

This newsletter is supported by the website: www.TheGuidingPath.com If you do *not* want to receive future newsletters please let us know and we will remove your contact details from our distribution.

Hello everyone!

2010 has continued to be busy and productive year for us at The Guiding Path. We created a new course: "Choices in Life" held in the spring that went well. We are going to hold that one again soon and plan to make it one of our regular courses. The course looks at the process of exposing our wants, making choices, and seeing them through to completion.

We also played a leading role in putting on and teaching a More to Life "Mastery" course to support people who have taken the main More to Life weekend. This is the first time this course has been run in the Thames Valley area and was well-received by all that took it.

And now we have another new course to offer you. Called "Enjoying Your Personality" it is all about nurturing the roots of self-esteem. We are holding free preview events at 5pm on 22nd August and at 7pm on 30th August. See the attached page for more information.

We have also been busy behind the scenes further developing our web-based personality analysis. There is still much to do, but the main website that is being created to host the personality test is hopefully just a few months away from being ready for its official launch.

Events and Dates

Autumn Courses

- **Enjoying Your Personality**

Getting enjoyment from life, growing self-confidence, and having a real sense of fulfilment need not be accidental. These are things that happen for a reason and come out of skills that can be learned. This small-group course presents some of the most effective approaches. For more information, see the notes on this extended newsletter. **Starting Sunday 5th September 5pm-7pm**

- **Choices in Life**

How to know what we want and go for it. Build confidence on ourselves and become more effective in everything that we do. A small-group course exploring our motivations. **Starting Sunday 31st October 5pm-7pm**

- **The Empowered Self (Free Workshop)**

An introduction to the concept of personal growth and a taster of what it means to take command of our own lives in ways that are simple yet profoundly effective. **Next Course Date Saturday 25th September 2pm-4pm**

FREE PREVIEW EVENTS!

- **Enjoying Your Personality**

There will be 2 free preview open-hours to introduce our latest course, to be held at **5pm on 22nd August** and at **7pm on 30th August**. These previews give you a chance to find out more about the course, to have an introduction to the type of course content, to experience the environment that you will meet in the course, and meet with other prospective students. You will also be able to ask questions about any aspect of the course.

Please call us on 0118 926 6962 to confirm your place (the previews, like the course itself, are currently run in our front room at the address in the contact box below and space is limited!).

The previews will typically last for 1-2 hours. Water is provided.

Book now: **5pm on 22nd August** and **7pm on 30th August**

Me, Myself, and Happiness

“If I want to be happy, it helps to explore what is at the root of my unhappiness.”

By John Cochrane. August 2010

A thought flashed through my mind as I was pulling on my running shoes early this morning. Just one of those constant commentary type thoughts, and for an instant the observer in me, the ‘Me’, almost let the thought go on its way. Initially I felt the internal ‘clunk’ of the thought rather than realising that there was something incorrect with it in itself, but as soon as I felt the ‘clunk’ and realised what the thought had actually been, I knew what to do.

The thought was simple enough. As I pulled on my shoes I was scrunching forward on the bottom step of the stairs and I felt the pain in my back well up again. Most mornings I wake up with stiffness in my back and I have a regular series of stretches and exercises to get myself ready to run. The thought was simple: “I’ll be happy the day I can get up without pain”.

The ‘clunk’ was the sudden onset of feelings that went with that thought: sadness, frustration, despair. Over almost as soon as they appeared, the feelings were significant but not the most significant thing about that thought. Flashes of



feeling like that, both comfortable and uncomfortable, wanted and unwanted, are a vital part of my normal process of being alive and establishing meaning. They are nothing to be worried about. But as I caught that particular thought as it flowed through my semi-consciousness I realised that it was more sinister than just a passing thought. So, I decided to do some truth-telling.

I often enjoy the inspirations and realisations that I get when I run in the morning. This morning was wet and fresh, with the sounds made somehow sharp by the wet ground. The run seemed short as I carried my thoughts through about happiness. One very simple truth to challenge my thought was that I don't actually know whether a pain-free morning would bring the promised happiness or not. My cynical appreciation was that the chances are that if I wasn't in low-level pain or discomfort I'd have, or would invent, some other reason for waiting for happiness. Another truth (challenging one of the unspoken concepts behind the thought): I don't have to wait for happiness; even if the pain continues it does not mean that I will be unhappy. Another truth (challenging the absoluteness of the thought): I am often happy these days and even on those days when the pain is more present, I have much to appreciate and enjoy in my life.

