

Conscious Being

Reading Twelve: Living on Purpose

From Chapter 7 of Conscious Being

Doing and Being

In our action-oriented society, people tend to think of their purpose as solely an external activity. When asked “What is your purpose in life?” most people say it is about the roles they play, or want to play, in the world. Some say they want to be a good mother, or a loving and supportive husband. Others say they hope to be successful in their career, or to fulfill certain goals and dreams. Rarely does it occur to them to take a step back and connect with their state of being first, before concerning themselves with doing.

The experiences of my earlier life taught me that if my doing is not fully grounded in my being, then it is like building a house on sand rather than on solid ground. Another way of saying this is that conscious being naturally gives rise to conscious doing. I used to believe that if I could figure out what was mine to do in life, and if I successfully accomplished it, then I would be living on purpose. Consequently, I would feel fulfilled. So I spent my early years building what I thought was “the life of my dreams.” That included a successful career along with the external trappings I thought I needed. I believed I was living my purpose. However, it was not long before everything for which I had worked so hard came tumbling down. In retrospect, I realize that during that period, my doing was primarily divorced from my being. The life that I had strived so hard to build fell apart because there was no solid foundation beneath it.

Inner and Outer Purpose

Once we have done the deep inner work of discovering who we truly are—and develop the ability to reside in that in our daily lives— then our doing emerges easily and organically from that internal place of stability. When we are connected to who we are, as spirit, there is no longer any sense of personal struggle or effort. Struggle and effort are only needed when we lose touch with our authentic being. When we are rooted in being, communication channels from within are intact and we are informed and guided by a deep sense of knowing. The actions we need to take become clear and obvious, moment to moment.

In American culture, it seems perfectly normal to be more concerned with doing than with being. Our society is dominated by left-brained logic. Subtle, intuitive messages come to us through different channels and are often drowned out by the loud noise of our logical minds. Given that we have lived in a logic-dominated world for several thousand years, many of us do not question this way of functioning. However, when we acknowledge the multiple crises that are currently affecting life on our planet, it becomes clear that we are blindly letting our limited, logical minds rule our lives. This is no longer sustainable. We need to find another way. Regular meditation or quiet time carves out some inner space. It provides the inner silence in which the still, small voice within can be heard. The more we pay attention and are willing to listen to this gentle voice of guidance, the stronger and more reliable it becomes.

In my daily life, I remember that my primary purpose is to remain connected to being. I live in a state of openhearted, vulnerable authenticity. This means I'm willing to listen to the communications that come from all aspects of my

being—body, mind, heart, and spirit. I am committed to having my mind “step down” from its elevated, autocratic position. As I allow myself to be guided from within, I find that my external life flows with an effortless ease. This is not to say I don’t have moments of stress, difficulty, or confusion. But when I do, I realize that it is because my mind has taken control again. And all I need to do is remember to relinquish my mind’s control and to return to being, as my primary purpose. With that remembrance, tension instantly dissolves, and I am able to return to my naturally joyous state.

Head, Heart, and Intuition

It has been said that the journey from the head to the heart is the longest 18-inch journey we will ever take. This journey, however, is a highly important passage for us to take if we are to move beyond living only from our logical minds. Yet, there is an even deeper voyage. And it possibly the most important passage of our lives. It is the journey into discovering, and living from, our intuition.

Albert Einstein understood that we can tap into our highest source of intelligence. He said, “The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.” Einstein was way ahead of his time. He indicated that we need to shift our sense of loyalty to the intuitive mind. Rather than making our rational minds our supreme source of understanding, we can honor the heart’s understanding, and ultimately live from a deep oneness with our intuitive nature. At this level, we can tap into a far greater knowing—the knowing of the whole—rather than merely the experience of our separated mind.

Considering the current state of humanity, perhaps we are ready to acknowledge that we have gone as far as we can without honoring the sacred gift of our intuition, our higher knowing. We realize that it is time to train and discipline our logical minds so that they can play their intended role. The mind is a powerful tool and when utilized as a faithful servant, great accomplishments are achieved. It is when we believe that we are our minds (or our thoughts) that difficulty and discord arise.

