

AWAKENING THE GENIE WITHIN (Chapter 6)

Suggested Homework Before Completing Worksheets 1 through 5.

Before completing these worksheets, many, including me, have found it helpful to first do some self-reflective work. It is up to each of you to make this decision depending on how well you know yourselves. I urge you to read the following three suggestions before deciding. Keep in mind that if this work is part of an organization's group workshop, this self-reflective work may be completed at home in preparation for the workshop. If you are completing this work on your own or with a partner or small group, you need to make your own decisions. Personally, I found the self-reflective work insightful as I had forgotten many aspects of my life that shaped the person I am today. It also reminded me of what was important to me, my values.

Suggestion 1: The ancient Greeks measured time in two ways; *Chronos* and *Kairos* time. Chronos is time measured by the sun, clock, or calendar; it is chronological or quantitative time. Chronos is the time that tends to dominate our daily lives. Kairos time measures time from the perspective of significant or memorable events (pivotal moments in a person's life). It is more qualitative and less concerned with discreet units of time. It could be your wedding day, graduation, the birth of a child, a coming-of-age moment, the death of a loved one, the 9/11 tragedy in the US, or any other significant event that has impacted your life. Your feelings and behaviour at these times indicate what is important to you (your values). It is worthwhile to recall pivotal Kairos moments in your life, and how they influence your feelings, actions, and behaviours.

These moments are often timeless and live on within us even though our preoccupation with ego clouds our memory. Taking the time to recall these moments can have a considerable influence on your choice of values. In Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge was visited by four spirits, one of which took him on a journey of Kairos moments from his past. This journey allowed him to reflect on his life and make some decisions for the future. Dickens' story is fictitious, but his message is powerful. Scrooge was so preoccupied with money and possessions that he lost touch with many of the precious moments in his life. Unfortunately, we do not have the same opportunity that Scrooge had. We must do this work on our own. We must rely on our own spirit and memory. I am confident that if Scrooge had completed the worksheets before and after his visitation by the spirits, the results would have been completely different.

Suggestion 2: You might think that your presence on earth is trivial and that your impact on others is insignificant, but you are wrong. Every person you have touched in your life is influenced by the interaction. Your friends, partners, coworkers, parents, brothers, sisters, and many others have all been influenced by who you are. If you have children and grandchildren, they are here because of you, and they, in turn, influence others. Everything you do sets a wave of energy in motion which can have a far-reaching ripple effect on the lives of others. Each of us is precious, so never think of yourself as insignificant. George Bailey, played by Jimmy Stewart in the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, clearly shows the considerable influence each of us has on the lives of others. It is worthwhile to take some time to reflect on your life from this

perspective. Your past behaviours may have had both positive and negative influences on others. Revisiting these moments may cause you to re-evaluate your priorities and make changes in your life.

Suggestion 3: Take whatever time you need to complete this work, even if it takes a few days. You might find it helpful to look at old home movies or pictures or to talk to family or friends who can remind you of some significant moments in your life. The person you are today is the result of a lifetime of experiences, so it is worth reflecting on them. If you are caught up in Chronos time you may be impatient and begrudge this time. Kairos time, however, has a more lasting influence on your life. A good friend once told me that it is unlikely that a person would want the following words included in their eulogy; *they wish they had spent more time at work*. The following is a well-known quote of unclear origin which is attributed to many people, including Vicki Corona and George Carlin: "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away."