

# Inner Awareness - Internal Census

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"We have a feeling place (stored emotional energy), and an arrested ego-state within us for an age that relates to each of those developmental stages. Sometimes we react out of our three-year-old, sometimes out of our fifteen-year-old, sometimes out of the seven-year-old that we were.

If you are in a relationship, check it out the next time you have a fight: Maybe you are both coming out of your twelve-year-olds. If you are a parent, maybe the reason you have a problem sometimes is because you are reacting to your six-year-old child out of the six-year-old child within you. If you have a problem with romantic relationships maybe it is because your fifteen-year-old is picking your mates for you.

The next time something does not go the way you wanted it to, or just when you are feeling low, ask yourself how old you are feeling. What you might find is that you are feeling like a bad little girl, a bad little boy, and that you must have done something wrong because it feels like you are being punished."

Quote from Codependence: The Dance of Wounded Souls{/xtypo\_info}

In the first article in this series (Inner child healing - How to begin) I spoke about the importance of becoming aware, of raising our level of consciousness. It is vitally important to start observing our own internal process in order to start becoming aware of when we are reacting.

Once we get aware that we are reacting, then we can start figuring out where our reactions are coming from - do an internal census as it were. Anytime we have a strong emotional reaction to something or someone - when a button is pushed and there is a lot of energy attached, a lot of intensity - that means there are unresolved emotional wounds from the past involved.

It is the inner child who feels panic or terror or rage or hopelessness or desperate loneliness, not the adult. The more we can get aware of our "buttons", our emotional wounds, the more we can have some Loving control over them instead of judging and shaming ourselves for our reactions.

When we have a strong reaction to outer stimuli - other people or life events - it is important to learn to separate the inner child's reaction from our adult reaction. I usually figure that about 80% of a strong reaction is about old unresolved

issues and only 20% about what is actually happening now. Until we start separating now from the past, we are incapable of responding to what is happening now in an age appropriate manner. It is impossible to be present in the now and respond honestly to what is happening if we are not conscious of how much inner child reaction is involved.

As I described earlier in this series - we need to start being a detective, observing ourselves and asking ourselves: Where is that reaction / thought / feeling coming from? Why am I feeling this way? What does this remind me of from my past? How old do I feel right now? How old did I act when that happened?

We need to ask ourselves and then listen for an intuitive answer. When we get that answer then we can track down why the child was feeling that way. What was happening when I was \_\_\_ ? (whatever age pops to mind.) What house were we living in? What grade was I in school? Was that before a certain event happened or after?

It is very important to get in touch with the different ages of the child within because the emotions of the toddler are very different from the feelings of the teenager. A five year olds anger is a different kind of energy from a twelve year olds. When the primary button that is being pushed is the twelve year olds, it is important for us to recognize that so we can deal with it appropriately.

I believe that we have at least one age of the inner child that relates to each developmental stage. We also have archetypal aspect of our personality. The archetypal facets - such as the rebel or the maiden, etc. - can be very tied into a specific age or relate strongly to several ages. For instance, we all have a romantic within. I have found that there are usually at least two ages that are tied to the romantic. A young child - around 5 or 6 - who is magical thinking, who believes in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny, and in happily-ever-after. Then there is a teenage romantic part of us who wants to find our mate, live out our fairy tale.

The romantic within is a wonderful, magical part of us - the idealistic, dreamer, lover, creative part of us that is a wonderful asset when kept in balance - and can lead to disastrous consequences when allowed to be in control of choices. In our unconsciousness, many of us swung between the extremes of letting the romantic within be in control of our choices - in which case we cast the wrong person in the part of our Prince or Princess and then because we wanted the fairy tale so badly we denied any evidence to the contrary and ended up heartbroken - and reacting to our heartbreak by slamming the romantic into an inner dungeon and believing we will never find love.

It is important to get in touch with our inner romantic so that we can have Loving boundaries that do not allow the romantic to lead us into dysfunctional relationships with unavailable people, at the same time we do not have to disown or deny this part of us.

I will sometimes refer to those inner child place (as well as the archetypal aspects of our psyche) as personas. They are not actual personalities. People who suffer from multiple personality disorder/defense are beings who were pushed farther than the rest of us. The wounding process involves the same basic dynamic - in fact, I learned a lot about my own inner process by studying cases of multiple personality - but multiples were broken in harsher ways (usually in an intentional and/or ritual abuse manner that amounted to torture.)

The next article is one that I wrote in 1996 - and the one after that is a follow up to it written 5 years later. These offer a good examples of how to get in touch with our inner children - and how to start building Loving relationships with those parts of our self.

[Go to Union Within](#)