Conflicts between the mind, heart and intuition primarily arise when the mind wants to dominate. Why is the intelligence of the heart and intuition a higher intelligence than that of the mind? Because intuitive intelligence comes from a place of oneness. It is at the level of the intuition that we have the capacity to feel and know our oneness with the whole of life. Our mind's intelligence comes from the perspective of our separateness. It is vital that we honor and respect our individuality.

However, if we want to survive as a species, and to experience our inherent interconnectivity, then we need to leave behind our old structures of knowing in which we believed the mind was our highest source of intelligence. We need to transcend to a new structure of knowing. This means living from the intuition and trusting it as a higher source of intelligence.

The survival of our planet is at stake here. And we now possess the potential to raise our consciousness and create our lives and our world with peace and love.

Knowing Our Outer Purpose

Spirit manifests uniquely in each of us. We all find and walk our own path through life. But how do we find clarity about our individual purpose? Recently, during a workshop I was facilitating, I asked a participant, "What do you absolutely know you are here to do?" At the time, she was feeling extremely frustrated in the workplace. Although she was enjoying a high corporate salary, she hated every minute of her job. She said, "The only thing I know I'm here to do is to help animals." It was clear to me that she had gotten in touch with her life's outer calling, based on how she lit up when speaking this and by the conviction in her voice. However, she immediately discounted the idea, saying, "But I can't do that. I'm not going to veterinary school, and I'm not even sure that's what I mean by helping animals. And there's no way I could possibly make a living doing that anyway." Her purpose had emerged, for a split second, and then her mind totally dismissed it. It was a clear example of how we allow our logical minds to dominate us. We have learned to allow the limited thinking patterns of our brain to control our behavior. And in the process, we have lost an enormous amount of our potential for joy. I believe that our intuition knows what our purpose is. And when we are willing to quiet our mind and listen to our deeper intuitive wisdom, it can guide us in a useful direction. And we can trust that direction to be correct if it increases our joy.

It was during a workshop led by Diane Conway, author of the book *What Would You Do If You Had No Fear?* that I first gave voice to my calling to be a spiritual teacher. At the workshop, Diane asked me the powerful question which is also the title of her book. And for the first time, I acknowledged and spoke out loud my desire to work in the arena of spiritual leadership and counseling. It was a big "aha" moment for me. I felt as

though a spark was ignited the moment, I shared this deep knowing with the other participants in the room.

At the time I owned a furniture store and designed my own line of furniture. I wasn't sure how I would make the transition from store owner to doing spiritual work. People at the workshop were eager to support me with their ideas and offered suggestions about how I could combine the two careers. Someone recommended that I make "spiritual furniture" by infusing positive energy into the pieces. It was difficult for them to imagine that I would give up my successful furniture business and step into a completely new field of work. It was an example of how logic can take hold of an inspired idea and immediately limit the possibility of fulfilling it. The logical mind can only think within the limits of what is already known. Listening to other people's ideas about how I might fulfill my calling was a somewhat frustrating experience. It kept me trapped within the confines of logical thought and of the past. I was relieved when Diane looked at me and said, "I hear you, TJ... and I know it's not about furniture. Give yourself full permission to continue freely exploring this idea." What a priceless gift she offered me that day.

Nurturing Our Purpose

Once we have discovered what our outer purpose is, it is important to keep it safe from instant dismissal from our logical mind. Like a newly planted sapling, our new purpose needs gentle nurturing for it to safely grow and take root. It might be wise to share our goals only with those people who understand the delicate process of delivering and growing a new idea. In my case, the next step was to have a conversation with someone who was

already a spiritual leader. That person gave me helpful support and guidance. But then my mind started to intimidate me, asking questions like: "Who are you to do that kind of work?" Our minds can act as bullies to the subtler, gentle voices of our heart and intuition. If someone else intimidated us that way, it would be a clear act of abuse. But do we recognize abuse when it comes from within our mind and is directed against the subtler voices of our heart or intuition? I have heard it stated: "My mind is a dangerous neighborhood that I should try to avoid."

