

# The Process of Processing

## Inner Child Healing - The Process of Processing

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### Internal Boundaries

"This is of course a dance of balance, because there are also times in which I need to force myself to take some action (which is a very different thing from trying to force an outcome.) I won't get into how that works right now because this will end up way too long. I will just say that it is so important and helpful to learn to listen to, and trust, our intuition instead of giving the negative, shaming, fear based, critical parent voice the power to determine how we feel about ourselves today. Our Spirits will guide us to do what we need to do, when we need to do it. The more we heal and learn to discern which internal messages are coming from the Spirit and which are coming from the disease - the easier it becomes to see our path more clearly. Learning to have internal boundaries was the key in my process of learning to trust myself and the process more."

### Joy2MeU Update Announcement 3-24-2000

"Internal boundaries could also be described as self-discipline or taking responsibility or growing up. They are what is necessary for any real growth to occur. It is necessary for an alcoholic to start having internal boundaries in order to stop drinking - for anyone to stop any addictive, compulsive, or obsessive behavior. In order to start changing our behavior it is necessary to have an internal boundary with the child in us who wants immediate gratification/immediate relief from the feelings. In order to change what we are doing so we can change what we are getting - it is necessary to start having some internal boundaries with ourselves.

Terms like self-discipline or responsibility carried for me the shame and guilt of the dysfunctional society I grew up in - whereas internal boundaries was a much cleaner term, and a much more accurately focused term. I came to focus on internal boundaries in my private therapy practice and in my personal recovery - and found application of the concept to be powerful and effective in starting to help myself and others become more integrated and balanced

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### Wounded Souls Dancing in The Light

"Learning to have internal boundaries is a dynamic process that involves three distinctly different, but intimately interconnected, spheres of work. The purpose of the work is to change our ego-programming - to change our relationship with ourselves by changing our emotional/behavioral defense system into something that works to open us up to receive love, instead of sabotaging ourselves because of our deep belief that we don't deserve love. . . . These three spheres are:

1. Detachment

2. Inner Child Healing

### 3. Grieving

Because Codependence is a reactive phenomena it is vital to start being able to detach from our own process in order to have some choice in changing our reactions. We need to start observing our selves from the witness perspective instead of from the perspective of the judge."

Learning to Love our self{/xtypo\_info}

It is in relationship to learning how to set internal boundaries that the process of processing is so important. Processing involves observing our own internal dynamic. Observing our thoughts and feelings. It is very important to raise our consciousness, to become more conscious, of our own process.

When we start observing our internal process then we can start discerning between the different levels involved - we can start separating out the codependent, dysfunctional messages from the information that useful and informative. Then we can start setting internal boundaries within the mental, between the mental and emotional, and within the emotional levels of our being.

Within the mental we can start discerning and separating the shaming messages that are coming from the disease / critical parent voice from our own wisdom, knowledge and intelligence. Once we start realizing how much we are allowing the critical parent voice to abuse us, and to dictate our perspective of self and life through a filter of shame, blame, and fear - then we can start taking the power away from those messages. The more we take the power away from the shame and fear the disease is focusing on, the more we can honor our own wisdom, knowledge and intelligence.

By learning to set a boundary between emotional and mental, we can stop reacting to life based on the false belief that what we feel is who we are - that what we feel defines our reality.

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"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.

Just because it feels like you are being punished does not mean that is the Truth. Feelings are real - they are emotional energy that is manifested in our body - but they are not necessarily fact.

What we feel is our "emotional truth" and it does not necessarily have anything to do with either facts or the emotional energy that is Truth with a capital "T" - especially when we are reacting out of an age of our inner child.

If we are reacting out of what our emotional truth was when we were five or nine or fourteen, then we are not capable of responding appropriately to what is happening in the moment; we are not being in the now.

When we are reacting out of old tapes based on attitudes and beliefs that are false or distorted, then our feelings cannot be trusted.

When we are reacting out of our childhood emotional wounds, then what we are feeling may have very little to do with the situation we are in or with the people with whom we are dealing in the moment.

In order to start being in the moment in a healthy, age-appropriate way it is necessary to heal our "inner child." The inner child we need to heal is actually our "inner children" who have been running our lives because we have been unconsciously reacting to life out of the emotional wounds and attitudes, the old tapes, of our childhoods."

