



## Inner Exploration Guide – Month Three - Motivation

This month we will take another step deeper within to better understand the impact of our basic human motivations. As we map our inner experiences, we will recognize that the motivations (human desires) which guide our lives are often hidden deep within. Often unconscious, motivations “below the surface” are much like a ship’s rudder guiding our direction and journey in powerful ways.

Many people have attempted to simplify human motivation; Sigmund Freud believed that libido was the primary driving force; Alfred Adler believed that people want to belong, become better, more respected, and thus muster the courage to compensate for their flaws; Maslow considered the striving for self-actualization to be the main driver. However, as several scientists, including Steven Reiss, have studied human desire and motivation empirically, their results have pointed to our vast diversity and some specific commonalities about what drives us.

Reiss’ work concluded that each of us have aspects of 16 basic human motivations in varying amounts and blends. The basic human motivations he compiled from more than 6000 people who participated in the study are:

1. Acceptance, the need to be appreciated
2. Curiosity, the need to gain knowledge
3. Eating, the need for food
4. Family, the need to take care of one’s offspring
5. Honor, the need to be faithful to the customary values of an individual’s ethnic group, family or clan
6. Idealism, the need for social justice
7. Independence, the need to be distinct and self-reliant
8. Order, the need for prepared, established, and conventional environments
9. Physical activity, the need for work out of the body
10. Power, the need for control of will
11. Romance, the need for mating or sex
12. Saving, the need to accumulate something
13. Social contact, the need for relationship with others
14. Social status, the need for social significance
15. Tranquility, the need to be secure and protected
16. Vengeance, the need to strike back against another person

### **Reflective Questions:**

Which of the listed motivations are strongest in you? Weakest?

Think about your spouse, partner or another person you are close to. What are their strongest and weakest motivations?

As you think about the next thing you want to do, or will do, can you identify what motivation(s) are driving you?

Are there any motivations on the list that fall into the “should” or “shouldn’t” category for you?

For instance I should be more \_\_\_\_\_. Or, I shouldn’t be so \_\_\_\_\_. Utilize your answer here to help identify some aspect of yourself you’ve hidden from your conscious experience.

What would God (or your concept of God/Love/Spirit) say about your strongest motivation?

### **Quotes / Stories:**

Hindu holy writings seem to disagree about our ability to “act without desire.” The following from the Upanishad, a Hindu holy book, seems to indicate that “we are desire.”

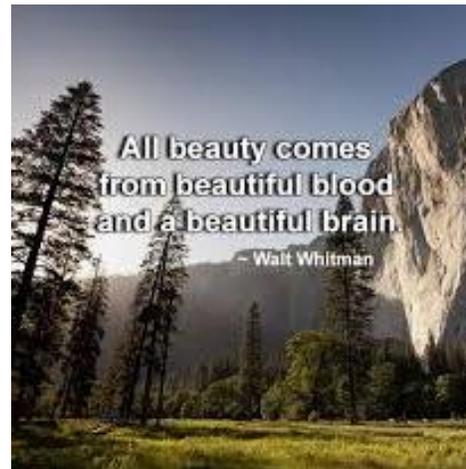
*You are what your deep, driving desire is.*

*As your desire is, so is your will.*

*As your will is, so is your deed.*

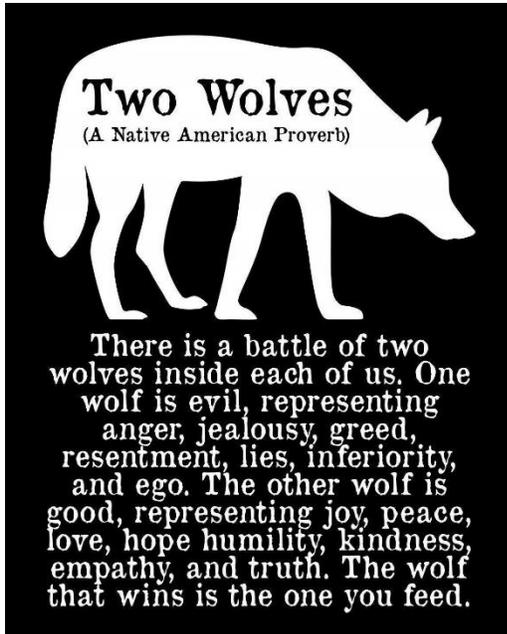
*As your deed is, so is your destiny.*

Reflective Question: *As you consider desires within you, would you characterize yourself as (1) being able to act without desire or (2) desire guiding and driving your acting and being?*



Bible passage - 2 Timothy 4:3 ... a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear.

