

THE ORANGE HELPER

Living in the Now

Lesson Two

THE OUTER LAYER

YOUR PERSONALITY TRAITS

Let's be clear here. Learning to Live the in the Now is learning to FEEL! Or more accurately it is *remembering* how to feel. This programme is about learning to feel the immediacy of life. ALL of it. Not just the good bits. The problem is that long ago you decided that this was not a safe way to live and you closed down your contact with the present moment. Developing awareness of the ways you avoid feeling your everyday experience is the first important step to living in the now. One of the biggest problems in our modern society is that we think our everyday ways of existing are normal, to be expected, are as good as it gets. They are not. When we develop mindful awareness of our immediate experience, we get back to who we were before the world got its hands on us and remember what we long ago forgot, who we really are.

In this session, we are exploring the outer layer of your map. Your personality traits. Your aim is to learn to recognise how these traits have become conditioned patterns of closure to living in the now. Your traits developed because you do not want to feel your own depths and taste life directly. Unconsciously you believe it is not safe and you would rather be safe than be happy. Eventually, your traits became ways of being that increasingly distanced you from the immediacy of life so that you gradually lost intimacy with it. This is why you feel so much dissatisfaction with yourself and your life. Is that normal? No, of course not.

The more you flee the present moment, the smaller and more isolated you become. You experience what I think of as an 'inner shrivelling'. You become dogmatic, inflexible and self-protective, and you become a victim of fear, anger, distrust, and neediness. You lose your sense of delight in life and instead of feeling full, alive, and energetic you feel depleted, empty, and dissatisfied. When you are not in the moment, you are in a reacting and avoiding mode of living. Even though you may not be aware of it, when you are acting out your habitual patterns of behaviour, thought, and emotions, most of the time your breathing becomes tight and muscles become armoured. You become tense and have negative feelings. At such times you have dropped out of the present moment and are likely to think reactively, behave poorly and make bad decisions.

THE OUTER LAYER

WHAT THE PRESENT MOMENT FEELS LIKE

So what does the present moment feel like? Present moment awareness is experienced and recognised through your three centres. Your head centre, your heart centre, and your body centre.

Present moment awareness or nowness is experienced in the head centre when your mind is clear and spacious, and is free from clutter and busyness. You feel an unmistakable lightness of mind that feels clear, responsive and agile. Remember how your mind feels when you are on holiday, like you have left the cares of the world behind? That's it!

Present moment awareness or nowness is experienced in the heart centre when your heart is open and warm. You experience an outpouring of love for everyone and everything and there is an absence of tightness and defensiveness. When your heart is open there are no barriers or walls of protection. Remember how you feel when you look at someone you love or cuddle your pet? That's it!

Present moment awareness or nowness is experienced in the body when your body is grounded and centred and you are FEELING what is happening. You were gifted with life and it is your birth right to feel its immediacy, to feel the humming vibrance of your body and the exquisite joy that exists within every moment. Remember how you feel when you really felt every moment? That's it!

When these three centres are operating in the present moment you will recognise it as feeling relaxed, peaceful, and joyful. Anytime you are not feeling these things you have abandoned the present moment. (Which for most of us is most of the time!)

So, let's explore your everyday experience starting with the outer layer of your map. Your aim with this is to directly experience the ways you leave the present moment through your habitual patterns of behaving. We will do this through an inquiry exercise at the end of this lesson. But first, let's get familiar with your personality traits. Read the description of your personality traits on the next two pages. These are describing what is detailed on the outer layer of your map. Do not be discouraged if you do not recognise ALL the traits described. It often takes some time to own all aspects of yourself. Once you have read the description and had some time to digest it all move on to the inquiry exercise.

THE OUTER LAYER

YOUR PERSONALITY & DESIRE FOR LOVE

As an Orange Helper, your core value is love. You believe that if you are helpful you will be loved. The ways you ensure that people will love you is by being seen as appealing, giving, caring, and heartfelt and it is important to you that you are needed. The drive to win others' affections by being considered important and appreciated for your efforts is a way of obtaining support without having to ask for it. You want to be liked and are always ready with an easy smile, helpful advice, or a friendly compliment. Relationship orientated, you reach out to others and are often the first one to lend a hand. You see yourself as approachable, nurturing and thoughtful. You would like others to see you as empathetic, supportive and altruistic. Your idealised image is that you are a loving and helpful person. You have a warm, sociable and enthusiastic personality and you are naturally practiced in the art of using positive communication to create rapport. Your natural strength is your genuine ability to listen to others, empathise with their feelings, and meet their needs. A good listener, you focus on the needs and concerns of others. You usually know what people need and feel, and enjoy taking on the kind of role where you can show your giving and generous nature.