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(All quotes in this color are from Codependence: The Dance of Wounded Souls)

Once we start the process of learning how to stop allowing the critical parent voice to abuse our wounded inner children, then it becomes easier to start separating out our different wounds - the different ages of the wounded child within. When we start recognizing our inner children - asking ourselves how old we feel - then we can start to heal those wounds. Then we can start to be Loving and nurturing to our inner children instead of shaming and abusive.

{xtypo\_info} "Inner child work is in one way detective work. We have a mystery to solve. Why have I have I been attracted to the the type of people that I have been in relationship with in my life? Why do I react in certain ways in certain situations? Where did my behavior patterns come from? Why do I sometimes feel so: helpless; lonely; desperate; scared; angry; suicidal; etc."{/xtypo\_info}

We need to discern between different ages of the child, between different emotional wounds, in order to see our own inner process more clearly. Once we start having boundaries within the mental, and between the mental and emotional, then we can also start having boundaries within the emotional level of our being. We can start determining the roots of our patterns, the causes of our emotional wounds. We can start getting in touch with the 5 year old who feels so much shame; with the 14 year old who is rebelling by self destructing; with the romantic within who wants to believe in fairy tales; etc.

If we are feeling a lot of emotional pain over our last relationship, and only looking at that relationship as the cause of that pain, then we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg. Our emotional wounds have been repeated over and over in our life. Our main issues of abandonment and betrayal, of deprivation and loss, of loneliness and insecurity, etc., all stem from our childhood. They did not just magically appear in our adult life. They are part of a cause and effect dynamic. And the closer we can get to cause, the more powerful the healing becomes.

So, there are levels and layers within the emotional to separate out and see more clearly. It is also vital to start discerning between the emotional truth that is coming from our old wounds and the emotional energy that is Truth.

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"Truth, in my understanding, is not an intellectual concept. I believe that Truth is an emotional-energy, vibrational communication to my consciousness, to my soul/spirit - my being, from my Soul. Truth is an emotion, something that I feel within.

It is that feeling within when someone says, or writes, or sings, something in just the right words so that I suddenly feel a deeper understanding. It is that "AHA" feeling. The feeling of a light bulb going on in my head. That "Oh, I get it!" feeling. The intuitive feeling when something just feels right . . . or wrong. It's that gut feeling, the feeling in my heart. It is the feeling of something resonating within me. The feeling of remembering something that I had forgotten - but do not remember ever knowing." {/xtypo\_info}

One of the reasons that we have repeating behavior patterns is because we have not been capable of discerning between intuitive Truth and impulses arising out of our emotional wounds. It is very important to start learning how to tell the difference between an intuitive message from our spirit and a message that is being generated by the lonely inner child who wants to prove him/herself worthy by earning the love of an unavailable man/father, woman/mother. One of the things that I came to realize in my recovery was that if I met someone who felt like my soul mate, it was much, much more likely to be about an old wound than to be intuitive Truth.

Our intuition is right on. It has always been right on. We did not trust it because of the reflections and messages we got as children. It is real important to start discerning what is intuition and what is an old impulse in order to start trusting ourselves and the process - in order to start relaxing and enjoying life.

### A Boundary between Being and Behavior

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"It is important to start setting a boundary between being and behavior. All humans have equal Divine value as beings - no matter what our behavior."

"We do not need fixing. We are not broken. Our sense of self, our self perception, was shattered and fractured and broken into pieces, not our True Self.

We think and feel like we are broken because we were programmed backwards.

We are not broken. That is what toxic shame is - thinking that we are broken, believing that we are somehow inherently defective.

Guilt is "I made a mistake, I did something wrong."

Shame is "I'm a mistake, something is wrong with me."

Again, the feelings of that little child inside who believes that he/she deserves to be punished."

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The purpose of the inner child healing process, the codependency recovery process, is to learn how to change our relationships into healthier, more fulfilling, and happier experiences. The goal is to learn how to stop empowering the past so that we can relax and enjoy life today. The goal is to learn to be Loving and kind to our self so that we can manifest Love into the world.

