

## **What the World Needs Now Is Our Wholeness**

By Lynda Klau, Ph.D.

These days, there's been a lot of talk about the power of collaboration to help create a better world. The importance of collaboration can't be underestimated. But before we learn to successfully collaborate with others, we must learn how to collaborate with ourselves. By this, I mean that we need to embrace a larger definition of who we are, which takes into account our "wholeness." By living from our "wholeness," listening to all parts of ourselves and to others, we generate the possibilities of true collaboration and begin to build a better world.

### **What is our "wholeness"?**

In someone who lives from their "wholeness," the personal self is rooted in a healthy relationship with what can be called the universal self. The universal self is that place in us that directly accesses a loving wisdom beyond conditioning. This intuitive "gut" self knows our own intrinsic goodness and self-love, and also recognizes it in others. When we remain sufficiently connected to the universal self, we're anchored in a larger perspective that allows us freedom from the issues that arise within the personal self.

Ideally, the personal self and the universal self work together as partners and co-creators. It is important to avoid getting stuck in either. Rather, we must differentiate and then integrate them into a larger perspective that takes into account our particular conditioned beliefs and our vast unconditioned awareness. This is what it means to collaborate with ourselves and to be whole.

### **How can we live from our "wholeness?"**

Over the years, I studied as many different modalities as possible, from psychology to spirituality to body-therapies and coaching, to help other people reclaim their wholeness and manifest it in the world. One powerful way to embrace our wholeness, however, is "mindfulness."

Originally derived from the Buddhist tradition, but increasingly applied to a wide-spectrum of Western modalities for mental and physical well-being, "mindfulness" is the practice of bringing our awareness to what is happening in the present. This refers to what is occurring for us internally (our thoughts, feelings, and beliefs) and externally (the environment around us) from moment to moment. Mindfulness is a radical wake-up call to become conscious of all parts of ourselves, shedding the light of clarity upon the unconscious behaviors, thoughts, and beliefs that have been running us.

This place of clarity offers another perspective from which we can compassionately witness whatever is occurring in the present without judgment or identifying with limiting feelings and beliefs. This allows us to be aware of our personal self's conditioning without getting stuck in it, increasingly opening us to the inspiration and wisdom of the universal self. This is how mindful awareness helps us reclaim our wholeness.

### **Collaborating From Wholeness**

Once we've embraced our "wholeness," we're ready to collaborate with others in a way that truly honors this place in all of us.

The highest potential of a collaborative experience arises when everyone involved possesses their individual wholeness while participating in a collective experience. This accesses a wisdom beyond the sum of the individuals involved.

Just as the key to embracing our “wholeness” is listening to all parts of ourselves without judgment, the key to true collaboration is mindful and respectful listening to ourselves and others. This kind of radically open communication can be called “courageous conversations.” These are the conversations that are challenging to have with ourselves and others.

One way to think about “courageous conversations” is mindfulness applied to the art of communication. The key to having a “courageous conversation” is listening to all aspects of a conflict with openness, clarity, and compassion, without getting stuck in our own conditioned thoughts and beliefs. This involves embracing any voice or perspective with love and the willingness to understand.

When we listen openly, clarity will come and the path will reveal itself. It may appear very different from what we might have expected before the conversation began. From here, we begin to build true collaborative visions, strategies, and actions, whether for our work environment, our family lives, or even the most crucial social issues of our times.

Let us hold the vision that we are heading toward a new world, held and guided by wholeness and unconditional love.

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