay more attention to those aspects that are detrimental. Consider the news that is posted each day. The focus is always on what is potentially detrimental to your livelihood, to your lifestyle, to your experience of life. While these communications are useful, many become obsessed by it and through these obsessions they shape their vision of the world. Thus, it is only natural that your internal conversations focus on those topics that evoke a response triggering your behavior. Another thing for you to keep in mind is that you are continuously comparing yourself to others, whether you recognize this or not, it is an active part of your socialization. While this mostly takes place through the subconscious, there are times when our comparisons break through the subconscious and into the consciousness. Yes, there are times when you actively compare yourself to another. During these moments, the inner critic may point out all of your inadequacies. There's nothing wrong with comparing yourself to others. Generally, this is how we become inspired to do better. Although, you must be careful not to set standards for yourself that are out of reach. Sometimes, because there is so much conflict within us, we become focused on those imagined inadequacies, allowing the inner critic to lead us down a dark tunnel that becomes your life.

I'm not going to say it is better to focus on those things that are better because that is more pleasing, but I will say that, like all conversations that take place face to face, there are two sides to what you are experiencing. On the one side, which is your side, you consider better, and then there is that part you assume to be against you. If you accept that all conversations are biased, you will save yourself a lot of future grief. Providing both sides of a conversation within yourself is beneficial because whichever side is more persuasive will guide you in the direction you believe to be superior. Sometimes the inner critic is appropriate, just as there are times when the inner coach is inappropriate. Your inner critic may actually be beneficial because the critic is more likely to help you abide by your standards, abide by your decisions, and remind you of potential downfalls. Like all conversations you have participated in, you must use your own judgment and your own skills to reason which is the better advice. Foremost, the inner critic and coach are aspects of yourself. So, it will be difficult for either of them to mislead you.

Demons

Aside from our internal dialogue, there may be other aspects of our being that trouble us. We may call them demons because they seem to possess our life; they seem to control us. These demons may be better known as one of the various cancers, mental conditions, situations, people, circumstances, or any one of a variety of sufferings that exist. Your demons can take on these personifications. They may be conditions you are experiencing, people you feel are harassing you, or emotions that seem to plague you. They are anything that steals your power, demoralizes you, or does anything else that seems to paralyze you or prevent you from acting. Before you can work with demons you must identify them. You must recognize them. You must understand them, and sometimes you may even have to be their advocate.¹⁸ However, most of the time, the demons you face can be found in hope and fear, because they are twins, two sides of the same coin. They are

¹⁸ (Allione, 1998)

fear because they are unknown, and they are hope because you are led to believe that whatever is happening to you will work itself out, which it does, but not always in your favor.

Before you can communicate with your demon, you must first identify your demon. Sometimes it is easier if you give it a name. Sometimes it is easier if you draw pictures of it or associate it with an image, or some other representation recognized by you. The demons you seek within, that you seek to reconcile yourself with is often one of those dark, shadowy areas of your personality. The only way to discover your demon and to learn to work with it, to accept it, is to explore yourself and uncover it.

When listening to the spiritual rhetoric being espoused by people and by leaders, you may notice their focus is often on fear. We know fear exists; however, we have the option of choosing how to respond to that fear and how to identify that fear. If you were to look at fear and define it as an opportunity, then fear will not have a hold on it you. If you consider fear as something that is dangerous and overwhelming, then it will control you. To consider fear to be an opportunity, you must consider what evokes that response within you. Typically, we are fearful of what we do not know and the only way to alleviate that fear is to discover what it is that we do not know, to avail ourselves of additional information, or to seek additional training. These are the opportunities fear presents. However, if you focus on the unknown, and what the unknown may entail, then that fear controls you. It becomes a demon possessing you. Those demons that remain unknown, remain so because there is no further information to be gleaned from any source. To not know the cause of a condition can be detrimental to a person's sense of self and wellbeing. You may find yourself getting caught up in the question of why, instead of asking the question of what? Why is something occurring to you or why you have contracted a certain disease is of no consequence. Knowing its origin or why you have it tells you nothing. If you were to ask what can I do about this? What can I do to live with this condition? Then you have created an opportunity instead of digging a pit.