In order to do these things it is vital to start eliminating the toxic shame that has been dictating the human experience. As we learn to eliminate that shame from our internal process, we can stop projecting it onto other wounded souls.

As we learn to own our inherent worth as beings by eliminating the shame from our internal process, then we can start seeing the inherent Divine worth in the being of others - even as we do whatever is necessary to protect ourselves from their wounded dysfunctional behavior if that is necessary. Allowing someone to abuse us in the name of love is the opposite of Love - is a denial of Self. Judging and shaming ourselves for behavior that we adapted to cope with our emotional wounds is definitely not Loving.

By learning how to have internal boundaries we can change the quality of our relationships. Our relationship with self/Self. Our relationship with life. Our relationship with people, places, and things.

Becoming more conscious, so that we can learn to have internal boundaries is not a linear process. It involves multiple levels, multiple perspectives. It involves seeing, and taking action, on multiple levels, in a number of different spheres of our dynamic internal process - sometimes focused on a single area, ultimately (at least some of the time) with awareness of multiple levels simultaneously.

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"In order to Love ourselves we need to have boundaries within as well as external boundaries. Codependence is a disease of self-victimization - "I'll show you, I'll get me!" We need to stop feeding the dragon within by giving power to the part of us that shames and judges us. We need to stop listening to the disease voices which tell us that we "should" be able to control things over which we have no control.

. . . . . I had to become willing and open and honest enough to start becoming conscious of the dysfunctional attitudes, the dysfunctional perspectives. I had to become willing to learn discernment in order to make choices about the changes

I needed to make in my perspectives - especially my perspective on my own emotional process.

Once I started to feel the feelings, to do the grief work, then I could begin to trust myself to be discerning about which of my emotions were telling me the Truth. Only then was I able to substantially change my relationship with my God, with myself, and with life.

I learned that I was able to feel and release the feelings without having them destroy me. I learned that I could change my mental attitudes, I could change the way I think, so that my mind was no longer my worst enemy. I learned that by owning and honoring my inner children and their emotional wounds I was able to take the power away from those wounds by releasing the stored energy, so that I had choices over how I would respond instead of blindly reacting. I learned that I could trust myself to have the wisdom to recognize Truth so that I could accept the things that I could not change and change the things I had some control over.

When I became willing to surrender the old attitudes and beliefs, to surrender to feeling the feelings, to surrender trying to control things over which I had no control, then I accessed the power to change myself and my relationships. I became empowered to change my life into an experience that was defined by Joy, Love, and Peace instead of fear, anger, and pain.

It was vitally important for me to learn how to have internal boundaries so that I could lovingly parent (which, of course, includes setting boundaries for) my inner children, tell the critical parent/disease voice to shut up, and start accessing the emotional energy of Truth, Beauty, Joy, Light, and Love. It was by learning internal boundaries that I could begin to achieve some integration and balance in my life, and transform my experience of life into an adventure that is enjoyable and exciting most of the time."

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## Levels of the Inner Child Healing Process

I am going to conclude this article and series (except for another page with quotes) with a mention of the major areas/levels that need to be addressed. This is not a linear process! There is no right or wrong way to do the process. There is no diagram that can tell you how your Path is going to unfold. Each person has their own path to follow. We all are going to end up in the same place - but how we get there is unique to each of us. We do have the same basic human emotional dynamic. We have much more in common than we have ever had differences. So, the feelings, and the wounds, are basically the same for all of us. The magnificent complexity of our internal process is part of a human dynamic that we are all here to experience.

{xtypo\_info} "The individual human being is a fully contained system involving multiple interrelationships within multiple levels. This is easy to see, and understand, when looking at the physical level. The interrelationship of the organs to each other, to the blood, to the skin, to the nervous system, etc. - is a dance of grand, and compelling, complexity.

Just as grand, and compelling, is the complexity of the dance of interrelationship between the mental, emotional, and spiritual components/levels that dynamically interact to form the make up of the individual being - the persona, personality, consciousness, of the self. The more awareness is acquired about the different levels of the self, and the interrelationships between those levels, the easier it becomes to diagnose the dysfunctional interaction dynamics."{/xtypo\_info}

### Wounded Souls Dancing in The Light

When I first got into recovery, someone said to me "All you have to change is everything." Boy, was that the Truth. I did need, and continue to need, to change my relationships with everything. All of my relationships were based on intellectual programming and emotional experiences from my early childhood. Attitudes, beliefs, and definitions determine expectations and perspective. My expectations and perspective dictate my relationships.