These truths, these challenges to that thought were simple to get to and I had them before my shoe laces were tied. I am well-practised at this level of truth-telling and this level of self-awareness and it is pretty much second nature to me to catch errant thoughts like this. But I wanted to explore more.

As I ran I pondered on the concept of simply 'being' happy, of choosing to feel happiness and satisfaction as an experiential choice. This approach is proposed, or attempted, by many in various different forms, and I know a number of ways of doing just that. I know that truth-telling often leads directly to a lightening of my overall state of being as I consistently remove my 'reasons' to be unhappy with what's going on in my life. I know that I can use the power of association to reconnect with particular feelings, including happiness. I know that I can ease my mind through meditation and achieve a particular state of mind. These are all things that I practise on a regular basis.

But that particular thought shone a light on one particular and, in my experience, common misconception about happiness, that getting something that I want will bring happiness. My mind comments on my feeling of stiffness and makes what seems to be an observational thought: "I'll be happy the day I can get up without pain". But implicit in that thought is an attachment of my happiness to a thing, in this case an achievement but it could equally be a literal thing; a car, a house, a relationship, and so on. That's the real danger of this kind of drive-by thought, it sets up a victim trap where I get to think that my happiness is dependent on something outside myself and that I won't have happiness until I get the thing. Some people describe this as coming directly from the 'self', the ego-self, trying to counter an implicit sense of lack.

There is another truth for me to tell. It is true that I do want to be free of pain. And I accept that pain and discomfort are as much a part of life as pleasure and happiness. When I really accept that I don't know how I *should* be or what I *should* be feeling at any one time then I automatically drop my unconscious objections about how things are. It is these objections that can easily block my contentment and my happiness. I may not be able to achieve happiness through flattering my ego but I can achieve it through nurturing my enjoyment of life as it is, for what it has been, and for what it will bring in the future.

To contact us:

Website	www.TheGuidingPath.com
Email	John.Cochrane@TheGuidingPath.com or Grace.Natalia@TheGuidingPath.com
Phone	0118 926 6962 (John Mobile: 07970 208133, Grace Mobile: 07921 058199)
Post	The Guiding Path, 12 Easby Way, Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 3XA

Enjoying Your Personality

Nurturing the roots of self-esteem

Enjoying Your Personality covers these main areas:

- Sources of Self-Diminishment – what we do that undermines our sense of self.
- Establishing Self-Confidence – how we can give ourselves a solid center from which to grow.
- Strengthening Self-Confidence – how we can learn what helps us grow.
- Choosing Self-Esteem – ways of being and choices we make that build self-esteem.
- Energising Self – enjoying our own capabilities playing to our strengths.

The course introduces many approaches, concepts, and ideas that build to give a powerful grounding in how to build self-esteem, self-effectiveness, and self-confidence. Further than this, the course presents ways to appreciate and enjoy ourselves in life through realistic knowledge of ourselves and of those around us.

The course material is presented using a number of different formats, including direct presentation, examples, journal work, work in pairs, and shared work in the group. Some of the material is in the form of exercises, some is informational, some is through direct experience of the mind/body connection, and some is meditational.

This range of formats is used to give the greatest potential for learning; to give the participants a wealth of experience and opportunity to get what they can from the course whilst keeping the sessions achievable and enjoyable.

The group setting, fostered by the teaching mentors, makes for a friendly and generally relaxed environment in which students can explore and learn as well as make changes as part of the overall transformational process.

Anyone can take this course and expect to benefit from it. There are no prerequisites, no assumptions about what you already know or what personal growth you have already achieved. It will be beneficial if you have a basic ability to read and write basic English, though even this is not essential.

All course materials are provided, including a folder for course handouts and for your own notes and supporting notes for each session of the course.

The course material builds over the series of sessions to achieve some significant insights and to make potentially profound shifts that are long-lasting of themselves. The approaches and techniques introduced during the course can, if wanted, be used for continued and continuous growth work.

Enjoying Your Personality runs for 5 Sunday evenings, between 5pm and 7pm, from 5th September. It is taught by 2 mentors: John Cochrane and Grace Natalia. We offer one-to-one catch up sessions (up to a maximum of 2 sessions) if you know in advance that you cannot make particular dates. The course fee is £99 payable by the start of the first session and it comes with a money-back guarantee. If you complete the course and are not satisfied with your experience, The Guiding Path offers a full refund up to a week after the course is over, provided only that you have attended all sessions.