“What makes people tick is so varied that it cannot be explained by just a few impulses.” - Reiss



### A Spiritual Journey

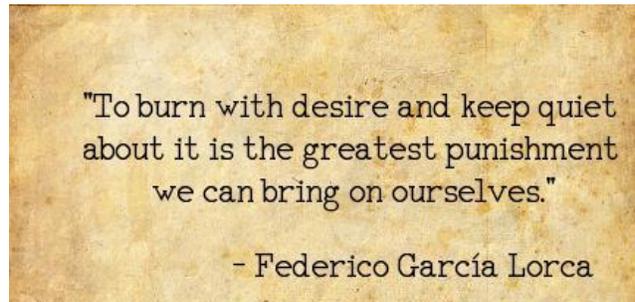
And the world cannot be discovered by a journey of miles,  
no matter how long,  
but only by a spiritual journey,  
a journey of one inch,  
very arduous and humbling and joyful,  
by which we arrive at the ground at our feet,  
and learn to be at home.

- Wendell Berry

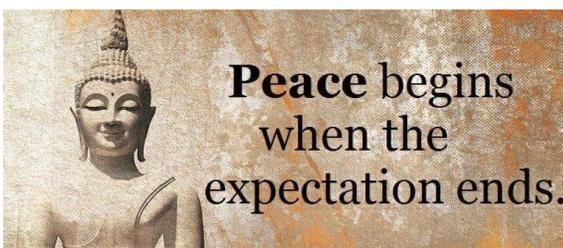
### Reflective Questions:

What is your understanding of good and evil? How do you approach your inner work based on that understanding?

As you read these quotes and stories, what do you find most true?



Do any of these support or challenge your internal drives and motivations in ways you notice?



Describe your sense of peace.

Does expectation ever end? If so how?

**Articles and Videos:**

Projection as a way to point to a subconscious motivation... article - The Psychology of Projection: 8 Feelings We Transfer Onto Others.

<https://www.aconsciousrethink.com/3833/psychology-projection-8-feelings-transfer-onto-others/>

Article from the Globalist – A Hindu’s Reflections on Desire and the Human Condition.

<https://www.theglobalist.com/india-hinduism-kama-desire-religion-philosophy/>

Article from 1000-Word Philosophy – Wu-Wei: Acting without Desire.

<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2019/06/03/wu-wei-acting-without-desire/>

Article from Desiring God – The War for Inner Peace, How Desperation Fuels Contentment.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-war-for-inner-peace>

Article - Spiritual Beings on a Human Journey—Remembering Our Stardust.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/inviting-monkey-tea/201507/spiritual-beings-human-journey-remembering-our-stardust>

Video from the Secular Buddhist Association – Spiritual Materialism.

<https://secularbuddhism.org/spiritual-materialism/>

Video Eastern Philosophy – Wu Wei - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvZi7ZV-SWI>

Video How Do I Deal With Desire? by Sadhguru – (8:28 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uolXz3KcwME>

**Practices:**

**Discernment Four Voices** – Method of Discernment (teaching by Cynthia Bourgeault)

The Four Voices method welcomes the specific wisdom of each part of our being—even when they’re diametrically opposed—in a way that brings the parts into harmonious solidarity.

Cynthia has developed this personal discernment practice and method of inner listening to integrate the varying facets of our being as we make decisions both large and small. The ego (persona) – how we wish to project ourselves, soul – our “inner voice”, Spirit – the sacred view, and heart – emotional or non-dual place of understanding, all have distinctly valuable contributions to make in guiding us toward the best choice in any situation.

|                                    | Ego (persona) | Soul | Spirit | Heart |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------|-------|
| How do I feel about the situation? |               |      |        |       |
| What should I do next?             |               |      |        |       |

Both practical and profound, this method employs spiritual practices to help us access and recognize our distinct inner voices as they weigh in, both consciously and subconsciously.

For further information: <https://wisdomwayofknowing.org/resource-directory/four-voices/>

## Meditation – Dzogchen Practice – Tibetan Buddhist

Use whatever time you have in thirds (3+ minutes). You may wish to utilize a timer app.

- For the first third observe your breath and notice what arises within you as you breathe.
- For the second third, control breath out only by pushing from lower belly.
- For the final third, go back and observe your breath again noticing what arises.

Trust that your practice will bring fruit over time. As an abiding practice, notice your breath when you notice it and be mindful or aware of what is going on inside you.

