

Facing Your Dark Side

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Ah, I remember way back when I was curled up watching one of the Star Wars movies. This was the one where Luke is training with the great Yoda and confronts what appears to be Darth Vader, whence Luke defeats Vader, his helmet falls off revealing Luke's face as the one he was battling. For me, this scene represents how many of us view our dark side, the part of our nature that we must vanquish if we are to walk the path of light and righteousness. It does seem on the surface like a good idea, to face our dark half and destroy it in one strike of our proverbial lightsabers. However in my experience if we are seeking freedom from our egos this is a counterproductive method.

Our egos are in fact strengthened by attempting to eliminate the negative aspects of ourselves. If we are to view our dark sides as something to be separated from, we are giving weight to our own identification of self as something that is 'not bad'. Also the reverse is true, if we are to ignore our positive qualities, preferring to view ourselves as a 'bad' person then we strengthen the ego in the other direction. At this point you may be asking yourself, "what's so 'bad' about identifying with a sense of self that is 'good'?" To this I reply there's nothing 'bad' about it per se, but if we are seeking to become enlightened, we have to overcome viewing things as dualistic. It is a fact of the material world that there exists duality, within us we have been blessed with the gift to recognize the duality within us and around us. Kierkegaard the famous existential philosopher in his work entitled, "The Sickness Unto Death" talks of how man is a synergy of duality – within us exists both the infinite and the finite and many other dualities, he noted. So why is it that we believe we are anything less than both the light and the dark sides?

To truly be able to be complete we must embrace our dark sides, including our thoughts, feelings and opinions if we are to truly open up to the real reality that exists all around and within us. With this simple meditation I hope you all will be able to realize as I did, that everything is the same and that all duality is united through the Divine love of our hearts. Ok so let's begin the meditation shall we?

Sit comfortably and focus on the breath, letting it seep deep down to your root chakra, and to every other chakra including those above the heart. Now sit with your thoughts and simply observe, letting all thoughts just pass through you as though you were a sieve.

Call upon your own memories of the past, or perhaps present feelings of negativity and general darkness, everyone has them so don't be afraid letting them be there.

Now this part is a little hard to describe so bear with me. Open your heart and gently allow yourself to feel fully what your dark side feels like. You will feel an initial aversion to it, but just be there with the darkness and allow it to flow into your heart. Bit by bit allow it all into your heart and say to yourself that you accept the inherent dark side of your nature completely and will always allow it into your heart.

Next reverse the situation and allow all the positive memories and present feelings to surround and then enter your heart. Don't worry, your heart can handle it!

At first when this meditation is done, you may notice that the dark energy seems aversive and yet at the same time oddly powerful, remember at this point that clinging to either the light or the dark side will make your ego stronger and belittle your true nature. Now it may take some practice of this meditation before your heart becomes a large enough container that it can take it all in, I mean we are so

conditioned to put barriers around our hearts that it becomes so difficult for us to open them.

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