

serve me? Where does it come from? And from a deeper understanding I choose to behave from a place that empowers what is really important to me.

Truth, to me, is looking deep into another person's eyes and recognizing the amazing soul that lives there. Encouraged by this, I learned to use my intent and will to take a good look at all of these deep fears, one by one. And now, when I look deep into the eyes of the person in the mirror each morning, I recognize the amazing soul that lives in there.

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Welcome to the Throat Chakra

Even in the midst of all the chaos surrounding us right now, have you noticed how many people have been opening their hearts and becoming more compassionate? Remember the outpouring of compassion for the victims of the Tsunami a few years ago? As we open our hearts, we deepen our experience and perception of compassion.

In our evolution as spiritual beings opening the heart allows us to access the energy of the throat chakra at a higher level. I have noticed that many people being drawn to my workshops are beginning to open their throat chakra and explore some of the issues and opportunities for growth this presents to them.

The throat chakra represents how we communicate our truth, our integrity, our will and willpower. How we make our choices and their consequences, even understanding the consequences of our thoughts and beliefs. It is also the home of some of our greatest fears and the place of surrender from personal will to your higher purpose. Because it is the home of surrender, it is also the home of control. Quite a mouthful, isn't it?

One of the greatest fears most people have is speaking (or performing) in front of others. It pushes major buttons like: What if I screw up? What will they think? I don't want to make a fool of myself in front of others, so I just won't do it. What if I say something they don't like? I might get fired. God forbid if they know what I really think. And this is just the short list.

Many of us have a bucket full of these what ifs. My journey with my own personal bucketful has brought some valuable experience. Teaching and performing the classical guitar has given me the opportunity to be in front of others for about 30 years. Being a good organizer, I have also been asked to serve on the executive of a number of organizations throughout my life and that meant being in front of the group as their representative. You wouldn't believe the number of times one or more of these what ifs in my bucket broadsided me with feelings of humiliation or failure. But even after feeling broadsided, something within me was driving me to get back up on stage and do it again.

So I started to take a closer look at my bucket of what ifs. Avoidance sure wasn't working. Where did all this stuff come from anyway? And what is it within me that kept making me get up to do this over and over again? After a few years of observing myself and stirring up this bucket, I ended up staring at a bunch of negative thoughts that had been repeated so many times in my mind I was actually believing what they were telling me. So the next question I asked was: Is all this stuff really true?

I also recognized that the inner drive sending me back up on stage over and over was my spiritual essence giving me a kick in the butt. Ok, so I am a slow learner. Getting back up on stage kept the big fears right in my face. When I quit kicking and screaming and decided to face the fear with the intent of understanding its source, I was amazed at the crazy logic behind it. How could I have even considered that some of this drivel I was thinking was actually true?

Choosing to take responsibility for your thinking is a huge step towards integrity. As you change your mind, you change your life and begin to live with higher purpose. It certainly gave me a different perspective on my bucketful of what ifs. As I become more committed to understanding my purpose a lot of these old beliefs get examined with the following questions. Does this really