### What Dzogchen Is

- It is an outlook, a PERSPECTIVE.
- It is simple, effortless, PROFOUND, RELAXING, and IT is right here right now.
- It is empty, open, NATURAL and luminous, the TRUE NATURE OF OUR SPIRITUAL mind.
- It is accessible through moment-to-moment MINDFUL AWARENESS.
- Dzogchen is the Natural Great Perfection.
- Dzogchen is the ultimate teaching of Tibet.
- Dzogchen brings out our intrinsic OPENNESS, ACCEPTANCE and EQUANIMITY.
- The spirit of Dzogchen is joyful and light as well as being a wise outlook and vast perspective.

### What Dzogchen Isn't

- An attempt at controlling the mind.
- Just ordinary relaxation, clearing away thoughts, or concentration-meditation.
- Based in ritual or dogmatic beliefs.
- A practice that requires "converting" to anything.
- In contradiction with any existing religion or practice.
- Object-based focused meditation such as counting breaths, candle-watching or using imagery or sound.
- A Buddhist practice – Dzogchen is a universal practice that pre-dates Buddhism in Tibet.

## Being Present to Your Five Senses

Being present to your five senses is a powerful way to practice presence. Simply noticing what you notice and moving from one sense to the other can help make you more aware and thus bring peace and equanimity. Try one or more of the following brief practices.

- Notice what you **see** in your view right now. Pick anything that grabs your attention and stay focused on that. Move your awareness from the thing you are seeing back to the seeing itself. Are you looking at the thing or is the thing pulling your attention to it?
- Close your eyes and **listen**. Identify the various sounds around you and where they are coming from. Note how each of your ears has a unique perspective. Shift your awareness from ear to ear and from sound to sound. Open your eyes and see if your listening or awareness of sounds changes.
- Notice anything that you **smell**. What is it and where does it come from. The sense of smell is the sense that is processed least before it arrives at the brain. It might be considered that smells arrive directly to our unconscious mind and trigger thoughts and emotions. Are there any smells that trigger you as you sit quietly?

- **Taste** is always on. Right now see what you taste even if you're not eating anything. Think about something you like to eat, and imagine what it tastes like. Can you feel where that taste is located in your mouth?
- **Feel** your whole body as you sit or stand where you are right now. Scan from toes to fingers to head and notice any specific sensations as you become aware of how you're feeling. Take a moment to move around from place to place and notice where you are in direct contact with your external environment.
- Take a few minutes to notice **how you feel or what you think about your five senses**. Go through them one by one and monitor your inner sense about each one. You might want to jot down a word or two regarding each sense. You might note a preference for taste over smell or perhaps you like how your right ear hears vs. your left ear, etc.
- Finally, be **generally aware** of what you notice. What seems to take precedence? What naturally falls into the background as you allow your senses to be as they are? Are any of your senses demanding your attention more than others?

### **Mealtime Meditation**

Utilize your next meal as a time to be present to your desires and motivations. No matter the setting, there is much to pay attention to within and around you. As you are able, pay attention to your inner desires as they connect with something in the environment. Note the silent inner drives as they are satisfied or not through the simple act of eating a meal. You might consider:

- Your sense of enjoying the food and your sense of having your hunger satisfied.
- If you are with others, note any sense of social connection, conversational intimacy, competition, etc. that may arise within you.
- The variety (or lack) of food and what you're most attracted to by sight and smell. Notice any variance once you begin tasting. Try to discover subtle flavors that you might normally take for granted.
- Note how you feel prior to eating anything, once you've had a few bites, and at the end of the meal. How have your inner desires and motivations adjusted throughout?
- At some point between meals, note any inner awareness about your desire for food or your motivation to get some.

### **Projection, our companion, teacher and guide.**

As stories from scriptures remind us ... "the log in our eye is what we're really seeing when we notice the splinter in someone else's." Noticing an "irritation," "problem," or something like "admiration" or "attraction to someone's giftedness" seemingly outside ourselves, is our inner teacher, if we are ready students.

Practice:

- Identify the other person's "splinter."
- Realize your recognition of their splinter is a sure sign that you have a "log in your own eye." Note the log and the splinter are "wood-relatives" in different forms.
- Patiently sit with your understanding that there is a "log" within but you might not be aware (conscious) of it.

- As you pay attention, you will find that the unconscious will become conscious. What was once lost within, is now found. It will slowly be revealed from within.

As you work with this practice, you will begin to **challenge your own truth**. We tend to see what we want to see and sometimes that is not necessarily the truth. Whether you idealize your partner or you put all the blame on your best friend for something, it's important to take a step back and look at the situation objectively. Recognize that emotion is pointing you toward something that you may want to examine as a third party- notice if you see things from a different perspective. Shifting our reality can be challenging but is often helpful and can be freeing.

Reflective Questions:

Why are you spending your time to discover something new?

What risks are involved as you take this inner journey?

What motivates you (deep down) to follow this inner path?