In praise of the logical mind, it does an excellent job of processing information, sorting, organizing, and categorizing. It is an essential tool when it comes to implementing action steps. But if we rely on our logic too early in the creative process, it will prevent us from discovering the steps that will lead us into new territory. Again, we can find wisdom in Einstein's words: "Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand."

To manifest our outer purpose, it is important to remind ourselves of the deeper meaning of our purpose. We need to begin living in the "vibration" of it, even before it has manifested. It is all too easy to get lost in attempting to figure out "How do I do it?" Instead, we will want to move into the already-existing energy of it, which can be found within us. By embodying the vibration of our purpose, we become magnetic to the people, opportunities, and situations that will enable us to make our purpose manifest. When I stepped into the feeling tone of assisting people with their spiritual transformation, I knew I was energetically opening doors for this new work to be born. I then took consistent and determined action in the desirable direction and inevitably the physical world seemed to respond.

Suddenly opportunities appeared that matched the vibration in which I was already living. It was a truly magical process, and I am deeply grateful to be living my purpose.

Purposeful Living

Some people are born with a strong calling and are aware from a young age of what they are here to do. But the Mozarts of this world are in the minority. Most of us have multiple steps or layers to our calling. One step leads to the next, in a gradual unfolding. The connection between these steps might not be obvious until we look back and connect the dots and trace our progression. There is no one-size-fits-all formula for finding and living our purpose. Many of us feel inner resistance, in the form of fear, as we get in touch with our deepest calling. However, we can cultivate the courage to work with and overcome these inner roadblocks and move forward. It is a process and a journey, which we each engage in our own unique way. We ask for support when we need it. We often have to do deep and difficult internal work to overcome our fears. It is that process of transformation that enables us to fulfill our calling. Our personal development deepens as we continue to live on purpose and take each next step that we find before us. Living on purpose, or living an intentional life, is achieved when we find the right balance between being and doing. It is the yin and yang of our existence. Our being feeds and energizes our doing. Conversely, if we put too much emphasis on being, and not enough on doing, then nothing gets accomplished in the outer realm. We lack engagement with the world, and we may experience dissatisfaction. When we obsessively do, without paying attention to being, what we do loses its sense of meaningfulness and connectedness to the larger web of life.

Right Brain Magnificence

Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, a brain scientist who had a stroke that caused her left brain to completely shut down, has explained what the right brain is capable of perceiving when its vision is not obscured by our logical mind. As a brain researcher, she was cognizant of what was occurring to her, while it was happening. Her stroke caused her left brain to go totally silent. In her own words, "I was immediately captivated by the magnificence of energy around me. And because I could no longer identify the boundaries of my body, I felt enormous and expansive. I felt at one with all the energy that was, and it was beautiful."

She described the state as nirvana, and she knew, in that moment, that everyone was capable of experiencing it. She glimpsed the possibility of a world full of compassionate, loving people; those who could move into that expansive sense of well-being, perfection, and oneness. It was possible at any time they chose by purposely stepping into the right hemisphere of their brain (what we often refer to as the heart). She added, "My left brain is doing the best job it can with the information it has to work with. I need to remember, however, that there are enormous gaps between what I know and what I think I know."

Jill further states that "The more time we spend choosing to run the deep inner peace circuitry of our right hemispheres, the more peace we will project into the world and the more peaceful our planet will be." Sharing this message with others is what motivated Jill to spend the next eight years of her life working to heal and recover her ability to walk, talk, read and write, and recall the details of her earlier life. She made a full recovery and tells her incredible story in her book *My Stroke of Insight*. Fortunately, most

of us do not need to have a stroke to glimpse the magnificence of right brain perception. When we quiet our dominant logical minds, the voices of our heart and intuition can be heard. It will open doors to see what life is like from an integrated, whole-brain perspective.