In order to start changing the quality of my relationships, I need to own that I had choices about what attitudes, beliefs, and definitions I was empowering. The intellectual paradigm that is dictating my relationships is what determines how I relate to: self; life; the concept of a God-Force; my emotions; my body; my gender; etc., etc. So they also, of course, dictate how I relate to people, places and things.

I had to become aware of my own thoughts and thought process in order to start changing it. I had to become aware of how much the critical parent voice was determining the quality of my life experience. I had to become conscious of the reality that I was negatively affirming myself hundreds of times a day. That I was allowing fear and shame, belief in scarcity, lack, and separation, to dictate my relationship with myself and life.

I needed to fire the judge that was always watching me ready to put a negative spin on anything in my life. I realized that I had the power to take steps to replace that judge with a Loving observer. An observer that could give me the detachment to start discovering that those messages were based on warped distortions, insane expectations, and obscene, soul wounding lies.

In terms of the process of processing, this is an ongoing process. I don't actually get to fire the judge and exile him from my inner kingdom - what I can do is gradually disempower that judge. I do that by changing the attitudes, beliefs, and definitions that are creating the insane expectations and dysfunctional perspectives. I do that by choosing to introduce different programming - taking action to change my intellectual paradigm. (One tool in that reprogramming is using

positive affirmations to replace the negative ones.) I do that by owning that I have a choice about where I focus my mind - and a choice about what beliefs I empower. One level of beliefs that it is very important to own that we have the power to change, is our beliefs in relationship to the nature and purpose of life. We do have the right to empower in our life a Higher Power of our own understanding - we do not have to be the victim of anyone else's concept.

Choosing to empower a spiritual belief system that supports the belief that we are Lovable and precious beings is a very valuable part of the process in my opinion. Much of the mental and emotional work can be done without buying into the belief system that I believe to be Truth - but it is much easier when your spiritual belief system is large enough to take the shame out of the equation.

Owning that we have the power to take some control of our own mental processes is vital to changing our relationship with ourselves. We do not have to be the victim of the wounded, dysfunctionally programmed part of our own mind. We can change the way we think into one that is gentler and more Loving. Again, this is a process that unfolds over time - not a destination to be reached.

Emotionally, it is vital to change our relationship with our own emotions into one that works to help us open up to Love - instead of battling our emotions as the enemy. We need to embrace our feelings so that we can release the repressed grief and rage - at the same time we start learning how to have some Loving control over our own emotional process. Our wounded inner child is often like a dog that was abused as a puppy - either cringing in fear or snarling out of reaction. It is a long gradual process to learn how to Lovingly parent those wounded children within us - we cannot do it without owning our childhood experiences and releasing the repressed emotional energy that has been dictating our relationships. Often the dysfunctional attitudes and beliefs we are empowering are subconscious ones from our childhood that we may have rejected consciously in adulthood - but which are still dictating our reactions emotionally. These subconscious beliefs may only come to light when we do our grief work. It is very critical to be willing to do the grief work.

Emotional balance is not a destination. It is a constantly changing dance. In doing our reprogramming intellectually, and our emotional and Spiritual healing - we are changing the music of our dance. We are choosing to have the opportunity to dance with Love and Joy, to dance in Light and Truth - instead of in darkness and disharmony. In order to have the capacity to dance with Love and Joy, we must first be willing to dance with our anger and fear, with the pain and sadness. Through owning our wounded inner children, we get to uncover and release the spontaneous, playful, Joyous Spiritual child within that is the one who will lead us home to LOVE.

Balance in dancing is about having a feeling for equilibrium, moving in harmony, adjusting, balancing, rebalancing. Likewise our inner dance of finding balance is an ongoing process - ever changing, fluctuating, oscillating in tune with the vibrational rhythms. Once we learn to have a sense of balance, a feeling for emotional clarity, then we are able to adjust and rebalance more quickly when some external (life event, other people's behavior) or internal (wounded child reaction, old tape kicking in) stimuli throws us out of balance.

