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# Befriending Confusion

Jeff Brown Delivers Weekly Inspiration

by JEFF BROWN

April 23, 2010



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Moving forward often demands that we live lost, knowingly surrendering our attachment to who we think we are, voluntarily stumbling around in the dark with little to guide us. Growing is all about leaps into the seeming unknown.



Jeff Brown delivers this week's inspiration on the Spirituality page. (UpperCut Images/Getty Images)

If there was one skill that I could not have done without on my spiritual journey, it was my learned capacity to befriend my confusion. As old ways of being died off, new ways of being invariably came to life. Before the transition was complete, there was a time, often a long time, when all of these parts were pressing up against me at the same time. In "Soulshaping," I refer to this in-between phase as a "spiritual emergingcy" -- a state of confusion and inner tumult that arises when a new pathway is forcing its way into consciousness, prior to its full emergence and integration. The bridge from one side

to the other is confusion. You have to learn how to hold the space for all of your parts and befriend your confusion, until clarity emerges on its own terms.

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Unfortunately, befriendng our confusion is difficult to hold to in a linear world. Those that walk the path of uncertainty are frequently characterized as flakes, drifters, and, ironically, lost souls. Nowhere in society are we taught to distinguish aimless from growth-full confusion, madness from truth aches, nervous breakdowns from nervous breakthroughs, habitual crisis from spiritual emergingcies. Confusion is sadly stigmatized as the mark of the "loser" without regard for the fact that one cannot come to know anything without first surrendering to the not knowing.

Our state of confusion often arises in the context of careers and relationships: Why do I hate my job? What are my callings? How do I really feel about this relationship? We develop a truth ache- a sense of internal dissonance about our path, a crying out for another direction.

Sadly, when we begin questioning our choices, resistant voices often float to the surface --

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voices of habit and fear, internalized judgments, well-entrenched defenses. Although progress has been made on many levels, most of us are still making our primary choices as to path through a survivalist lens, with a vigilant eye to what is most practical, safe and materially satisfying.

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