When you discover what is troubling you, what it is that has possessed your mind, it is often best to give it some form of identification.¹⁹ Give it a name. Give it a title. Give it a form. These identifications allow you to communicate, to converse with whatever possesses you. If your demon is fear, is there something you may not have considered? Is this demon, this fear, this deep seated emotion that has possessed your being also manifesting itself as a physical condition, such as chronic pain, headaches, illness, or any of a variety of other minor chronic conditions that often lead to debilitation. What do you do about it? You feed it. You become friends with your fear. You give it recognition, and as you get to know it, as you speak with it, as you converse with it, you learn what it needs. You must remember, all things within yourself, and all things that are about you are based on energy. Energy exists in a variety of forms and the demons you create are going to be of a mental and emotional energetic quality. The way you feed your demon is through your mental and emotional energetic states. If your demon wishes to be recognized, then that is what you do. You recognize it in all things. You feed it what it needs. If your demon requires nurturing, then you nurture that demon. What you will discover in doing this is that the demon will begin to dissipate. Many of the gurus tell us, wherever there is fear, send it love. They do not tell us how to do this, but if love is nurture, then to send love wherever you find fear, then you nurture that fear. This is how to do it.

In these conversations with your demon you will discover that your demon has a role to play, and that role is to inform you that something is amiss. There is nothing that occurs within your life of which you are not first informed. Whether you acknowledge what has been provided or dismiss it, you have been put on notice. Through your emotions, through your perceptions of the world, all of these tell you when something is erroneous. It is your responsibility to discover what has gone awry. This is one way you discover what that might be.

¹⁹ (Allione, 1998)

Journaling

We do not always have to talk or have internal conversations with our demons or our internal selves. When we have these internal conversations, they have an imaginative quality to them. Thus, it may be better for you to write things out, or if you do have your conversation, have it aloud so you can hear the words that are being said. Often what we think is different from what we speak and hear or read because it has become externalized. There are some schools of thought that suggest that if you give your internal critic or your demon an identity then you may be able to dismiss it or ignore it.²⁰ That may not work. In my experience it's often better to understand what is causing your distress than to simply dismiss the entire situation. Some of you may wonder where this internal critic came from. Well, there are a variety of theories. One may give credence to the Hindu and the Buddhist proverb that all is an illusion. Another theory suggests from the perspective of the internal critic, the only valid reality is the one you believe to be real. The most influential and intimate force that exists in the universe is the inner being. If your inner being is split with an inner critic and an inner life coach, then you are in need of reconciliation, and it is their role to aid you in doing this. However, before they can assist you, you must first, like everything else, recognize what is happening. When you become aware of what is causing the pain and suffering you are experiencing, then you have the power to reconcile it.

Another way of conversing with this inner critic, with this inner demon, is to write everything out. If you prefer to write a journal, then what you may be writing down has happened within a certain timeframe. Describing events in a journal gives you the opportunity to explore those events you may find troubling. As you do this through your journaling process, you include questions followed by opinions and potential solutions.

Another approach to this is to write yourself a letter. Address it like you would in any other letter; fill it with all that you are experiencing, including questions, thoughts, suggestions, and the like. Describe the motivations for your behaviors, thoughts, reactions,

²⁰ (McKay & Fanning, 2000)

and anything else that may be useful. When you sign the letter, sign it with love. Walk away from it for a few days. After a bit of time has passed, retrieve your letter, read through it, and respond to it. Address it to whom you are addressing and sign it from the person who is providing the information. If you choose different identities, that's fine. It all comes down to an exploration of the situation or that shadowy aspect of yourself. Through such explorations you begin to understand and with understanding comes comfort. With understanding comes confidence.

What does the most harm to us is our perception of the world and how we internalize it. We are conditioned to see the world in a particular fashion, and it is in this fashion that our difficulties develop. For many, the way to deal with potentially troubling information or potentially troubling situations is to avoid them. Avoidance is never something that is helpful. Avoidance leaves you blind, and not knowing often leads to fear and confusion. When you get caught up in this fear and confusion there is disharmony within yourself. There is disharmony in your internal world. This disharmonious internal environment may lead to disharmony without. It is only through disharmony that we experience misery and seek some sort of recourse. Very often the solution to your troubles is yourself. If these methods are unable to assist you, then consider discussing them with someone, anyone, and if you are distrustful of them, consider a mental health professional. For you to dismiss any kind of aid demonstrates a preference for the struggles you are experiencing. Remember, life is not about struggle. Life is about exploration and satisfaction.

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