

The Numinous Journey

*How to Infuse More Joy and Meaning
into Your Daily Life After Age 60*



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overfiftyandfit.com

A Fantastic Life After 60

*You can leverage your experience and wisdom
into increased happiness and health.*

Would you be surprised to know that – even after age 60 – there are hidden parts of yourself that you have yet to discover?

These hidden aspects of yourself are like personal-growth jewels, and when you unearth this treasure you can experience a deeper, more soulful, more satisfying life in the final third of your lifespan.

This report is different from our others.

For starters, this is for people who are approaching, or have surpassed, their sixtieth birthday.

Also, the main intention of this report is to provide **inspiration** as you begin your journey into this particular part of your life. It's intended to get you thinking – to get your creative juices flowing.

However, for those of you who are more pragmatic-types, we also provide links throughout this report that forward you to practical how-to's and action steps.

We hope you find this 35-page report helpful and motivating.



Each night, while asleep, we dream.

Whether or not we remember our dreams when we wake up in the morning, we were still dreaming the night before.

If we're able to remember our dreams the next morning, and we spend time tending those dreams, it can – over time – have a positive, meaningful impact on our lives.

Our dreams can help us to experience more happiness, make better decisions, and set better goals.

Dreams allow us to move beyond our daily strivings toward basic survival and into the realm of self-reflection and understanding.

What Your Dreams Reveal about the Mythic Energy of Your Own Life

Sometimes, in our day to day lives, we get in a rut. Our conscious minds set to auto-pilot.

However, when we tend to the images and feelings within our dreams, we're inviting the numinous.

We're returning color into the black-and-white of our daily lives.

Many of us think of our dreams as little more than some bizarre form of storytelling that has gone way off script, but if given a chance to offer up their **wisdom and perspective**, we find that dreams can help us access a fuller appreciation for all that we both celebrate and reject within ourselves.

You Are More than Just Your Personality

The process of dreaming is actually going on all of the time. However, when we close our eyes and go to sleep, the sounds, images, and sensations of dreams are able to be heard – reminding us of another form of intelligence which is at work.

It is like our dreams are the stars in the heavens. They twinkle just as brightly when our sun is shining as they do when the moon crests in the sky. The only difference is our ability to notice them.

“Dreams pertain to the symbolic dimension of human experience as a whole. Thus, dreams may occur in sleep where we are accustomed to look for them; in waking states where we find ourselves living out the symbolic aspect of life; and in the twilight states that are between the state of sleeping and waking.” ~ Ira Progoff

James Haggen writes that, “dreams enable us to something better in this life, something fine. If we look into our dreams, we see that something wonderful lies within our grasp. Something not quite tangible, something not quite of this world, but something all the same most marvelous.”

When we work with our dreams they respond by awarding us **unimagined gifts** and offer to heal our wounds.

“They reveal the fundamental matters: our destiny; the unseen reason for the fact that we are here. They slay the life already dead and lead us on to what is yet alive. They deliver us to spirit,” explains Haggen.

Your Mind Has an Unconscious, Too

Dreams emanate from our imagination – the landscape of symbol, image, and metaphor.

This is why, as Robert Bosnak points out, our dreams are uneasy within our waking consciousness. “We have stolen the dream from its nocturnal domain” and so, “Every dream requires a switchover into dreamlike consciousness that can follow the dream world.”

This, he explains, comes as a shock to daytime consciousness which fumbles with a logic that feels intrinsically incomprehensible.

Here are five ways that you can use your own night dreams to increase daily joy and meaning in your life.

1. Play with the Images in Your Dreams

The conscious mind will move to compartmentalize the dream with a quick, literal interpretation.

But the conscious mind likes words and uses them frequently to communicate.

However, the funny thing about **the unconscious mind**, is that words are often not its primary form of communication.

Instead of words, the unconscious mind often prefers images to communicate.

So in a dream, water is often not water.

Sex is often not sex.

A house is often not a house.

And (despite the famous quip credited to Freud) sometimes in a dream, a cigar is not just a cigar.

Depending on your own personal or cultural associations, a cigar within a dream could symbolize power, or intrusiveness, or joy, or a penis.

As another example, if you dream that you are standing knee-deep in water, after you wake up you might be tempted to think that dream was about water.

But the water might represent something different to you than just literal water.

It might symbolize imperfection, or depth, or the unknown.

It may be a symbolic response to an earlier thought you had or action that occurred the day before.