In this process, it is necessary to be continually rebalancing our relationship with our self.

We will not find balance in all areas, on all levels at the same time. The goal is to be at balance in as many areas as possible as much of the time as possible - and to accept wherever we are at as a perfect part of the dance. We focus on an area of relationship (with some part/level of our being, and/or some outward manifestation of that issue/area) and find some balance in that area - and then it is time to focus on another area. And then another and another. By that time, it is time to come back and find a new level of balance in the first area - because we are constantly changing and growing.

We may work on healing our relationship to our same sex parent - which also involves healing our relationship to our own gender, sexuality, emotions, etc., and how we relate to others of our gender and the opposite gender - and that may lead us into focusing on our relationship with money which was distorted by that parents relationship with money. This leads us into looking at the blocks we have within us to receiving abundance in money and all other levels - which leads us into our fear of intimacy issues - which leads us back to our relationship with our parent. Etc. Etc.

Each issue branches off into many other related issues, into all the different emotional and intellectual levels of each of those issues. As we peel away the levels of denial in relationship to each issue, as we get emotionally honest with ourselves on a deeper level with that issue - it opens up more levels, more grief, more denial to peel away. And we find ourselves back looking at the original issues with a new perspective.

In this process, it is not just necessary to uncover and let go of the dysfunctional attitudes and false beliefs of childhood. We need to be willing to see, and let go of, our attitudes of 6 months ago, of 6 weeks ago, of 3 days ago. Because we are growing and changing, our perspective keeps changing. That means our relationships keep changing.

Part of finding emotional balance involves accepting ourselves wherever we are at in the moment. I can have a place where I feel very balanced emotionally, Spiritually, intellectually - but still have some obvious imbalance in my relationship with my physical body. That is OK. That is part of the ongoing healing process. I also have places in time when I feel no balance or clarity about anything. That is OK too. We are works in progress - in process. By not judging myself, and not buying into the belief that there is some destination I have to reach before it is OK to Love myself, then I can have some moments of balance today.

There is no destination to be reached. We will be growing and learning, uncovering and discovering, peeling away denial and releasing emotional energy, for the rest of our lifetime. On subtler levels, with less pain and discomfort as we heal - but it an ongoing process nevertheless.

It sure is a good thing that we aren't in control of this process. It is a good thing that we don't have to figure it out. We will be guided. We are being lead through the process. Our job is to pay attention and learn how to manifest as much Love as possible into our dance in the moment.

In order to do that, it is vital to start taking the shame out of the process. In one sense, the dance of recovery works like a pendulum swinging. The more we are in reaction out of shame, out of the right and wrong paradigm of the disease, the more extreme our swings are in both directions. We react (to an emotional button being pushed), and then we react to our reaction (with shame and judgment.) The less we judge and shame ourselves, the less extreme our swings become.

The more we do our emotional healing so that we are not taking life and other people so seriously and personally, the less power we give to old reactions. The more we take the power away from the old tapes and old wounds, the less extreme our swings become. The more gentle our swings, the easier it is to maintain some equilibrium - some semblance of balance. Gentle swings is what we are looking for and that can only come by being gentle with ourselves.

By getting in touch with, and building an ongoing relationship with the different inner child places within us, we are able to recognize and respond more quickly when we get triggered. When we get triggered multiple old wounds can be triggered at the same time. The reopening of old wounds triggers old defenses to kick in so that the lonely, needy child reacts out of a deeply painful place which triggers the older child who had to get tough, to react with disdain and hatred for the needy part of self. The internal battle is off and running.

The internal battle is what we are working to stop. This is where we need to manifest Love for those wounded places within us. Having compassion for our self, and forgiving our self on an emotional level for our powerlessness as children, is the hardest thing for us to learn.

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"We were powerless out of ego-self to do anything any different than we did it. We are powerless out of ego-self to heal this disease. Through Spiritual Self, through our Spiritual Connection, we have access to all the power in the Universe.

We need to have the willingness: willingness to get to a new level of self-honesty; willingness to start listening to the Loving inner voice instead of the shaming ones; willingness to face the terror of healing the emotional wounds.

