

“The path to enlightenment includes not only the search for the divine but also the total acceptance of the shadow self.”
Deepak Chopra, M.D.

“we must stop judging ourselves, we must forgive ourselves for being human. We must forgive ourselves for being imperfect. Because when we judge ourselves, we automatically judge others.”
Debbie Ford: From: The Dark Side of the Light Chasers

People seek personal growth or professional help when the pain or burden feels heavy, too much to carry alone. The work with our shadow selves is about discovering and accepting those parts of ourselves that, because we have denied them, are running our lives much like the man behind the curtain in “The Wizard of Oz”. Often these shadow selves are destroying our relationships, killing our spirit and keeping us from living a life we love.

We have been taught to ‘hide’ these parts of ourselves...they don’t ‘fit in’ in our families, in our schools, in our culture. And in the hiding, we come to believe that there is something wrong with us...something we must hide... NOT TRUE!

I wrote an article about how our “authentic selves” are sacrificed in the guise of socialization.
[Normal? Socialization, Domestication and Consensus Hypnosis.](#)

And the result of our socialization? We develop a socialized self or “ego” self and deny, wrong ourselves, or project these hidden aspects of ourselves onto our world.

Recently I was consulted by an associate with an 8 year old boy who is ‘acting out’. She went on to describe her son’s behavior: “he’s aggressive, pushy with others, always active, he argues with us and his teachers, I don’t know what’s wrong”.

Now, pretend I am talking about: A politician, a CEO of a large company, a U.S Marine Sergeant or a professional boxer: “he’s aggressive, pushy with others, he argues with those who disagree with him...”... You see, these traits are extremely valued in some situations in our culture... just not as a child in school.

As an adult, I am an Inspirational Speaker, a Trusted Teacher, an Author and Relationship coach. I am opinionated, tremendously curious, out spoken and yes, downright loud at times (have you been to one of my talks or classes!?). Now, imagine a 1st or 2nd grade classroom setting. Where is there room for someone who likes to learn, teach, and talk a lot? NOWHERE!!! I was told something is wrong with me, I needed to learn to ‘sit down and be quiet’... It wasn’t until I was placed in a specialized school setting geared toward a special needs person like me that I thrived...yes... now get this:

In a normal classroom setting, I was always in trouble.
In a specialized classroom setting, I thrived.

When we deny parts of ourselves, we give them our power... I say, take your power back! Learn about what's going on 'behind the curtain'! This process is not about getting rid of what you don't like about yourself, instead, finding the positive aspects of these parts, accepting them and integrating them into our lives by choice.

I will include some information about the Shadow from the great psychiatrist Carl Jung and some exercises to help you to discover your own shadow selves; to become free of the constraints that have been outside of your awareness... and then... to live your dreams and love your life!

The following excerpts are from an article on the Shadow written by Rebeca Eigen printed in the Indigo Sun in the August 1999 issue and an edited version was reprinted in *Conscious Living Magazine* in their Winter Issue 2000.

The Shadow

The Shadow, is a psychological term introduced by the late Swiss psychiatrist, Dr. Carl G. Jung. It is everything in us that is unconscious, repressed, undeveloped and denied. These are dark rejected aspects of our being as well as light, so there is positive undeveloped potential in the Shadow that we don't know about because anything that is unconscious, we don't know about.

The Shadow is an archetype. And what an archetype simply means is that it is typical in consciousness for everyone. Everyone has a Shadow. This is not something that one or two people have. We all have a Shadow and a confrontation with the Shadow is essential for self awareness. We cannot learn about ourselves if we do not learn about our Shadow so therefore we are going to attract it through the mirrors of other people.

Taking Responsibility for Our Lives

The first thing we have to do in order to begin to see our Shadowsides, is to take 100% responsibility for our lives. This is a very difficult thing to do and no one does this overnight so we have to be patient with ourselves.

Being in the human experience, we have all had many painful, difficult experiences where it clearly looks like it is the other persons fault, or bad luck in life or whatever else we want to call it. So taking total responsibility for what appears to come to us is no easy task but it is well worth the effort because when we take responsibility for what happens to us, we can then learn and grow from our experiences and make new choices for ourselves.

Changing our attitude from blame to responsibility will change what happens next in our world. Our destiny is of our own making and what goes on inside of us will be reflected outside of us all the time.

Exercises:

The Following Exercises are from: “The Dark Side of the Light Chasers”. By Debbie Ford

- 1) For one week, observe your own judgments about other people. Whenever you are upset by another person’s behavior, write down the quality in him or her that is most upsetting to you. Write down any opinions you have of the people who are closest to you. Be sure to include your friends, family and co-workers. ..

This list marks the beginning of discovery your hidden aspects. You will refer this list when you start the process of owning your shadow.

- 2) Make a list of the advice you give to other people. What are you telling others to do to make their life better? Reflect on whether the advice you give to others isn’t just advice to yourself. Sometimes we tell other people what to do as a way of reminding ourselves what we need to do. Realize that your advice to them may be a way to remind yourself.

If you have done the work, and you are wondering how to make it work, contact me...

Not only will I help you to change, but it will no longer be “work” For a change...

Try my coaching, I offer a free sample: [Click here to email me](#). Get more of what you want.