As another example, if you have a dream at night that you are having sex with someone, the sex may not represent literal sex.

Instead, sex in that dream may act as a symbol for something other than physical intercourse – such as **anxiety**, vulnerability, intimacy, or who-knows-what.

What sex symbolizes to you in that dream, might depend on your own personal, historical associations with sex and with what's going on in your daytime life currently.

Sometimes a dream image has a collective meaning.

For example, often when people dream of a house, the structure of the house symbolizes their own psyche.

On the other hand, what a particular image symbolizes might not always be collective – it might be as unique as your own personal associations with that symbol. So, for you, dreaming about a house may not represent your psyche, but instead represent what a house means to you based on your own unique life experiences and associations.

2. Listen for Puns

If your unconscious mind does use words to communicate with you in a dream, it will often do it in the most symbolic way possible. Such as, with the use of puns.

I once had a dream that I was on stage performing and someone requested that I sing a song from the rock band Journey.

When I woke up the following morning, at first I remembered the dream in a very literal way. But after reflecting on the dream a few minutes, I began to realize that in the dream, the stage was not a literal stage, and "Journey" was not a rock band.

More about this dream later – the point for now is, my unconscious was trying to tell me something.

In general, when reflecting on your own dreams the following morning, it's a good idea to **avoid the impulse** for swift solutions, as that's not the nature of a dream's delivery system.

Dream wisdom requires a space to speak to you from all directions.

According to Bosnak, one way of accomplishing this is by listening to the dream with “half an ear” while simultaneously tracking the terrain of your wandering mind as you recount the dream.

Just as in our waking state, there are aspects of ourselves which we do not feel comfortable giving our **full attention**.

Our dreams do not completely disengage this impulse, and when we feel resistance we can realize that we have happened upon some rich fodder of further self understanding.

The most sensitive images are protected by a hedge of resistances that keeps the emotional force of the images away from your ordinary consciousness.

This is a way of keeping at bay emotions that do not fit your habitual self image.

The places where we get stuck or feel bored or distracted may, if allowed to unfold, help us to gain a more holistic appreciation for the richness of who we are.

Hagan explains that each dream holds information that is longing to be known.

Dreams have the uncommon ability to create a connection between our awareness and what lies hidden within, “a link that early on was natural, but was broken during childhood. Dreams repair the break. Dreams restore the system to its original integrity,” says Hagan.

However, he also notes that working with ones dreams is not always a gentle labor. “It can be a heavy and a bitter task. It tests your mettle to the last degree. It strips the bones and bakes the flesh. But it takes you to surprising places, and it leads to revelation.”

There are likely those who believe that dream work holds no potential (for the simple fact that they cannot remember their dreams).

Many of us have taken little time over our lives to tune into the world of dreams, save the unusually alarming ones that leave such a strong imprint that cannot help but carry them into our day.

The effect of not paying attention to our dreams is that they stop speaking to us.

Fortunately, like **a truly understanding friend**, they have a forgiving nature.

When we begin to reach out to them, we find they are there to meet us again.

3. Become Curious about Your Dreaming

Aizenstat explains that there are multiple ways to remedy the lost ability to remember your dreams, one of which is to simply become curious about them.

When we “befriend the whole notion of listening to dreams” our ability to recollect them is naturally recalled, says Aizenstat.

In a similar fashion, Hagan realizes that when we begin to comprehend the importance of our dreams they begin to flow to us more freely.

He likens dreams to small diamonds or pieces of gold that deliver priceless bits of wisdom.

When we tune into this truth – the truth of the beauty which lies just behind the glare of the sun – we overcome that which blinds us to their knowing.

4. Keep a Dream Journal on Your Nightstand

Another way to encourage dream recollection is to dedicate a journal for writing them down.

Dream-journaling emphasizes the fact that you are interested in knowing the world of your dreams and they will respond in turn.

The contents of your dream journal do not just have to be the linguistic telling of the dream.

They can also include representations of the dream, such as symbols or figures which can be drawn or painted.

You can also write about the feeling that the dreams inspire and where these **feelings reside in your body**.

In order to help the process of dream recall, Aizenstat also recommends that you say, “tonight I am going to remember my dreams” three times as you go to sleep.

Again, this is another way to alert your dreams that you are on the look out for them and are willing to take notice if they will wait for you – rather than slipping back into the darkness of the night.