Codependence causes us to have a distorted and repressed emotional process, and the only way out is through the feelings. Codependence gives us a scrambled mind, a reversed dysfunctional way of looking at ourselves and the world,

and we have to be able to use the wonderful tool that is our mind while changing our attitudes and reprogramming our thinking.

It seems awfully complicated, doesn't it?

That is because it is!

On another level it is also very simple. It is a Spiritual Dis-ease. It can only be healed through a Spiritual Cure. It cannot be healed by only looking at the symptoms. That is backwards.

The cure is available through surrendering control to a Higher Power. We cannot do this healing by ourselves. We need a Loving Higher Power in our lives. We need other Recovering people in our lives."

Complex and complicated is this dance of recovery. Multiple interrelated issues branching off into multiple intertwined levels. Some feelings that need to be trusted, some that cannot be trusted. A part of our mind that is the enemy, most of our mind a magnificent resource that we have hardly begun to tap. Twisting and convoluted is our inner journey. Often confusing and baffling, scary and frustrating. So easy to feel the victim of a somehow defective self.

We are not defective. There is nothing shameful about being human. It is not only OK to be confused and scared - it is a normal, natural part of the human experience that it is very important to accept as a perfect part of the process. The less we judge and shame ourselves, the more quickly we get to move out of the painful places. The more we align with how the healing process really works, the more control we have of our own inner process.

We do not have to figure it out - we just need to learn to pay attention in a conscious way. We need to be willing to learn how to be emotionally honest with ourselves so that we can have a more balanced relationship with our own emotional process. We need to learn to discern between the things we cannot control and the things we can have some control over, so that we can start learning how to relax and enjoy the growth process we are experiencing.

Recovery is not self help - or at least not only self help. We need to do our part of the process and let go of trying to do our Higher Power's part. We are not alone. We are being guided. We are being led to new horizons. Our paths are unfolding perfectly.

One of the great gifts of aligning with a Spiritual growth process, is that we get to discover who we are in Truth. As we learn to change our relationship with self and with life into one which allows us the possibility of opening up to Unconditional Love - we learn that we already exist in that State of Grace.

As we learn to remove the distortions, false beliefs and lies from our intellectual paradigm, as we clear our emotional process of the twisted, polluted residue of judgment and shame, then we start to see ourselves more clearly. Then we start to see our Self. As we strip away the masks we learned to wear, remove the garbage and lies from our perspective of self - then we get to see the wonderful Truth.

We are exactly who we always wanted to be.

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"A "state of Grace" is the condition of being Loved unconditionally by our Creator without having to earn that Love. We are Loved unconditionally by the Great Spirit. What we need to do is to learn to accept that state of Grace.

The way we do that is to change the attitudes and beliefs within us that tell us that we are not Lovable. And we cannot do that without going through the black hole. The black hole that we need to surrender to traveling through is the black hole of our grief. The journey within - through our feelings - is the journey to knowing that we are Loved, that we are Lovable.

It is through willingness and acceptance, through surrender, trust, and faith, that we can begin to own the state of Grace which is our True condition.

We are all beautiful swans who exist in a state of Grace, in a condition of being unconditionally Loved. The dance of Recovery is a process of learning to accept and integrate the Truth of Grace into our lives.

The goal in this Age of Healing and Joy is integration and balance. To integrate the Spiritual Truth into our physical experience so that we can fill the hole inside and find wholeness within. As we integrate our True Spiritual nature into our relationship with our physical being we can begin to achieve some balance and harmony with and between all of the parts of our being.

This age is a time for growing and learning, a time to become conscious of the True nature of the Source Energy, a time of Spiritual Awakening. We have been given the wonder-full gift of having the ability and the tools to start integrating the Truth of a Loving Universal Force into our day-to-day experience of life. We now have the knowledge and guidance that we need to start bringing some balance to our relationships - with ourselves and our God/Goddess, with other people and the planet - so that we can live in a way that allows us to experience some Peace and Love on our life path.

We can heal our wounded souls enough to change the dance of life from a dance of endurance and suffering to a dance that celebrates living. We now have access to the power to transform the dance of Codependence to a dance of healing and Joy."

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