You have developed the gift of flattery to the level of an art form because you see how this skill can be a currency for creating intimate rapport. Secretly, you can feel needy and vulnerable, feeling that you must earn the right to be loved. Avoiding a deep sense of loneliness, you find ways to connect to and be of service to others. You have an innate sense of what to say or do to make people feel seen and admired, and can be very diplomatic and skilled when it comes to delivering messages in ways that people can hear. Like a fairy godmother or godfather, you like to do special things for people and surprise them with unexpected gifts. You take note of others' desires and try to fulfil them. You take pride in your ability to comfort and support others. Your superpower though, is that you can be an excellent friend and will often go to great lengths to take care of and support those you love. Always ready to be helpful, others often depend on you. You have innate people skills and value interpersonal relationships above all else. Your extraordinary insight about what people need, and your ability to create mutual trust and affinity, are rare gifts. You love to be instrumental in helping others achieve their full potential.

THE OUTER LAYER

YOUR PERSONALITY & AVOIDANCE OF BEING UNLOVEABLE

As an Orange Helper, your fear of being being unloved or unlovable is what will take you away from present moment awareness. Because of your unconscious fear of being unloved, you have developed patterns of behaving that take you away from the present moment.

For example you believe that you are the only one who sees and can give people what they need. This aspect of your personality leads to self-inflation, a form of pride. Though you might not realise it, this pride masks the fact that you may give to people with strings attached. When you offer unsolicited advice or give compulsively, others may perceive you as bossy, overly demonstrative or manipulative.

In an effort to have your needs met, you may promise more than you can deliver or deliver more than you promise. Unconsciously, you may feel needy and want to be taken care of by others and can become emotional, sullen or overly dramatic, suffering from psychosomatic illnesses.

Whilst you are friendly, upbeat and want to be considered a 'special' friend you can get in your own way by overdoing your focus on shape-shifting to please others. Skilled at going out of your way to notice what is needed you feel motivated when others acknowledge your efforts

but you can be so focused on others that you don't pay attention to your own unmet needs and feelings. You avoid appearing needy or useless and feel that to have your needs met by others, you must meet their needs first. Because you can't help imagining that people are as sensitive to criticism as you are you may sugar-coat or shade the truth out of fear of hurting someone.

At other times your cheeriness can feel false as it functions as an overcompensation to mask sadness, resentment or disappointment. Secretly, you fear being ignored and don't want to feel left out, or be seen as inconsequential. To be liked, you avoid saying or doing anything that is off-putting or unflattering. You feel much more comfortable giving than receiving. To let yourself receive, you would have to express your own desires, which makes you feel vulnerable. Focused on the needs of others, you may repress your own needs and feel taken for granted.

Because you consider yourself to be indispensable, your vice is arrogance. Whilst you may believe that your giving nature is unconditional, if you dig deep enough you will discover that you have a habit of strategic giving. Giving to make people feel indebted to you.

EXERCISE

Congratulations, you are now ready to begin your first exercise.

- Give yourself some quiet time, have your map open in front of you and bring yourself into a state of mindful awareness with a few deep breaths.
- Choose one personality trait from the outer layer of the map it can be a 'good' trait or a 'negative' trait.
- Using the trait you have chosen, 'answer' the three inquiry questions below.
- For one, or even two of the questions you may get the answer "It doesn't." That is fine, move on to the next question
- Avoid rushing through these questions with your thinking mind. Mindful Awareness is needed here.
 - **How does this trait create distraction and busyness? (meaning I lose contact with the feelings and immediacy of my body)**
 - **How does this trait create overthinking? (meaning my mind is cluttered and full)**
 - **How does this trait create avoidance and withdrawal? (meaning I feel closed off and unavailable.)**

Remember, anytime your mind is not clear, your heart is not open, and your body is not grounded you are avoiding or fleeing the present moment.

You may not always find this inquiry easy because your traits have become so normalised. Simply remain with your mindful awareness and notice whatever arises into the space of inquiry. It is important that you stay open and curious and not judge what arises. **It is also important that you do not do anything or try to change yourself.** People often think they have the change their behaviour, do things differently, nothing could be further from the truth...**there is nothing to do but simply hold the space of mindful awareness.** Spend a week or two doing this exercise **choosing a different trait each time.** Choose traits that you have noticed popping up in your day. When you choose traits that you notice in your everyday life you are learning to catch yourself in the act of fleeing or avoiding the present moment. The more you do this the faster your awareness grows, the more spontaneous and authentic you become, the more you develop a growing connection to the present moment.

Listen to the guided meditation called 'Your Traits'. It will support you with this exercise.