Perhaps because they cannot fully expand under the glare of the sun, dreams have a tendency to meet our awareness at the earliest moments of our waking each morning.

So the most likely place to summon them is the state that rests **between wake and sleep** – the liminal space.

If we can allow ourselves to awaken gently unperturbed by the screaming insistence of an alarm clock, “we will find them still lingering in our memory, waiting there for us to come for them,” explains Aizenstat.

It may begin as a simple perception of a residual mood or solitary image left over from the night’s theater, but if you take note and give it your attention more aspects of the whole will slowly begin to emerge.

Our dreams will occur whether or not we allow them to speak to us, but speaking to us is their exact purpose.

And when we move towards our dreams, they will respond in kind.

5. Decipher the Dream Messages

Hagan recommends that after we have remembered our dreams and then given them form (either through word or image) we must then learn to decipher them.

“We must extract the message from the medium” glimpsing the core “of who we are and can become” says Aizenstat, who also notes that when we tend to our dreams it is not necessary to interpret or analyze them:

- we must simply be present with a dream. By doing so, we allow the dream to open itself – to spring into life and reveal its wisdom;

- when we sit with our dream, without insistence, we allow the images within to take shape and offer up their teachings;

- likewise, we must understand that the images held within dreams are not necessarily intended as literal representations;

- dream images tend to be symbolic, holding a multitude of possibilities;

- our work is to determine which meaning or idea is able to fit our experience and offer **something of relevance**;

- and our final (and most critical) task is to respond to what has come into our awareness. To make a choice, a decision, a shift, based upon what we have now come to understand.

Like the exploration of our selves through mythology and meditation, dream work becomes more transformative with time and attention.

What we do to our dreams, they return to us.

With all of these modalities, there are more nuanced approaches to be investigated and integrated (and you are encouraged to seek these out).

What has been provided here is just meant to be an open door – an invitation to call the work in and to see if you are roused by what it has to say.

Each night, we dream.

The following morning we can reflect on those dreams and, in tending to their images and secret messages, **untangle our illusions** and increase our contentment and clarity.

Your Unconscious Mind Is Trying to Tell You Something Important

Myths and dreams provide us with an opportunity to move beyond the blur of the everyday.

When we invite myths and dreams into our awareness, they permit us to peer behind the curtain and explore a knowing that stretches beyond the limits of our five senses.

Stephenson Bond explains:

- Myths and dreams carry the potential to draw us into their depths where we have a chance of being roused from our slumber.
- They are able to awaken us because they do not speak in the dialect of the mundane.
- They speak in the language of our soul.

- They insist on fluidity by enlisting metaphors, imagery, and symbols which naturally defy attempts at linear categorization.
- When the rational mind tries to catch a symbol in the bright light of reason, it burns away like overexposed film.

If you hope to unearth the cache within their layered meaning you must **relax your need for certainty and allow yourself to play** in their fields of shifting possibility.

Symbolism is one of the dialects of myth and dream which makes it possible to access a deeper level of awareness within one's consciousness.

Symbols are depictions of concepts or ideas and have the ability to emblematically translate their quality or meaning.

Bond states that symbols can arouse a sense of frustration – because of their innate ability to defy our attempts at distinct classification.

“In a profound way, a symbol is intolerable to objective consciousness. Our way of ‘knowing’ tends to strangle what it grasps, so that the recognition of an unknowable factor tends to collapse,” explains Bond.

Symbols do not tolerate foregone conclusions and only offer up their **potentialities** in an environment that is free of an insistence on certainty.

In a similar fashion, metaphors also rebel against the urge to affix them with any sureness.

“Metaphor is play. It never lets itself quite get hardened, so that through it we have an opening to what is possible,” said Bond.

Joseph Campbell further defines the character of metaphor by saying that it “is an image that suggests something else – the actuality that hides behind the visible aspect. The metaphor is the mask of God through which eternity is to be experienced.”

When we’re repressing something important – something essential to our uniqueness and life path – it activates the unconscious.

If we’re stubborn in our **repression**, something in the unconscious will act out.

Before that, however, our unconscious mind will try to communicate with our conscious mind about the repressed material.

The language of the unconscious mind is not usually words (that’s mostly the language of the conscious mind).

The language of the unconscious mind is often: pictures.

One exception to this is: puns.

The unconscious mind will sometimes use puns in an attempt to use our conscious mind’s language.

That dream of mine that I mentioned earlier, that was at age 21. In that dream, I was asked to go onstage and perform a song by the rock band Journey. I walked on stage and had a moment of disorientation. “*Am I nervous?*” I wondered. “*Do I remember why I’m here?*”

Then I woke up.

As I remembered the dream over the following week it occurred to me that “Journey” was more about my own Journey than it was a literal reference to the actual rock band.

Having just become a legal adult, some deeper part of me was feeling the call to begin this new leg of my life’s journey.

Incidentally, that part of my journey was to be as much internal as external. I spent the next twenty years as an explorer.

Metaphors also allow us to move beyond the concept of fixed duality and into the possibility of transmutation.

David Miller describes this capability by saying that, “metaphors...are the juxtapositions of dissimilar things so as to show their similarity. They are the means whereby polarities touch and transform each other.”

Metaphors allow us to give expression to what otherwise defies direct explanation or knowing.

Weller Embler highlights this dynamic using the example of art and its ability to convert one’s inner experience into metaphor, “Metaphor allows one to **express what cannot otherwise be spoken**. The artist is saying one thing in the guise of another. He does not, indeed cannot, speak directly of the life within.”

Like symbols and metaphors, images also have the unique capacity to offer themselves as guides which are able to escort us to the realm of fluid meaning.

“It is our imaginal capacity (our ability to form images which carry energy) that constructs the requisite bridges to those infinite worlds which otherwise lie beyond our rational and emotional capacities,” wrote James Hollis.

Image holds the possibility of all things without ever advancing an absolute truth.

Images, as Mircea Eliade notes, “are not irresponsible creations of the psyche; they respond to a need and fulfill a function, that of bringing to light the most hidden modalities of being.”

Symbol, image, and metaphor are the language of our source self.

They speak in the tongue of possibilities and prospective forms that are impervious to attempts at literalization.

However, if we suspend our need for stasis and tangible understanding we can use the language of dreams and myth to open to the possibility of a **fuller emergence** of our selves.

One way to wade into these waters is to discover our own reflections within the symbols, images, and metaphors of myth.



how to use
myth
to your advantage

It might seem that fables are just simple stories, offering little more than a fleeting distraction from our daily lives.

When we look closer though, we see that these myths speak to a universal experience – an expression of a collective or individual event.

A myth is speaking to something much deeper than race, geography, gender, or religion. It's accessing the very kernel of humanity itself.

“Myths and legends are stories of our search through the ages for truth, for meaning, for significance; [they let us] touch the eternal, to understand the mysteries, to find out who we are.” — Joseph Campbell

Yes, myths, legends and fables are shaded by the details of specific language, custom, and culture (indeed their particulars are specific to the regions and people from which they arise); however, the making of myth is a practice that is common to all of human kind.

Perhaps this is because myths speak to our longing to make meaning of our lives and to **connect to our possibilities**.

Myths remind us of the wonder and alignment with the divine that lies within and beyond – hidden from view only by our own learned blindness.

Ira Progoff notes that myths touch upon, “what is ultimate in man and in his life, expresses it symbolically, and provides an inner perspective by which the mysteries of human existence are felt and entered into.”

Myths energize. They are alive by nature and if we allow them to breathe, to whisper, to sing – even to bellow their knowing – something within ourselves awakens.

In myths we invite in the possibility – we inspire the wonder of the child – that dynamic energy of awe and mystery which allows us to remember our own knowing.

Joseph Campbell says that, “Myths inspire the realization of the possibility of your perfection, the fullness of your strength, and the bringing of solar light into the world” and “are infinite in their revelation.” They are, “the common strains of a single symphony of the soul.”

When we align with the energy of myth we remember to seek out what has been lost – what has been buried under the details of life.

Myths can stir us to our bliss, to the energy and excitement which leads us to our purpose.

Many of us have auctioned off our dreams for the promise of someone else’s vision.

But as Campbell warns, “If the person insists on a certain program, and doesn’t listen to the demands of his own heart” he risks nothing less than his own psychological undoing.

If a myth persists throughout time it is not by mere chance but, rather, because it still has something to say.

There is a collective recognition that happens when a story touches upon a universal experience or longing.

We are unwilling to cast it off because it still holds wisdom and mystery that offer to teach us something we have somehow forgotten.

To help explore the ways we can unlock the potentially revelatory treasures hidden within myths, here are two potent myths that have survived from ancient Greece.

1. The Legend of Medusa

Medusa was one of three Gorgons (beings whose origins lie in the depths of the earth) all of whom were sisters.

In one version of the myth, it is said that she and her sisters were once incredibly beautiful and boasted of this fact often, even claiming to be more stunning than the gods themselves. Medusa felt that her crowing glory was her auburn hair which she tended to with great care.

Things may have remained as such for Medusa and her sisters had one of her suitors not been the mighty God of the Ocean, Poseidon. Taken by her

beauty Poseidon arranged for a tryst with Medusa in one of the temples of the virgin goddess Athena.

Upon hearing of the desecration of her temple, Athena transformed the sisters of Gorgons into hideous monsters, adding particular insult to Medusa by turning her once beautiful locks into a mass of writhing and hissing snakes.

If any should be unfortunate enough to glance upon Medusa and her sisters they would be turned instantly to stone.

The Greek hero Perseus eventually beheaded Medusa by using a bronze shield (gifted to him by Athena) as a mirror so that he could gaze upon Medusa without perishing. Perseus made a gift of Medusa's head to Athena who put it on her own shield.

When Perseus beheaded Medusa she spontaneously gave life to the two offspring she was carrying. Of her offspring, sired by Poseidon, one was Pegasus – the divine white winged horse – the other was Chrysaor (meaning golden sword) who took human form.

So how does (or can) the story of Medusa, crafted thousands of years ago, still find resonance in our **modern life**?

What can this compelling and enduring mythological tale tell us about who we are and what mysteries lie beyond our everyday understanding?

There is no one answer to these questions and there is certainly no right answer, only possibilities.

In order to host the potency of myths, and their ability to remain fluctuating and fluid, we must allow them to respond to the observer and his or her **personal story**, experience, and understanding. We must allow them to speak to both the individual and the collective, without anchoring them with ownership or insistence upon predetermined meaning.

One approach to doing this is by asking open-ended questions rather than promoting theories.

We can ask questions that let potential hover – neither forcing the myth to rise into the air of the intellect nor permitting it to fall into the ground of absolute truth but rather allowing it to expand around us, revealing potentials we hadn't yet considered.

Keeping this in mind, let's engage the myth of Medusa and see what she offers up in this moment, knowing that if we choose to return to her another time, all things may seem changed.

One fascinating aspect of Medusa's story is the ability it has to hold the possibility of many seemingly opposing forces.

Medusa (at least in some versions of the story) begins her life as a maiden whose beauty inspires intense desire and animosity.

Then there is the image of Medusa as monster, capable of creating statues of those who have the misfortune of allowing their eyes to come to rest upon her:

- what can these opposites of the spectrum tell us about our own nature?

- in what ways do we embody both beauty and terror (and its subsequent immobilization) as potentials in our own lives?
- is there a way to hold up a mirror so that we might peer upon the unsavory parts of ourselves without feeling powerless or destroyed by them?
- how do we find a way to decapitate the illusion of black and white, good or evil, corruption or redemption as singular and compartmentalized truths so that a more holistic understanding can be attained?
- when we remove the mask of our fixed nature what prospects emerge?
- for Medusa two possibilities sprang forth; how many lie within us, buried underneath the burden of set perception?
- what masks, illusions, notions about our selves serve as impassible guards to a fuller knowing of possibility and potential?
- how does that which terrifies us, keep us from **fulfilling our promise**?
- what are the mechanisms in our lives that act like our own Perseus?
- what people or events have split us open – initiating the process of change, even if by means of suffering – so that new potentials have had room to emerge?
- what does it feel like to be required to endure a cycle of death and rebirth within ourselves – to allow one aspect of ourselves to die so that another dream has room to emerge?

The point of engaging myth is not to come to a solid knowing, but to lessen the inflexibility of our assumptions.

If we think we have “the answer” we may have lost sight of **the greater gift** of understanding that still awaits.

Instead of announcing the “truth” of your discovery, take note of what has arrived at your doorstep – training yourself not to shut the gate on the other possibilities waiting to be witnessed.

2. The Legend of Midas

Another myth that continues to pique the interest of many is that of King Midas.

Like the myth of Medusa, the myth of King Midas has also been told in a variety of ways throughout time.

Midas was a famed king of the city of Phrygia.

One day a beloved satyr of the god Dionysus, wanders (intoxicated) into King Midas’ rose garden where he falls fast asleep.

When the situation of the satyr is brought to the King’s attention he decides to host the satyr with great kindness and generosity over a number of days.

The King eventually reunites the satyr with Dionysus, who offers to reward King Midas with one wish.

Without much forethought, the King requests that whatever he touch turn to gold.

At first King Midas is overjoyed with his new found ability.

Unfortunately, he soon learns that it is not only objects which transform under his touch; it is everything – including his daughter, Zoe.

The devastated King breaks down in fear and mourning for what he has wrought.

The Gods take mercy upon him and tell him to wash his hands in the river Pactolus.

As he does this, the power of the gold leaves his hands and flows into the river.

King Midas is left feeling overcome with gratitude for all that he has – those things that life had already given him:

- so what can this myth, its message lingering for thousands of years, help us understand about ourselves?
- what does it speak to, collectively and individually, which compels us to return to it?
- what, within us, reflects the nature of Midas?
- what, within us, is able to recognize the transformative potential of hosting an extension of the divine?

- what moves us towards harnessing transformative potentials before developing an understanding of their potency?
- what, in this myth, speaks to the place within us that longs for the alchemical transmutation, while reminding us of the danger of skipping the accompanying step of reformed understanding?
- in what ways have our society and our personal lives become like King Midas – well-intentioned but insatiable – transforming all that we survey without first considering the possibility of what those changes might bring?
- in our individual lives, do we resemble this figure? Do we, too, alter our physical environment, sacrificing what is most important in the process?
- how do we create devastation and find redemption in the realm of our inner divine?
- how do we allow the yearnings of our sense self to override the knowing of our source self?
- when this happens, why do the relationships and energies in our lives become static?
- and how do we breathe life back into them?
- how do we allow the river to wash clean our misperceptions so that we are reminded of what truly sustains us?

Many of us may see myths as just entertaining tales, another way to amuse our minds with the unusual story telling of the ancients.

Myths, though, have the possibility of being more than that.

They provide us with an opportunity for introspection and resonance with parts of our selves which we may have repressed.

These two myths can continue to help us understand our own strivings and our own nature – how they are capable of fostering a deeper and more holistic sense of ourselves, and how they permit us to make meaning of our shared experience with all of humanity.

Myths and legends have the ability to remind us of our collective effort to realize our fullest potentials.

They can inspire us to become more balanced – and therefore also become better and happier people.

You are encouraged to find a myth (or myths) that speaks to you and explore what it reveals about your hidden self.

How Meditation Can Change How You Think About Yourself

To begin the journey of self-actualization requires a shift in mindset – to step out of what we think we know, and who we think we are, so that we can come to a broader awareness of our true inner nature and potential.

There is an aspect of our self that relies on our five senses to make meaning of all we observe and feel.

The sense self, understandably, is always shifting – continually being shaped by its perception of its experience.

Anxiety is produced when the sense self sees and reports back with its version of the three-dimensional life it believes you live.”

However, there is another aspect of our self that arises from our source which, unlike the sense self, already exists in its entirety.

How to Realign with the Very Best Parts of Yourself

The source self is not coming into being, it is not in the process of evolution, its existence is not dependent on the story of this lifetime – it has existed long before and will continue to exist long after.

Perhaps the most difficult, yet most critical, challenge of one’s life is to align with one’s source self – to continually touch upon and return to the reality of who you are beyond the story line of this life.

The predicament though, is that the sense self is what most of us mistake for the whole of who we are:

- we think we are our profession
- we think we are a character within a relationship – be it mother, son, friend, or enemy
- we think we are our nationality, race, and gender.

We forget that the stage – its costumes and characters – are only temporary states of being; they are not who we are and they aren't capable of holding the expanse of our true nature.

They are merely a sliver of a shadow of its reality. The sense self is at the mercy of the undulations of everyday life.

Though we would like to think of the sense self as solid, it is in fact rather malleable – often being pushed, pulled, thrown high, and then plunged low by the whims of the day.

By investing yourself in only this aspect of your knowing, you miss the opportunity to draw on resources that emerge from a more transformative place of awareness.

Anxiety is produced when the sense self sees and reports back with its version of the three-dimensional life it believes you live.

It can fill you with uncertainty, denying you a sense of deeper meaning.

When you change your lens, you can begin to find calm; you can begin to look upon life's currents as potentials rather than fixed happenings imposed from the outside.

When you stay aligned with your source self, the typically swelling streams of insecurity do not become raging rivers that carry you away.

A question then to ask your self is *“Am I feeding the river, or, am I feeding the source?”*

Both can carry you but only one knows the way home.

This One Habit Will Change How You See Yourself Forever

Meditation is an exceptional method for growing ones connection to and awareness of the source self.

Unfortunately, the practice of meditating is not one that most of us in the West grew up knowing much about or having a chance to witness up-close during our formative years.

We may have only a dim understanding of its purpose or benefits.

Meditation readies you to relinquish what is of no importance and helps you look upon others with love.

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana Refers to meditation as “The Great Teacher.”

He says that meditation is like a cleansing fire which transforms us by allowing us to understand.

It alters us, making us into an ideal teacher or parent.

Meditation, he says, readies you to relinquish what is of no importance and helps you look upon others with love.

You become capable of doing this because you have come to understand others as you now understand yourself.

You have **plumbed your depths**, and have faced your own failings and illusions, making it possible to forgive yourself and empathize with others.

Through meditation, our perspective becomes more aligned with who we truly are.

It is a practice that brings our conscious awareness into relationship with our source self.

It opens us to our true nature which is also the nature of all mankind.

Meditation enables us to relinquish our quest for (the illusion of) perfection so that we can begin to grow our **sense of compassion** for all that we are (even the darkness we have worked so mightily to hide from ourselves and others).

Once we are able to accept and have compassion for all that resides within us, we become able to extend this attitude towards others.

We stop compartmentalizing everything into the arenas of good and bad as we see more clearly the collective suffering and strivings of our selves and of humanity.

Meditation also gives us a means of being present with the ache of emptiness that we all inevitably feel from time to time.

Make Room for the Mystery

The practice of meditation allows us to learn to sit with that universal experience of feeling lost and void-of-meaning that occurs during certain moments, or periods, in our lives.

It teaches us to make room for the mystery within that perception so that something else has room to emerge.

Typically, when we have these sorts of feelings, we avoid confronting them, by whatever means possible.

It seems as though these feelings have the potential to upend the very balance of our existence.

Meditation gives us the ability to host these unnerving emotions and to invite in the opening of a **new awareness**.

Mark Epstein describes this process when sharing his own experience with meditation. He says that without meditation, specifically without its ability to cultivate nonjudgmental awareness:

“I could never have done the unimaginable thing of looking into my own emptiness. I could not have tolerated that degree of aloneness nor would I have been willing to drop my compensatory mind. Meditation gave me faith that there were other techniques of self-exploration than the analysis of my thinking mind. It gave me a way of getting back to the secret room of my dreams.”

Meditation also gives us the unequalled gift of being able to move beyond the self-defeating traits of our personality, the ones that defy our best efforts to act in accordance with the kindness and compassion we are capable of.

Each time we devolve into a state of rage, anger, or jealousy, it rips through us like tornado and we feel as though we are witnessing our ability to change being flung far and wide.

When these moments occur we may feel defeated, as though these emotions are simply who we are... as though we don't have the **personal strength** to overcome them.

This is, truly, not the case.

We simply need an effective method of divesting ourselves of these negative upswells.

We need to pull back from the illusion that things are fixed in place and we have no choice but to be who, and how, we are in this moment.

Meditation is thought by many to be unequalled in its capacity to help us do just that.

Mattieu Richard notes that people become confused and believe that their unique blend of characteristics and even emotional unrest somehow comprise the very essence of who they are.

These people worry that to take away any ingredient from the recipe of what makes them an individual would be to deprive them of an elemental aspect of themselves.

He points out that this flawed reasoning often leads them through a cycle of unending dissatisfaction.

Gunaratana explains that, even for those of us who strongly desire change, it is not enough to just hope that it will somehow magically grace our lives.

Something of ourselves must be invested if we want to realize our vision of transformation.

We have spent much of our lives investing in habits that are opposed to those we are trying to cultivate through meditation.

Disengaging from these habits takes determination and even strategy.

That said, the effort required is a good investment, for as Richard warns:

“our negative character traits tend to persist if we do nothing at all to change the status quo...if we just let our habitual tendencies and automatic patterns of thought perpetuate and even reinforce themselves...”

The good news is that you can indeed challenge these patterns and you do not have to resign yourself to the “fate” of your existing inclinations.

Meditation can be a path out of the wilderness of our own impulses and confusion.

This **internal work** tends to have the net-result of producing more moments of daily serenity – and feelings of increased purpose and meaning.

Perhaps best of all, it produces more moments of joy.

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